THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Also by Roger E. Kanet

ASIA IN THE SOVIET GLOBAL STRATEGY

BACKGROUND TO CRISIS: Policy and Politics in Gierek's Poland

COPING WITH CONFLICT AFTER THE COLD WAR (*editor*)

ON THE ROAD TO COMMUNISM

SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN FOREIGN RELATIONS: A Bibliography

SOVIET ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE DEVELOPING WORLD

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND EAST–WEST RELATIONS (*editor*)

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1980s

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN TRANSITION (*editor*)

THE BEHAVIOURAL REVOLUTION AND COMMUNIST STUDIES (*editor*)

THE COLD WAR AS COOPERATION: Superpower Cooperation in Regional Conflict Management (*editor*)

THE LIMITS OF SOVIET POWER IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: Thermidor in the Revolutionary Struggle (*editor*)

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE DEVELOPING NATIONS (*editor*)

THE SOVIET UNION, EASTERN EUROPE AND THE THIRD WORLD

WESTERN EUROPE IN SOVIET GLOBAL STRATEGY

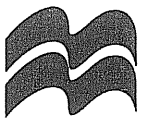
The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation

Edited by

Roger E. Kanet
Professor of Political Science
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

and

Alexander V. Kozhemiakin
Assistant Professor of Political Science
Georgia State University



First published in Great Britain 1997 by
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS and London
Companies and representatives throughout the world

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 0–333–66442–6

First published in the United States of America 1997 by
ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, INC.,
Scholarly and Reference Division,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

ISBN 0–312–16557–9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
The foreign policy of the Russian Federation / edited by Roger E. Kanet and Alexander V. Kozhemiakin.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0–312–16557–9 (cloth)
1. Russia (Federation)—Foreign relations. I. Kanet, Roger E., 1936– . II. Kozhemiakin, Alexander V., 1973– .
DK510.764.F67 1997
327.47—dc20 96–34346
CIP

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
06 05 04 03 02 01 00 99 98 97

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire

Contents

Preface

This book traces its origins to a roundtable panel on the emerging new foreign policy of the Russian Federation held at the annual meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii in November 1993. Since that time the original authors have drafted and reworked their individual contributions, in order to incorporate recent developments in this rapidly changing area. Several other authors were commissioned to write or expand chapters, so that the resulting study would provide a comprehensive overview of emerging Russian foreign policy.

Our objective is to provide a current assessment of the major developments in Russian foreign policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. Each chapter provides a brief introduction to the legacy of the Soviet past in the region, a discussion of the foreign policy debate in Moscow and its implications for Russian behaviour, the significance of Russian interests in the area, and the major current and likely future lines of Russian policy. Initially the editors were convinced that the virtual break in relations between Russia and the developing world did not warrant a full chapter. The re-emergence of Russian relations with developing countries since 1993, however, resulted in the decision that a full analysis of this topic was essential.

The editors wish to express their sincere appreciation to the authors for the timeliness of their submissions. They also wish to thank both Larry R. Faulkner, Provost of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Peter F. Nardulli, Head of the Department of Political Sciences, for research support. They are also indebted to Susanne M. Birgerson who assisted in editing some of the original papers as well as preparing page proofs and indexing, Jason Sharmon for page proofing and indexing, and to Jerrie C. Merridith of International Programs and Studies at the University of Illinois who helped make footnoting styles and wordprocessing programs compatible. Without the assistance of all of these individuals the project would not have come to completion.

ROGER E. KANET
Champaign, Illinois
ALEXANDER V. KOZHEMIAKIN
Atlanta, Georgia

Notes on the Contributors

Susanne M. Birgerson received an MA in Political Science and is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently engaged in research on a dissertation entitled 'The Russian Diaspora in the "Near Abroad": Implications for Russian Security Policy'. Her publications have appeared in *Problems of Post-Communism, Asian Affairs, Revue d'Etudes Comparatives Est–Ouest, Strategic Studies Journal* and *Osteuropa.*

Aurel Braun is Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto. His research has emphasized the international relations of Eastern Europe, with special attention to Romanian and Soviet foreign policy. His many publications include *Romanian Foreign Policy since 1965* (1978); *Small-State Security in the Balkans* (1985): *The Middle East in Global Strategy* (1987, editor); and *The Soviet–East European Relationship in the Gorbachev Era* (1990)

William E. Ferry earned an MA in Slavic Studies from the Ohio State University and is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has co-authored several review essays that have appeared in *Osteuropa.* He is also co-editor of and contributor to *The Post-Communist States in the World Community* (in press).

Robert O. Freedman is Peggy Meyerhoff Pearlstone Professor of Political Science, former Dean of the Graduate School, and Interim President of the Baltimore Hebrew University. He is the author of many articles and books concerning Soviet policy in the Middle East, Middle Eastern politics, and related issues, including: *Economic Warfare in the Communist Bloc* (1970); *Soviet Policy toward the Middle East since 1970* (1974, 1978, 1984); *Moscow and the Middle East* (1991); and *Soviet Policy toward Israel under Gorbachev* (1991).

Roger E. Kanet is Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Director of International Programs and Studies, and Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His recent publications include *Coping with Conflict after*

the Cold War (1996, co-editor with E. A. Kolodziej), *Soviet Foreign Policy in Transition* (1992, co-editor with D. N. Miner and T. J. Resler), and *The Cold War as Cooperation: Superpower Cooperation in Regional Conflict Management* (1991, co-editor with E. A. Kolodziej).

Alexander V. Kozhemiakin is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Georgia State University, Atlanta. He is a graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and received an MA and PhD from the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His dissertation was entitled 'Expanding the "Pacific Union"? The Impact of the Process of Democratization on International Security'. His articles have appeared in *Osteuropa*, *Aktuelle Analysen* (Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien), *Problems of Post-Communism*, and *Review of International Studies*. He spent 1995–96 as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Olin Institute for Security Studies at Harvard University.

Paul J. Marantz is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. He has published widely on aspects of Soviet and Russian foreign policy. His publications include *Superpower Involvement in the Middle East: Dynamics of Foreign Policy* (1985, co-editor with B. S. Steinberg); *From Lenin to Gorbachev: Changing Soviet Perspectives on East–West Relations* (1988); and *The Decline of the Soviet Union and the Transformation of the Middle East* (1993, co-editor with D. H. Goldberg).

Peter Shearman is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Melbourne, specializing in international relations and Russian foreign policy. He is the author of numerous publications, the most recent of which are *The Soviet Union and Cuba* (1987); *The Superpowers, Central America and the Middle East* (1991, co-editor with P. Williams); *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990* (editor, 1995). He is currently writing a book entitled *Globalisation and Russian National Identity*.

F. Seth Singleton is Professor of Political Science and former Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Pacific University. His academic interests have included Soviet and Russian domestic and foreign policy. His writings on these and related topics include 'From Intervention to Consolidation: The Soviet Union and South-

ern Africa', in *The Soviet Impact on Africa*, edited by R. C. Nation and M. V. Kauppi (1984) and 'The Soviet Union, the Horn, and Tropical Africa', in *The Limits of Soviet Power in the Developing World*, edited by E. A. Kolodziej and R. E. Kanet (1989).

Introduction

Alexander V. Kozhemiakin and Roger E. Kanet

The collapse of the Soviet Union is undoubtedly one of the most critical events that shaped the flow of history at the end of the twentieth century. Signifying the fall of communism, the process of Soviet disintegration has profoundly altered the character of the international system. The superpower rivalry has ended, the threat of a global nuclear war has virtually disappeared, and post-communist countries are now building, with varying degrees of success, bridges of cooperation with their former capitalist enemies.

And yet, the dissolution of the USSR has also brought a considerable element of uncertainty into the international arena. Confronted with 15 politically and economically unstable states that have emerged in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse, the international community has no record of past behaviour to guide it in its relations with these unpredictable entities. The problem of uncertainty and volatility is most critical with respect to the largest and most powerful of the Soviet successor states – the Russian Federation.

The principal purpose of this volume is to describe, explain, and, where possible, forecast major trends in Russia's international behaviour. The focus is primarily on Russian foreign policy after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991. In order to facilitate the process of inquiry into this extremely complicated topic, contributors to the volume have been asked to confine their respective analyses to a specific geographical area. In other words, with the exception of the first chapter, which examines the interplay between Russian domestic politics and its general foreign policy, all other chapters in this book explore the issues associated with Russian foreign policy towards a certain region.

As noted above, the volume starts by considering the complex interaction between domestic political and economic processes, on the one hand, and Russian foreign policy, on the other. By examining domestic debates on foreign policy and on conceptions of the national interest, Peter Shearman identifies in Chapter 1 the visions of the country's international role and status held by top Russian decision-makers. Shearman focuses mainly on two representative

institutions that are critical for a nascent Russian democracy – parliament and the presidency – and analyses their roles in determining the national interest and formulating foreign policy.

In Chapter 2, Alexander Kozhemiakin and Roger Kanet examine one of the most sensitive areas of Russia's foreign policy – its relations with the countries of the European 'near abroad': Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and the Baltic states. Kozhemiakin and Kanet suggest that Russia's behaviour towards the former Soviet region is influenced primarily by domestic political processes and, in particular, by the rise of nationalist forces.

Chapter 3 focuses primarily on Russia's foreign policy towards the former satellite states of Central Europe and the Balkans. Written by Aurel Braun, the chapter presents an insightful analysis of the significant problems that stand in the way of Russia's greater cooperation with the region. Most importantly, the impact of the Soviet imperial legacy towards East-Central Europe has proven to be extremely strong. Braun argues that there is a need for restructuring the very psychology of the relationship between Russia and the East-Central European states.

In Chapter 4, Paul Marantz examines the crucial dynamic of the relationship between Russia and the West. While noting the considerable amelioration in these relations, he emphasizes the fragility of current East–West relations. Marantz argues that, under conditions of a continuing economic crisis and political disorder, there is a real danger of an upsurge of anger against the West for supposedly imposing an alien, unworkable programme of political and economic reforms on the Russian Federation.

Focusing on Russia's relationships with Central and East Asia, Seth Singleton examines in Chapter 5 the main objectives of Moscow's policy towards these very diverse regions of the Asian continent. Singleton especially emphasizes Russian attempts to sustain friendly relations with its Asian neighbours and to provide for its security by diplomacy rather than by military confrontation.

The absence of a specific discussion of Russia's policy towards South Asia, in particular India, is explained primarily by the dramatic reduction in the intensity of Russian–Indian cooperation in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse. Although quite recently a number of attempts have been made to strengthen the ties between the two countries, both Russia and India, confronted with their own pressing domestic problems, are yet to reach the high level of cooperation that existed between them during the Cold War.

In Chapter 6, Robert Freedman presents a perceptive analysis of continuity and change in the policy of the Russian Federation towards the Middle East. The chapter examines the evolution of Russian attitudes towards the Arab–Israeli conflict as well as Moscow's policy towards Iran, Turkey and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow has drastically reduced the geographical scope of its international activities. Faced with a severe domestic socio-economic crisis, the Russian Federation has chosen to curtail, though not completely relinquish, the 'global role' of its predecessor. Such a 'diplomatic retreat' of the superpower's main successor state has been most conspicuous in Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia. Russia's virtual abandonment of these areas can be considered as a direct continuation of Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of 'new thinking' that resulted in the drastic curtailment of Moscow's aid to socialist-oriented regimes of Africa and Central America. Yet, as Kanet, Kozhemiakin and Susanne Birgerson show in Chapter 7, Russia is now attempting to re-establish relationships in the developing world – although the focus is almost exclusively on matters of potential economic benefit to the Russian Federation.

In the final chapter William Ferry and Kanet summarize the major arguments presented throughout the book. As the preceding summary of chapters indicates, the volume explores Russian relations with all major regions of the world. Despite differences in their geographical focus, the contributors to this volume concur that Russian foreign policy is influenced to a substantial degree by the domestic process of political and economic reforms. They also emphasize, however, that by assisting Russia's transition towards democratic governance and a market-oriented economy, the international community can play a significant role in shaping Moscow's international behaviour. Such assistance appears to be critical in helping Russia fight the persisting Soviet legacies, as well as the rising nationalist challenges. Overall, the authors remain cautiously optimistic about the success of Russia's reintegration into what Russians themselves refer to as the 'civilized community of states'.

1 Defining the National Interest: Russian Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics

Peter Shearman

This chapter has two central objectives: first, it examines the domestic Russian debates on foreign policy, and in particular on conceptions of the national interest, in order to identify any general trends and emerging consensus on these issues among Russia's political elites. Second, it assesses the workings of, and the relationship between, parliament and president as they have evolved since the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Lack of space prevents a detailed examination of other important institutions such as the military, or the numerous lobby groups that have formed in recent years.[1] A focus on parliament and the presidency is justified, for they are the two critical representative institutions in any democracy, and an understanding of their roles and functions in determining the national interest and formulating foreign policy is important.

FOREIGN POLICY AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The one thing to note at the outset of this section is that foreign policy elites in Russia today unambiguously utilize the political discourse of the 'national interest'. There is no longer any need to struggle to read *pod text*: to search for the underlying idea buried beneath a complex verbiage of Marxist dialectics. Thus it has become easy to identify basic orientations pertaining to conceptions of Russian foreign policy.

Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics

Although the term national interest is somewhat ambiguous, one can usefully define it in terms of the *common good of a society within the bounds of a nation-state.* That is to say, although between groups in domestic society there are conflicting interests, there exist general

and common benefits to society that all members share irrespective of individual or group preferences on other issues. The basic common interests of any state are: survival for itself and its population, maintaining the territorial integrity of the state, and enhancing its status and position in relation with other states. Conceptions of the national interest provide a powerful dynamic for mobilizing domestic society around specific political programmes and issues. A constant feature of domestic politics in all types of pluralist political systems is competition between political groups to be seen as the one group that offers the best safeguards for maintaining national interests.

National interests are linked to perceptions of *identity*. Images of a nation and its place in the world can be drawn upon to mobilize what William Bloom refers to as a 'national identity dynamic', with government and opposition groups drawing upon, creating, and manipulating these images for their own ends in a struggle for political power.[2] The assumption here is that political elites manipulate a social-psychological dynamic relating to a conception of national identity which is itself determined by the external environment. In other words, conceptions of the national self are linked to perceptions of the external other. Without taking this social-psychological argument too far, these ideas of national identity linked to national security and perceptions of the international environment are useful for understanding the recent and ongoing Russian foreign policy debates.

Foreign policy and diplomacy can be viewed as the means to ensure the objective of defending the national interest and, hence, simultaneously the strengthening of national identity. Foreign policy also provides, as Philip Cerny has put it: 'The specific instrument *par excellence* at the disposal of elites hoping to mobilize the population of a legally-recognized nation-state towards authority legitimation and political integration.'[3] There are four important reasons why foreign policy and competing conceptions of national interests should be so powerful in the mobilization of domestic society. First, national interests are universal interests shared by all members of society, transcending other cleavages based upon ethnicity, religion, culture, or class. Hence, political groups are provided with the most potent force for mobilizing the widest possible sections of society. Second, foreign policy provides a perfect discourse of politics that allows for escape from objective verification. Unlike specific economic or social policies, the features of foreign policy, designed to

defend the national interest, are removed from the same standards of immediate or short-term tests that can so easily lead to failure. Third, foreign policy is often more *emotional* as an issue affecting society, but it is often far more *remote* in terms of its impact on the individual. As an emotive issue the mass national public will always react favourably to policies which seem to enhance the national interest, and negatively to policies seen as undermining it. Fourth, foreign policy facilitates, much more readily than domestic policies, opportunities for the emergence of strong or charismatic leaders, who, wrapping themselves in the national flag and the rhetoric of national identity, portray themselves as the only effective defenders of the national idea.

Given the sudden and unexpected death of the USSR in December 1991 and the subsequent uncertainty about Russian national identity, it should not be surprising that Russian political elites would engage in a foreign policy debate in which issues pertaining to national interests and identity have been paramount. Russian politicians had been inexperienced in these matters, being accustomed for centuries to having an official political position imposed upon them. Furthermore, the collapse of the Soviet Union left some 27 million Russians living outside the Russian Federation in other former republics of the USSR, with uncertain citizenship rights and status and an ambiguous relationship with Moscow. To make matters even more complicated the Russian Federation inherited a partly reformed Soviet-era constitution and political institutional structures that ensured confusion and competition. With this background, foreign policy as an issue in domestic politics was bound to be highly salient. The Russians in what came to be called the 'near abroad' were certain to be central to any debate, and the lack of a coherent foreign policy decision-making institutional setting and an absence of a clearly defined division of powers were certain to lead to conflict over foreign policy between the executive and legislative branches of power. The next section traces the conceptual and perceptual differences over foreign policy since 1991, before then moving on to the institutional and structural setting and the relationship between parliament and president.

Competing Foreign Policy Orientations

There have been a number of attempts by both Western experts on Russia and by Russian academics to make sense of foreign policy

debates by setting up general categories under which to label the various competing orientations. Alex Pravda has employed three 'clusters': liberal internationalists, patriots, and pragmatic nationalists, while Alexei G. Arbatov identified four 'major groups': a pro-western group, moderate liberals, moderate centrists, and neo-communists and nationalists.[4] It has also been common to assess these competing foreign policy conceptions with reference to a number of issues, usually including attitudes towards Russia's relationship with the near abroad, the United States and the West, and Bosnia, in addition to general security/strategic concerns. In an earlier study I examined these patterns by tracing policy controversies in relation to three concentric circles consisting of the former republics of the USSR (the first circle), the West, including the United States, Europe, and Japan (the second circle) and the rest, mainly what used to be termed the 'Third World' (the third circle).[5] What all of these studies highlight is a move from a confused and relatively ambiguous conception of the national interest by most of the various groups identified, towards a more clearly defined conception in each case, with shifts within and between them. In addition, specific policy prescriptions and orientations towards each of the regions (or circles) have become easier to identify, and the official policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the government has become more coherent and consistent. These shifts in official policy have resulted from both the need to respond to external forces beyond the control of the Russian Federation, developments in the 'near abroad' with the need to deal with the question of the large Russian diaspora, and the domestic political process.

Former Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and President Yeltsin have been fairly consistent since the break-up of the Soviet Union in pushing a foreign policy which has sought to integrate Russia into the global economy, and which defines Russia's national interests in terms of forming a partnership with the West, focusing initially mainly on the United States. Yet, both Pravda and Arbatov consider this tendency in foreign policy (Pravda's 'liberal internationalists' and Arbatov's 'pro-Western group') to be a continuation of the 'new political thinking' of the Gorbachev period, marking an idealistic strain which put less emphasis on Russia's national interests than it did on common human values that were to be assured through international norms and institutions. Although there is some strength in these arguments, they exaggerate Kozyrev's idealism and misrepresent the extent to which he focused upon international institutions.

Indeed, Kozyrev, at the height of new thinking in Soviet foreign policy in the late 1980s, stated that it was 'very important not to lapse into new utopianism' and that the 'diversity and collision of interests will persist and states will continue . . . to rely on military force as the only real guarantee of their security'.[6] This is not to imply that Kozyrev was advocating hard-nosed realism or militarism, but it does indicate that he had, as his operational code, a conception of international politics that reflects traditional *state* interests. It is simply that in policy terms he stressed a strategic partnership with the United States which others in domestic politics considered to run counter to the interests of the Russian state. Indeed, according to Arbatov, the impression given to many was of a government 'selling out' Russia's interests to the West.[7] Furthermore it was a policy which did not enjoy a consensus among political groups outside the official government apparatus. This should not be surprising, for by definition in democratic politics, parties and groups competing for power will formulate alternative programmes and policies to those of the incumbent government if they wish to take that government's place. Thus to oppose the official line almost *required* a more critical stance to a policy focus on the West.

Indeed most oppositionists from the various shades of left and right, utilizing the language and rhetoric of national interest in their critique of official policy, claimed that they and their ideas better reflect the real interests of the Russian state. Alexander Rutskoi, Yeltsin's former vice-president (and resident of Lefortovo prison following the face-off between parliament and president in December 1993 until his amnesty by the new parliament in 1994), put himself forward as the leader of a rightist patriotic bloc that would steer Russian foreign policy away from its Western orientation. Rutskoi mourned the end of empire, and although he did not advocate restoring the old Soviet Union in its previous form he has constantly argued that Kozyrev and Yeltsin sold out Russia's great power status to the advantage of its former Cold War protagonists. Rutskoi claimed that US bankers and a 'fifth column' of Russian entrepreneurs were 'destroying the country'.[8] On the other side of the patriotic front is Gennadi Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, who similarly sees himself, as leader of a leftist communist patriotic bloc which criticized Kozyrev's Westernism, as representative of Russia's real national interests. On the more extreme right wing of the political spectrum sits nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii whose vitriolic nationalism has

done more than any other individual deliberately to mobilize public sentiments around a conception of Russian identity that reflects great power chauvinism.

During the election campaign for the State Duma in December 1993 Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party was the only party to have a clear focus on foreign policy and Russia's geopolitical national interests. Part of the LDP's 'minimal programme' was for the immediate halt to military conversion, the cessation of all overseas aid, including to starving African countries, and a campaign for overseas arms sales. The 'maximum' programme stressed assistance for Russians living in the 'near abroad'. Geopolitically Russia's sphere of interest should be around the rim of the Federation and to the south, spreading from Turkey to Afghanistan.[9] The various self-styled patriotic forces (the Red/Brown alliance) comprise Pravda's patriots and Arbatov's neo-communists and nationalists (although Rutskoi has shifted into this camp from his original centrist and moderate grouping). What they all had in common was opposition to the official pro-Western orientation of the government and the foreign ministry.

The final group that opposed the official foreign policy focus on the West clearly sought to create an image of itself as the more serious, experienced, and mature exponent of Russian national interests. Indeed, Vladimir Lukin, the Chairman of the Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee (and previously Russia's ambassador to the United States, and before that Chairman of the old parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee), had developed a concept of Russian national interest based upon its geopolitical position in the Brezhnev period, when he was a relatively young academic in the Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada.[10] Lukin is one of the more important and influential figures in the moderate liberal camp, who formed part of the 'Yabloko' (Yavlinskii–Boldyrev–Lukin) electoral bloc in the 1993 and 1995 parliamentary elections. This group comprises Arbatov's 'moderate liberals' (Arbatov puts himself into this category) and Pravda's 'pragmatic nationalists'. Members of this group criticized Kozyrev and Yeltsin for lacking a clear conception of Russian foreign policy based upon the specifics of its changed geopolitical position. Lukin's criticisms of Kozyrev's foreign policy go back to the days when he chaired the Supreme Soviet and at one stage it was widely rumoured in 1993 that he was set to replace Kozyrev as Yeltsin's foreign minister.[11] While serving as Russian ambassador in Washington, Lukin referred to the dangers

of Kozyrev's emphasis on the West that did not take into account true national interests based upon power and geopolitics. This could, he argued, lead to the undermining of Russian national interests and a simplistic and dangerous re-ideologization of international politics, only this time between democratic and 'good' states, and non-democratic and 'bad' states. Russian foreign policy should, he has consistently argued, be based upon a proper foundation reflecting geography and power, and should be unencumbered by issues pertaining to levels of democratic development or ideology.[12]

Although not advocating an authoritarian form of government for Russia, Lukin has supported strong presidential (and 'personified') leadership that would be able to conduct a coherent, decisive, and vigorous foreign policy in defence of Russian national interests.[13] The problem for Lukin with Yeltsin's leadership in foreign policy was that it failed to give priority to the former republics of the Soviet Union, and, by focusing almost exclusively on the West, it neglected to give sufficient attention to the Asia-Pacific Region. In addition, it risked Russia's status as a great power being undermined by a tendency to follow the lead of the United States in various policy areas. Lukin gave warning to the incoming Clinton Presidency not to treat Russia as a 'village idiot', always ready to follow the lead of the American elder brother, and to recognize Russia for the great power that it still was with its own state interests.[14] Arbatov was still arguing, at a press conference following Yeltsin's speech to the United Nations in September 1994, that official Russian foreign policy remained tainted with the idealistic elements of Gorbachev's new thinking.[15]

Although criticizing the Westernism of official policy, the moderate liberals are not opposed to developing and maintaining stable political and strategic relations with the United States and Western Europe. But, as Arbatov puts it, seeking better relations with the West should not imply that Russian and Western interests will always coincide, for there will be areas of disagreement and difference that will call not for 'confrontation', but for 'hard bargaining'.[16] Arbatov's father, Georgii Arbatov (Head of the Institute of the Study of the USA and Canada and long-time survivor as foreign policy adviser to successive Soviet leaders from Brezhnev through to Gorbachev – and for a while Yeltsin too), has taken a similar line, arguing that Kozyrev and Yeltsin gave in too easily to prescriptions from the West without advancing through hard bargaining on Russia's real interests. In 1992 Arbatov senior berated

the IMF for treating Russia like a Third World country and the Russian government for accepting such treatment too easily.[17] Two years later he was warning about the possibility of a new Cold War between Russia and the United States as the promised economic recovery, which was central to the official foreign policy focus on the West, had not materialized, despite (or, rather, because of) the shock therapy advocated by Western financial institutions. The West had failed to deliver on its promises to supply substantial aid to help Russia develop its economy, and as a result anti-American sentiments at all levels of society had grown, posing a danger of a nationalist backlash. The blame was apportioned to the new foreign policy elites that emerged following the collapse of the Soviet Union (that is, the pro-Western group of liberal internationalists) who 'lacked professional skill and experience'.[18]

In criticizing the pro-Western policy of the former foreign minister and president both the liberal and moderate centrists and the nationalists and neo-communists argued that Russian national interests should be based upon the realities of Russia's geographical position at the centre of the Eurasian land mass and Russia's long history of interdependence with the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The ultranationalists talk in terms of Russians having an historical mission (or a manifest destiny) which perceives Russia as unique and not as part of either Asia or Europe and calls for a more isolationist policy and separate development. The neo-communists, on the other hand, wish to see a revival of empire, while getting tough on the West, and the centrists hold positions which see, in varying degrees, Russia as a bridge between East and West.

What all these groups shared in common was a concern with the 'near abroad', particularly those former Soviet republics with significant Russian minorities, from Ukraine and Moldova in the West, through the Caucasus to Kazakhstan and the states of Central Asia. National interests, as noted above, pertain to securing the universal interests of the whole society within the nation-state. In the Russian Federation's case, since 1991, this realm of the national interest has been complicated by being extended to include the Russian-speaking citizens of the other republics of the former USSR. Furthermore, calls for increased autonomy, independence and sovereignty from various regions within the Russian Federation also stimulated reactive policies from the main political groups which all wish to maintain the territorial integrity of the state.

Threats to political and military stability on a state's borders are also traditionally considered to be major potential threats to one's own stability, hence calling for immediate and often drastic action. Since 1991 Russia's periphery has been beset with crises and conflict. The Russian political elite has been forced by events in the 'near abroad', from Moldova through Georgia to Tajikistan, to take a stance on these issues. Indeed, the debate over Russian foreign policy and the national interest, as it developed between 1992 and 1993, centred on these issues. All groups attacked the Russian leadership for paying insufficient attention to Russian interests in the 'near abroad' and made this issue into a main plank in their attempts to undermine the government and mobilize public opinion in support of their policies and programmes. It is clearly an emotive issue, as it pertains to the core question of national identity and is a most potent instrument to use for the mobilization of the mass public.

Yeltsin and his foreign policy administration were thus faced, at the beginning of 1992, with the task of devising an effective foreign policy that would be beneficial to Russian state interests. Having responsibility for government is different from sitting in opposition, which provides the advantage of a position from which to criticize the official line without the burden of accountability. This is the normal working of democratic, pluralistic politics, something which incumbent governments are faced with in all democratic systems. The conception of the national interest for Yeltsin and Kozyrev was determined in large part by the necessity to deal with the severe economic needs of the state. Economic factors are critical in any state's foreign policy, and economic capabilities determine a state's ability to operate effectively in the international environment. It was this economic imperative, with an economy in crisis and a state unable successfully to penetrate global markets, that was the key ingredient in the initial post-Soviet Russian foreign policy. The focus of policy for this reason was on the wealthiest, Western, capitalist states in an attempt to gain economic assistance and to facilitate Russia's integration into the global economy. It was recognized that state power was increasingly being calculated in *economic* terms with an overblown military capability acting as a brake on development and undermining Russia's status as a world power.

However, one major problem with the early foreign policy approach of the Yeltsin administration was that it paid insufficient attention to the other important domestic sources of foreign policy:

the political, cultural, and psychological. It was in these areas that the various oppositional groups centred their attacks on the official line. No government can afford to ignore these domestic features if it wishes to maintain legitimacy and be able to implement an effective policy. For example, the question of prestige and status is particularly significant in the field of foreign policy. Oppositionists took advantage in this area by arguing that Yeltsin was undermining Russia's status and identity as a great power by kowtowing to those same states that had emerged victorious in the Cold War and had helped to bring Russia to its knees. Indeed, this conception of Russia on its knees was utilized effectively by Zhirinovskii in the elections to the Duma in December 1993, as election posters represented Russia being helped from a kneeling position to take its rightful place as a great power.

In the early stages of the debate over foreign policy Yeltsin and Kozyrev seemed to react to these criticisms based upon a logic that the best form of defence was to attack. Kozyrev felt that he had nothing to apologize for as he was pursuing Russia's *real* interests which were tied up with forging a partnership with the West and, particularly, the United States. He remained consistent in this central plank to his policy and refused to diverge from it, arguing that those who opposed him and called for his resignation represented a 'party of war' or simply wanted to undermine democratic development. Kozyrev hurled abuse and criticism at his detractors, not only in domestic debates at home, but also in international forums and on official state visits abroad.[19]

A Russian 'Monroe Doctrine'

However, from early 1993 a consensus was emerging around the idea of Russia as a great power with primary national interests centred in the 'near abroad'. Andranik Migranian, a member of Yeltsin's Presidential Council (and one of Arbatov's moderate conservatives and an influential figure among Russia's intellectual community) credits himself with having developed a new concept in Russian foreign policy which defined Russia's role in the 'near abroad'.[20] He is referring here to what he termed a 'Russian Monroe Doctrine', a doctrine which recognizes Russia's vital interests and special role in the former republics of the Soviet Union and legitimizes Russian intervention to protect them, by military means where deemed necessary. One can trace the idea of a Russian

Monroe Doctrine back to Zhirinovskii's presidential election bid in 1991, when, as part of his programme, he presented what was in essence an expanded Monroe Doctrine in which Russia would have an exclusive sphere of influence cutting across the CIS states, through Turkey and Iran to Afghanistan.[21] Even earlier Professor Igor Shafarevich, writing in *Literaturnaia Rossiia* in early 1991 during the Gulf War, was arguing explicitly that what Russia required was a Monroe Doctrine.[22]

Evgenii Ambartsumov (another of Arbatov's moderate conservatives), from his position as chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the previous Russian parliament, began to promote this idea. Yeltsin himself began to talk in more forthright and confident terms during the course of 1993, in a variety of domestic and overseas gatherings, about Russia's role as a guarantor of stability in the geographical space of the former USSR. Indeed, he and Kozyrev, almost at any given opportunity, were arguing the case for international recognition of Russia's special rights in the 'near abroad', and for legitimization of Russia's peacekeeping activities there by international organizations such as the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Following Yeltsin's address to the United Nations in September 1994, where he referred explicitly to the 'near abroad' as a 'sphere of vital Russian interests' (this was the same speech that Arbatov had criticized as representative of old-style new thinking!), Kozyrev coined the term the 'Yeltsin Doctrine' to describe Russian policy towards the 'near abroad'.[23] At a two-day conference on Russian foreign policy towards the former Soviet republics, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 1994, Kozyrev spoke about the need for Russia to maintain a military presence in areas of the CIS 'which for centuries had been the sphere of its military interests'.[24]

A clear consensus had emerged around the fundamentals of what defined the national interest, in which the policy differences between the pro-Westerners and the moderate centrists were effectively evaporating. Zhirinovskii's ultranationalist stance, although important in helping to set the parameters of the debate (and in spite of the LDP's strong showing in the 1993 parliamentary elections) had become marginalized. It is worth noting also that Kozyrev, Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, and Evgenyi Ambartsumov, Chairman of the old parliament's International Affairs Committee, had each endorsed a document (a compromise on an earlier one) setting out a 'foreign policy concept' that had been produced

by the Russian Security Council in April 1993. The document did not become a blueprint for policy, but it did indicate, as Neil Malcolm put it '...a willingness on the part of different agencies involved in external relations to reach at least a paper accommodation over policy'.[25] The core of the document included an emphasis on developing cooperative relations with the West whilst stressing potential differences over such issues as technology transfers and trade, and provided for a more active Russian role in the near abroad. Russia had also been developing a new military doctrine during this period, and the document adopted in November 1993 similarly stressed Russian security interests on Russia's borders, requiring the development of rapid deployment forces, while noting that the West was no longer perceived as a threat.[26] Various think tanks had also been developing foreign policy strategies in which the emphasis, again, was on the 'near abroad'.[27]

Kozyrev's eventual replacement as foreign minister by Evgenyi Primakov following the Duma elections in December 1995 reinforced this emerging consensus on Russia's foreign policy priorities. A previous communist party official and head of Russian intelligence, Primakov came to the position without the negative baggage carried by Kozyrev, who was still perceived by many as being too close to the West. Indicative of this consensus was the fact that Zhirinovskii, Lukin and Gennadi Ziuganov (the head of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation) all made statements approving the appointment of Primakov as the new foreign minister. Primakov's appointment did not result in any major departure from the policies pursued by his predecessor, although a change in style, bringing to the office a more confident and forceful approach, provided a greater sense of confidence among Russian elites that the state's interests, prestige and status would be enhanced.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

Institutions matter in the political process, and with the collapse of communism and the Soviet state which gave birth to it in its organizational form, Russia in December 1991 was left with an unstable and uncertain domestic institutional setting for the development and implementation of foreign policy. Theories of foreign policy have at their core an assumption that multiple institutional actors will naturally disagree over policy objectives, and that the

disagreements are important and, hence, need to be resolved through a political process involving coalition-building as a consensus is sought.[28] In the former Soviet system the communist party apparatus, with the Politburo at the apex, controlled all state and government bodies through its nomenclature system, providing little opportunity for organizations such as the foreign ministry to develop and pursue their own institutional interests.[29] During the late Soviet period Marxist-Leninist doctrine had been effectively abandoned as a conceptual guide to policy, but the 'new political thinking' which replaced it manifested some of the hallmarks of an officially prescribed ideology. Yet, as the USSR was collapsing, the idealistic assumptions of new political thinking had already been abandoned.[30] Thus, Russia entered its post-Soviet era without any conceptual framework for formulating foreign policy, with a confused institutional framework that was in the process of transition, and with a lack of experience in the democratic process of compromise and coalition-building. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the principal institutional actors, particularly the presidency and the parliament, lacking clearly defined boundaries and competencies and a democratic political culture, would vie with one another for control over policy.

The Struggle between President and Parliament

A division of responsibilities and competencies, with checks and balances built into the political system to prevent the abuse of executive powers, is a feature of all liberal democracies, whether parliamentary, presidential, or some combination of the two. It is difficult to construct a fully consistent policy in a democracy because of the need to balance competing interests. One key role of a legislature is to check, challenge, monitor and legitimize policies undertaken in the name of the state by the executive branch of government. Indeed, it could be argued that, if there is no tension between a parliament and the executive, then the former is not performing its proper role. Yet the constitutional framework involving a separation of powers should provide for *effective government*, in which the process of intergovernmental and institutional rivalry does not hinder the ultimate wielding of effective power. In the Russian case after 1991 parliament and president were engaged in a struggle for power, with both sides involved in a serious dispute over which institution had competency over policy-making. The

parliament consistently opposed the president's policies, and most observers saw this as overstepping the bounds of acceptable behaviour, as an only partially democratically elected chamber was constantly seeking to obstruct and undermine government policy and a democratically elected president. However, the problem related to the absence of any clear demarcation and division of powers between parliament and presidency, as the new Russian Federal state was still operating under the old Soviet constitution (with numerous amendments). It was a confusing picture which ultimately led to governmental impotence and gridlock, as the conflict between the two institutions became increasingly more hostile and volatile.

Under the Soviet constitution, as it stood in 1992, the executive was subordinate to the legislative branch, and, although the President could nominate the prime minister and other ministers, the appointments required ratification by the parliament. While Yeltsin did not have the constitutional powers to disband the parliament, the parliament could impeach the president. Given the acute political and economic problems facing Russian society with the collapse of the USSR, there was a perceived requirement for strong executive power, and in the early post-Soviet period the parliament gave Yeltsin temporary powers to rule by decree. Yet even before the parliament failed to agree to a continuation of this arrangement it had begun to block Yeltsin's policies and personnel appointments. By 1993 Vice-President Rutskoi and Chairman of the parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov, both critical of the pro-Western foreign policies of Foreign Minister Koyzrev and the economic reforms of the government, helped to turn the parliament into what in essence became a totally unaccommodating opposition to the government.

The parliament in this early period was successful in fuelling the debate over Russian national interests and foreign policy and in a number of crucial areas was instrumental in forcing a change in the substance of policy. In the case of relations with Japan, for example, opposition from the parliament to any compromise over the disputed Kuril Islands was an important factor leading to Yeltsin's postponing, at the last minute, his scheduled visit to Tokyo in September 1992. This was a major blow to Yeltsin's domestic position and international status, and demonstrated most clearly the inherent weakness of Russia's political institutional arrangements. The parliament was also critical of official policy in the 'near abroad', with leading deputies seeking to influence policy directly, not only through debate in the chamber but also by under-

taking provocative visits to areas of important symbolic significance relating to conceptions of Russian national identity. For example, Rutskoi visited the Crimea, where he made an emotional and well-publicized speech promising that he would ensure that Russia would not surrender an inch of sacred land to the other republics of the former Soviet Union.[31]

The dispute between parliament and president came to a head in the autumn of 1993 when, for the third time in modern Russian history, an elected assembly was unconstitutionally and forcibly disbanded by executive authority.[32] Although Yeltsin lacked any proper constitutional authority to disband the parliament, he justified his actions by arguing that the parliament itself was undermining constitutional government by constantly blocking a democratically elected president from fulfilling his duties. It was hoped that the institutional crisis would be solved by holding elections to a new bicameral parliament, simultaneously with a plebiscite on a new constitution, held on 12 December 1993.

The new constitution was designed to create a strong presidency and legitimize Yeltsin's own position, to demarcate the divisions of powers (including a reduced role for parliament), to facilitate the development of a functioning party system, to marginalize extremists on both the left and right of the political spectrum, and to provide a strong mandate for radical domestic economic reform and the pro-Western foreign policy of Kozyrev (who was himself elected to the Duma). Arguably it did not clearly achieve any of these things.

Yeltsin had warned that to vote 'no' for the constitution would confront Russians with the possibility of civil war. He tried to prevent the publication of any criticism to the draft text, and he essentially staked his own reputation on the plebiscite.[33] Yet the result of the referendum was hardly a ringing endorsement, for the turnout for the vote was barely above 50 per cent (it was 53.2 per cent) with about 60 per cent voting in favour of the draft constitution. Only a bare majority of those voting was necessary for ratification, rather than a majority of all eligible voters (as is often mandatory on constitutional issues in democratic states) – which was just as well, for only 31 per cent of all eligible voters voted in favour. Yeltsin himself was elected Russian president when Russia was still part of the Soviet Union in 1991, hence it could be said that the new parliament now had more democratic legitimacy than the President.

For a political party or association to compete in the parliamentary elections it was necessary to collect 100,000 signatures, and for a party to be represented in parliament a five per cent hurdle had to be met – stipulations designed to marginalize extremist groups. Yet, the effect of this policy was to increase the votes for the Liberal Democratic Party and the Communist Party. Although Yeltsin has constantly sought to portray himself as above the party fray, not belonging to or clearly supporting any political bloc, it was evident that he was hoping for an electoral victory for Russia's Choice, the party advocating radical economic reform and a pro-Western foreign policy. In addition to Igor Gaidar, Russia's Choice at that time contained most of the senior ministers in the Russian government. In the event, the make-up of the new parliament was as conservative as the old one, with huge gains made by communists and nationalists, with nearly a third of the deputies in the State Duma hostile to Yeltsin and to radical reform. Thus, the result of the parliamentary elections did not represent a powerful mandate for Yeltsin's reform programme.

The elections were also designed to facilitate the development of multipartyism, ensuring this through the mechanism of half of the Duma being elected on the basis of party lists (the other half by individual candidates in single-member constituencies). Indeed, the relatively short period for campaigning did result in leading political figures attempting to organize themselves into effective parties and associations with manifestos and platforms in an endeavour to gain better representation. Yet, still the largest single group elected to the new parliament were independents (129 deputies or 28.7 per cent), and 15 parties represented in the Duma had only one member. A well-organized and disciplined party system clearly had a long way to go. One problem was that the liberal democratic forces (that is, Russia's Choice, Yabloko, the Party of Russian Unity and Accord and the Russian Democratic Reform Movement) were divided. The elections did not offer a clear choice between easily identifiable political platforms, with most voters confused by the multitude of parties and associations. Opinion polls showed that the most salient issues for the majority of people were crime, law and order, inflation, rising prices, and preventing the disintegration of the Russian Federation and strengthening the Russian state. While many people could name individual candidates, they often found it impossible to say which party the candidate belonged to and what their positions were on these key issues. To complicate matters further many of

those candidates elected to the Duma from the party lists did not belong to the party on whose list they appeared. Even with the LDP, which claimed to be the best organized party and was the one which won the most seats from the party lists, 24 of its 59 deputies (or 40.7 per cent) did not belong to the party. Two of the deputies belonged to other parties: one a member of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the other of the Party of Social Justice.[34] And none of the parties fielded candidates in all of the 225 single-member constituencies. Most parties lacked a clear social base and obvious constituency of voters, and, given the fact that many of them were only formed in the immediate period before the elections, they did not have substantial financial resources or any organizational infrastructure.

It surely should not be surprising then, given these circumstances, that the LDP, riding on the charismatic leadership of its leader – most of the votes were essentially personal endorsements for Zhirinovskii – should have fared so relatively well in the elections. Zhirinovskii's political rhetoric, his confident emotive appeals to the Russians to rise from their knees to take their rightful place as a great power in the world arena, while simultaneously offering immediate solutions to economic and social problems, were powerful mobilizing forces. The communists, too, representing a fairly clear constituency and offering what seemed to be a recognizable alternative programme to the radical reformism of the government, were in a position to attract votes in the face of a divided democratic reformist bloc.

Zhirinovskii's LDP fared less well in the Duma elections in December 1995, with the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) making impressive gains. Whereas the LDP vote dropped from 12.3 million in 1993 to 7.7 million two years later, the CPRF vote increased from 6.6 million to 15.4 million. The more liberal/democratic blocs and parties were once again disunited, with Gaidar's Russia's Democratic Choice failing to pass the 5 per cent barrier and Viktor Chernomyrdin's Our Home is Russia, the pro-government bloc, doing much less well than anticipated. Of the 43 parties that contested the elections only four parties managed to get past the five per cent hurdle and gain seats for the party lists – a development that perhaps augurs well in the long term for the establishment of a properly functioning multiparty system. Yabloko was the only radical pro-reform party to gain more than five per cent of the vote on the party lists. Although it

has been argued that the large vote for the communists and nationalists in these elections indicated a rejection of reform, in fact pro-reform parties actually won more of the vote in 1995 (21.4 million) than in 1993 (18.4 million). Whereas in the 1993 elections there were only four pro-reform parties, in 1995 there were more than a dozen such parties, hindering the prospects for any one of them to do well.

The presidential elections of June–July 1996 indicated that, although the communists and nationalists were a strong force, the majority of Russian voters were unwilling to give them supreme power in the executive branch of government. Yeltsin's re-election provided him with the legitimacy that was previously lacking and offered a mandate for continuing with reform. General Aleksander Lebed's strong showing in the first round of the elections, with 15 per cent of the vote, was indicative of support for a strong and effective leadership to restore Russia's prestige and status and to deal with the problems of law and order. Lebed's campaign was run on a platform of defending Russians in the 'near abroad' and of restoring Russian national pride. Yeltsin was undoubtedly assisted in his electoral success against Ziuganov in the second round by having Lebed as part of his team (Lebed was made secretary to the Security Council and Yeltsin's national security adviser). Although foreign policy issues were not central to voters' intentions, at least in relation to specific Russian policy in particular areas, the outcome of the election and the composition of the new Duma were bound to have foreign policy consequences. We should now turn to a brief examination of the new constitutional arrangements and what impact they have on foreign policy competencies between parliament and president.

The Presidency

The fundamental issue in designing a new constitution concerns the relationship between the executive and the legislative branches of power. In drawing up his draft constitution Yeltsin sought to stabilize the political system and to create a strong executive presidency which would limit, but not remove completely, the powers of the parliament. In essence Russia was starting from scratch, and there were a number of already existing democratic systems from which to borrow. At one end is the 'pure presidential' system, as in the United States, with a directly elected head of state who presides

over and selects (subject to ratification by an elected representative chamber) the government. At the other end there is a 'pure parliamentary' system, as in the United Kingdom (although with an 'unwritten' constitution), in which the head of state is either a constitutional monarch (as in the UK) with merely symbolic powers or a president selected by the parliament to represent the state as figurehead but carrying no legislative powers. In such a system, the government is formed by the leader of the majority political grouping in parliament who becomes the prime minister and forms the Cabinet. It was some form of parliamentary system that Khasbulatov was advocating in his struggle with Yeltsin during 1992–93.

Between the pure presidential and the pure parliamentary models are systems which have a directly elected president but where the government is led by the leader of the largest parliamentary faction, who becomes prime minister. France is such an example, one in which the president, who represents a political party, cannot control the composition of the government. Even when the president's party is in a minority in the parliament, he is nevertheless constitutionally obligated to accept a prime minister from an opposing majority party. In recent times this has led to what has been labelled 'cohabitation', where a socialist president and a conservative prime minister have been forced to divide powers (with the president keeping control over the general direction of foreign policy).

Russia's new constitution is a mixture of the American and French models, with some modifications. It is not a pure presidential system as in the United States, nor is it a presidential–parliamentary system as in France. Yeltsin, unlike US (notwithstanding future possibilities and past attempts by independents) and French presidents, does not belong to a political party. Unlike the US presidential system, Russia has a government headed by a prime minister (called the Chairman of the government); but unlike the French system the Russian president is free to choose whomsoever he pleases as prime minister (with the 'agreement of the State Duma') and controls the composition of the government (without requiring confirmation from the Duma). Such a system arguably presents a further problem for the development of a functioning party system, for a government controlled by a directly elected non-party president provides no incentive to develop party discipline to ensure the survival of the government.

The new constitution stipulates that the president is elected (for a maximum of two terms) every four years. There is no provision for

a Vice-President (clearly Yeltsin's earlier experience with Rutskoi was influential here). The president is head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the high command of which it is his prerogative to appoint. In addition to appointing the prime minister and selecting the government, he nominates candidates for the Chair of the Central Bank, the Procurator General, and members of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the Court of Arbitration. He also appoints and dismisses plenipotentiary representatives in Russia's regions. The president is head of the Security Council and is in control of its composition. He can issue decrees, initiate legislation, and dissolve the Duma and call new parliamentary elections. And the constitution is explicit in stating that the president is responsible for the main directions of domestic and foreign policy of the state. It would appear then that the Russian constitution had created a strong presidency, scaled back the powers of the parliament, and put Yeltsin in a position to be able to implement his own favoured policies. Some would argue that he successfully created the makings of an imperial presidency, or a super-presidential system, in which his control over government put him above politics and insulated him from the accountability essential for a true democracy. Zhirinovskii's support for the draft constitution could be considered evidence for this, as his eyes were set on the next presidential elections, victory in which could possibly have given him unbridled powers. However, if we turn to examine both the role of the Duma and, given our focus in this chapter, the direction of foreign policy during the first months under the new constitutional arrangements, the picture looks somewhat different.

The State Duma and Foreign Policy

A very large part of the composition of the Duma, as we noted above, is unambiguously conservative and opposed to the early economic reformism of the government and its pro-Western foreign policy. But, as we also noted, there had been a general trend developing among elites before the old parliament was disbanded that Russia's national interests lay primarily in dealing with questions relating to the 'near abroad'. Kozyrev had been forced, by both events and domestic political forces, to moderate his pro-Western stance (although certainly not to abandon it completely), and Yeltsin had already effectively given notice that Russia needed

to be treated with the respect and status deserving of a great power that the oppositionists, from Lukin through Rutskoi to Zhirinovskii, had long demanded. The psychological dimension relating to conceptions of national identity had to be acknowledged by those making foreign policy, who were compelled ultimately to borrow some of the political discourse from oppositionists, utilizing, for example, such concepts as 'spheres of influence' which they had earlier decried as outmoded. If one were to juxtapose some of the statements made by Kozyrev in early 1992 with those of 1993, one could be forgiven for thinking we have two individuals. Indeed, Stephen Sestanovich has noted that many have referred to 'two Kozyrevs: the old and the new; the good and the bad; the soft-spoken and the tub-thumping nationalist'.[35] But Kozyrev was merely seeking a limited compromise with the centre of Russian politics, while keeping a more nuanced pro-Western policy that places Russian national interests first, and not a capitulation to the ultranationalist wing. Thus there is much less for the bulk of the opposition in the new parliament about which to complain without reaching out to the more extremist elements (which was of course a potential problem as we have witnessed perhaps with Rutskoi as he tried to find a suitable anchor).

The old parliamentary leaders almost saw it as their *raison d'être* to oppose the executive leadership in what for all intents and purposes was a power struggle, not so much over policy (although articulated in those terms) as over individual and group ambitions. Of course, these ambitions have not dissipated, and some elements in the Duma (not so much in the Council of the Federation or the upper house) continue to see the parliament as a base for outright opposition to Yeltsin and the government. Yet, because of both the new constitutional constraints and a growing acceptance of the Duma's new constitutional role, most deputies appeared in the first few months to be operating not so much as a spoiler but as a check on policy (notwithstanding attempts at passing a motion of no confidence in the government, which failed, in October 1994, and an earlier failed attempt to prevent Russia from joining the Partnership for Peace agreement with NATO). In July 1994 the Duma passed the state budget, despite cuts in military expenditure and intense lobbying from the military industrial complex.

The Chairman of the parliament in recent years has been an important actor in Soviet and Russian politics – Gorbachev managed the reformed Supreme Soviet from this post, Yeltsin's rise to

power in the Russian Republic really began when he was Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, and later the main force of opposition to him in the Russian Federation parliament came from its chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov. The chairman still plays an important role, particularly given the task of maintaining order in a parliament lacking well-developed party discipline, and the fact that the government can only rely upon some fifty-odd votes in a chamber containing 450 deputies. Ivan Rybkin of the Agrarian Party (close in policy orientation to the communist party) was elected chairman of the new Duma in 1993 (Lukin was one of those running against him) and in an interview in *Moscow News* in January 1994 he said that his goal was to foster better cooperation between the various branches of political authority.[36] Rybkin did indeed achieve generally good relations with the government, and his profile accordingly rose, placing him in opinion polls taken in Russia in August and September 1994 as the second most influential politician in Russia, behind Yeltsin but in front of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.[37]

In the Duma elected in 1995 Lukin made another failed bid for the chairmanship, this time being defeated by Gennadii Seleznev of the CPRF, a former editor-in-chief of *Pravda*. Ivan Rybkin was also running, but Lukin's candidature divided the opposition to the communist candidate, thereby facilitating a communist victory. The competition over the speakership reflected the changing divisions in Russian politics, with the previous cleavage between liberal Westernizers and Atlanticists against Slavophiles, Eurasianists, nationalists and communists having less and less relevance. Yeltsin's favoured candidate was Rybkin, and voting patterns were more a reflection of tactical alliances between supporters and opponents of Yeltsin's leadership.

The Duma's role is not perhaps as limited as some assessments of the constitution make out. Like legislative bodies in all liberal democracies, it performs a number of functions in the foreign policy field, in addition to drafting and adopting legislation. It is, of course, an important forum to discuss and disseminate both the details of specific policies and the general direction of foreign policy. Through media coverage, deputies gain access to a wider audience and can affect elite and public opinions. Individual committees conduct detailed assessments on relevant issues and hold hearings at which ministers can be called upon to give evidence. Parliamentary delegations, or individual deputies, can travel abroad on fact-finding

missions or become involved in peacemaking endeavours or other forms of diplomacy. For example, Konstantin Zatalin, Chair of the Committee for CIS Affairs and Liaison with Compatriots, undertook a fact-finding mission to Abkhazia in July 1994.[38] Vladimir Shumeiko, the Chairman of the Federation Council, headed a parliamentary delegation to South Korea in November 1994, holding talks with business leaders as well as meeting with President Kim Young Sam. At the same time Rybkin was heading a delegation to India in an attempt to improve trade relations with that country following a drastic decline of 65 per cent in bilateral trade since 1987.[39] Deputies can also submit foreign affairs resolutions (either supportive or opposed to official policy), and the Duma has the final authority to ratify international treaties.

During the elections in January 1994 for membership of the important Duma committees dealing with international affairs there was, as Wendy Slater put it, a 'remarkably high level' of cooperation between opposing factions.[40] The LDP, despite Zhirinovskii's protestations, was effectively prevented from gaining the chairs of the International Affairs Committee (which went to Lukin of Yabloko), the Defence Committee (which went to Sergei Eshenkov of Russia's Choice), and the Security Committee (which went to Viktor Ilyukhin of the Communist Party). However, reflecting its large complement of deputies, the LDP was given the chair in five committees, more than any other party. As a kind of consolation in the foreign policy field Viktor Ustinov of the LDP was made chairman of a newly created Committee on Geopolitics. Yet overall the conduct of foreign affairs in the Duma was controlled by moderates whose foreign policy differences with Kozyrev and the foreign ministry diminished over time. Rather than playing an obstructive role, the Duma on the whole began to play a more constructively critical role. There were moves in the Duma to create voting blocs which enhanced the prospects for a more disciplined and orderly system. In April 1994 Yabloko and Russia's Choice, with a group of independents (the 12 December Alliance), formed a coalition to coordinate their parliamentary activities. It is necessary to have 35 members to form a faction in parliament, a rule which has further encouraged smaller groups to unite in order to become more effective.

In the Duma elected in 1995, having failed in his bid for the chairmanship, Lukin was elected once more to chair the International Affairs Committee, and Lev Rokhin of Our Home is Russia

was given the chair of the Defence Committee. Hence, the two key committees dealing with foreign and military security issues were controlled by the liberal or pro-government forces. The factions of the new Duma were made up of the Communists (149 deputies), Our Home is Russia (55), LDP (51), Yabloko (46), Russian Regions (42) Popular Power (37), and Agrarians (35). The communists delegated some of their deputies to the Agrarians to lift them to the required number to form a faction. With fewer parties in the new Duma compared with the previous one, there are greater prospects still for the development of effective parliamentary procedures, coalition building, and perhaps for the emergence of a mature party system.

In the foreign policy realm the development of an elite consensus in 1993 around the core issue concerning the saliency of the 'near abroad' in defining Russia's national interests and the elaboration of a Russian Monroe Doctrine based upon a Russian sphere of vital interest undermined the ability of any extremist group in the parliament to forge a powerful and united opposition to the government. The Russian parliament, perhaps remarkably given Russia's turbulent history and lack of democratic political culture, began to act in a way not radically different from many functioning parliaments in the West of much longer duration. The compromises over foreign policy were made during 1993, and it is important that this is noted. It is noteworthy also that although Yeltsin has constantly appointed and fired ministers in nearly all policy areas since 1991 (Anatolyi Chubais, who was appointed first deputy prime minister on 5 November 1994, as head of the State Property Committee in June 1994, was the only serving economic radical reformer to survive from that time), there was an impressive consistency at the top of the foreign and defence ministries. While Russia between January 1992 and January 1994 had three prime ministers, four finance ministers, two central bank governors, two parliaments, five governments, and an attempted coup (in October 1993), the foreign and defence ministers remained in place.[41] Although there have certainly been compromises over the details of policy, the basic and essential pro-Western orientation of Foreign Minister Kozyrev has survived, even under his successor, Evgenyi Primakov. Russia has taken its place as a member of the leading industrial nations in the political realm, the G-7 having become the G-8 on political issues; Russia has an institutional relationship with the main western military/security alliance through the partnership for peace; and

Russia has an Associational Agreement with the European Union. Russia is now more closely integrated with the West than ever before, as Kozyrev's more vigorous policy has begun to pay dividends. It is also recognized by most Western governments that Russia is the only state with the willingness and the ability to intervene to prevent or solve instability in the geographical area that was once the Soviet Union, that same area that all elites in Russia recognize as Russia's greater sphere of influence and responsibility. Russia had not only developed a more coherent foreign policy approach guided by a clearer conception of Russian national interests and identity, but it had also been very largely successful in achieving many of its main goals.

CONCLUSION

A number of conclusions can be made. First, in a relatively short period and in difficult circumstances Russia's elites have succeeded in developing a fairly coherent and consistent conception of the Russian national interest. Differences remain over the most appropriate policies to pursue, as is normal in any state, but the important point here is that there is general agreement over what constitutes the national interest: Russia as a great power with special interests in the 'near abroad'. The Duma elections of December 1995 and the presidential elections of June–July 1996 did not change this situation. Second, the previous systemic conflict between parliament and president has been replaced with a more normal and more functional relationship between these two key political institutions, despite the difference in policy orientation. There will continue to be disagreements over specifics, but the parliament and the governmental apparatus have demonstrated a greater ability to compromise and engage in more constructive relations. Third, Russia has been remarkably successful in achieving many of its stated foreign policy goals. Although the initial policy focus on the West did not bring the expected economic gains, Russia has been successful in maintaining the integrity of the state, reclaiming its influence (without military occupation) in the 'near abroad', and gaining access to important global and Western institutions without having compromised its sovereignty.

NOTES

1. On the military's role see, for example, Andreas Heinemann-Grueder, 'The Russian Military and the Crisis of the State', *Aussenpolitik*, vol. 45, no. 1 (1994), pp. 79–89.
2. William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
3. Philip G. Cerny, 'Foreign Policy Leadership and National Integration', *British Journal of International Studies*, vol. 5 (1979), p. 71.
4. Alex Pravda, 'The Politics of Foreign Policy', in *Developments in Russian and Post-Soviet Politics*, ed. Stephen White, Alex Pravda and Zvi Gitelman (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 208–36. Alexei Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1993), pp. 5–43.
5. Peter Shearman, 'Russia's Three Circles of Interests', in *Reshaping Regional Relations: Asia-Pacific and the Former Soviet Union*, ed. Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 45–64.
6. Andrei Kozyrev, 'Confidence and the Balance of Interests', *International Affairs* (Moscow), no. 11 (1988), pp. 6–7.
7. Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', p. 21.
8. Rutskoi made these comments at a meeting establishing the 'Accord for Russia', an organization that attempts to unite the communists and patriots. See *Segodnia* (14 May 1994), and *Moscow Times* (31 May 1994).
9. See 'Chto my predlagaem: Predvybornaia programma LDPR', *Iuridicheskaia gazeta*, nos. 40–41 (1993), pp. 4–5.
10. Vladimir Lukin, *Tsentry sily: kontseptsii i real'nosti* (Moscow, 1983).
11. See *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (14 September 1993).
12. See *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (10 September 1992).
13. See, for example, the open correspondence that Lukin had with Solzhenitsyn in the pages of *Moskovskie novosti*, no. 51 (3 December 1993).
14. Vladimir Lukin, 'Klinton i Rossiia: novyi vitok', *Moskovskie novosti*, no. 12 (21 March 1993).
15. *Russian Information Agency (RIA)* (28 September 1994).
16. Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', p. 11.
17. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *RFE/RL Daily Report* (31 July 1992).
18. Georgii Arbatov, 'Eurasian Letter: A New Cold War?', *Foreign Policy*, no. 95 (Summer 1994), p. 102.
19. See Andrei Kozyrev, 'Partiia voiny nastupaet i v Moldove, i v Gruzii, i v Rossii', *Izvestiia* (6 June 1992). He was warning here against aggressive policies designed ostensibly to support Russians resident in the near abroad but that could lead to dangerous forms of ultranationalism.
20. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (12 January 1994).
21. See Jeremy Lester, 'Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party: A Profile', *Labour Focus on Europe*, no. 47 (1994), p. 22.
22. Quoted in Walter Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 146.
23. *RFE/RL Daily Report* (6 October 1994).
24. *RIA* (18 January 1994).

25. Neil Malcolm, 'The New Russian Foreign Policy', *The World Today*, vol. 50 (February 1994), p. 11. See also his chapter in Peter Shearman (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990* (Boulder: Westview, 1995, pp. 23–52).
26. *Rossiiskie vesti* (18 November 1993), pp. 1–2. See also Stephen Foye, 'Updating Civil-Military Relations', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 46 (19 November 1993).
27. See, for example, the Council for Foreign and Defence Policy's 'Strategiia dlia Rossii' in *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (25 May 1994). The Council includes Ambartsumov, Boldyrev, Yavlinksii, S. Karaganov (member of the Presidential Council and Deputy Director of the Institute of Europe), A. Kokoshin (first deputy minister of defence and previously deputy director of the US Institute), S. Stankevich (deputy to the Duma and Yeltsin adviser), and A. Adamashin, ambassador to the United Kingdom and former first deputy minister of foreign affairs). The document calls for the establishment of a new union on the territory of the former Soviet Union and the need to ensure the political, economic and security interests of Russia are maintained in the near abroad.
28. See, for example, Graham T. Allison's classic work *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).
29. Allison's bureaucratic politics model of decision-making was used in an assessment of Soviet foreign policy. See Jiri Valenta, *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979 and 1991).
30. See Peter Shearman, 'New Political Thinking Reassessed', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1993), pp. 139–58.
31. *Kommersant* (3 February 1992).
32. The first occasion was in July 1906 when the Tsar sent troops in to close down Russia's first Duma just two months after its opening session. The second occasion occurred when the Bolsheviks used troops to disband the Constituent Assembly in January 1918 during its first session.
33. See Wendy Slater, 'Russia's Plebiscite on a New Constitution', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1994), pp. 1–6.
34. See Peter Lentini, 'Electoral Associations in the 1993 Elections to the Russian State Duma', unpublished manuscript (Melbourne, Monash University, 1994).
35. Stephen Sestanovich, 'Andrei the Giant', *The New Republic* (11 April 1994), p. 24.
36. *Moscow News*, no. 4 (31 January 1994).
37. *The Australian* (8 November 1994).
38. *RIA* (1 July 1994).
39. *RIA* (4 November 1994).
40. Wendy Slater, 'Russian Duma Sidelines Extremist Politicians', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 7 (1994), p. 5.
41. *Economist* (29 January 1994).

2 Russia and its Western Neighbours in the 'Near Abroad'

Alexander V. Kozhemiakin and Roger E. Kanet

Precipitated by the abortive coup of August 1991 and made imminent by the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the collapse of the Soviet Union finally became a *fait accompli* on 25 December 1991. Since the very beginning of *perestroika* waves of secessionist nationalism encompassing various of the 15 Soviet republics undermined what used to be the invincible Union structures, thus bringing the very existence of the USSR as a single entity into question. But, it was ultimately the actions of the Russian Federation that precipitated the superpower's rapid disintegration.[1]

In fact, the Russian Federation undermined the Centre's strength 'from within', transforming what then appeared as the string of possible secessions (for example, the Baltic States, Armenia) into the massive collapse of the whole Union. With Boris Yeltsin's triumph in Russia's presidential elections in June 1991, the Russian government posed the most serious challenge to the Centre by inaugurating a radical policy of restructuring, as well as by actively curtailing the Centre's jurisdiction and the Communist Party's control throughout the republic.[2] Whether motivated by the mercenary interests of removing the old Soviet elite and, thus, augmenting its own power or genuinely driven by the desire to implement the policy of Russia's political renewal and economic recovery that was stubbornly opposed by the communist Centre, Yeltsin's administration became involved in a virulent power struggle against the Union structures.

Undoubtedly, the key turning point in the Russia–Union struggle was the defeat of communist putschists in August 1991. Widely interpreted as Yeltsin's victory, the August events accelerated the transfer of the central state apparatus to Russian jurisdiction, leaving Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev virtually powerless. Humiliated and unable to stop Russia and other Soviet republics from

pursuing their independent policies, Gorbachev finally succumbed, declaring the end of the Soviet Union only a few months after the abortive coup.

Once the Soviet flag over the Kremlin had been lowered, however, the Russian role as a catalyst for the disintegration processes in the former Soviet region rapidly reversed. Considering itself the principal successor to the Soviet Union and conscious of its substantial geopolitical resources, Russia soon began to play the role of *primus inter pares* among former Soviet states. Despite official disclaimers that Russia has no desire to re-establish dominance over the newly emerging states, Russian leaders have had problems adjusting to the new reality in which they are expected to negotiate as equals with independent political elites in Kiev and Almaty, rather than merely issue instructions, as would have occurred in the past. This is part of a much larger psychological problem of 'redefining Russia's statehood and establishing a new concept of Russian identity', in the words of John Lough.[3]

Ironically enough, it was the Commonwealth of Independent States, the emergence of which was an immediate cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union, that came to be used by Moscow to create a new Russian-dominated Centre. Initially envisaged as a union of Slavic states, the CIS soon expanded to include most of the other former Soviet republics. In the view of some leaders of the newly independent states (for example, Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbaev), the Commonwealth was needed to preserve the existing links of inter-republican cooperation, mainly in the economic sphere. In the view of others (for example, former Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk), the CIS was needed solely for the purpose of solving the temporary logistical problems associated with the disintegration of the USSR. For Russians, however, the Commonwealth was primarily a political and economic mechanism to secure the republic's dominant role in the region. Not surprisingly, the Fourth All-Ukrainian Assembly of Rukh (Ukraine's nationalist movement) characterized the CIS as accommodating 'the imperial encroachments of the self-styled successor of the USSR – Russia'.[4]

It should be emphasized, however, that Russia's reliance on the legal framework of the CIS to preserve and expand its influence in the 'near abroad' (the term referring to other former Soviet republics) is not incompatible with the norms and principles of international law that Yeltsin's administration has repeatedly sworn to obey. In fact, the voluntary compliance of the 'near abroad' states

with Russia's dominant role in the Commonwealth would eliminate any contradiction between Yeltsin's increasing interference in the domestic processes in former Soviet republics and his vision of Russia's integration into the 'civilized international community'. In other words, the CIS is seen by Russia as legitimizing its dominant position in the former Soviet region.

And yet, Russia's attempts to strengthen the CIS by developing it into a viable multilateral organization have largely failed. Although by mid-1994 CIS membership had increased to encompass all former Soviet republics except the Baltics, no consensus exists among the member-states with respect to the form and the powers of the Commonwealth. Such a lack of agreement prevents Russia from using the CIS as a legal basis for its actions in the 'near abroad'.

Given the constraints put by some former republics on the functional expansion of the CIS, Russia's policy currently combines its initial emphasis on multilateralism with the development of power-based bilateral relations with each of the 'near abroad' states separately. The difficulties experienced by Moscow in strengthening the CIS have also forced it to seek another legitimizing basis for its actions by requesting the international community to grant Russia an official *imprimatur* to act as a dominant regional power. Thus, for example, in his speech to the Civic Union (an *ad hoc* coalition of former communist party *apparatchiki* and managers of state enterprises), Russian President Boris Yeltsin argued that 'the time has come for distinguished international organizations, including the UN, to grant Russia special powers of a guarantor of peace and stability in regions of the former USSR'.[5] At the same time, Russian diplomats did not give up their attempts to advance the idea that the CIS should be recognized as a regional and international organization by such authoritative international bodies as the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).[6]

It is important to note, however, that an active search for a legitimizing basis for Russia's policy towards the 'near abroad' has been recently combined with, if not overshadowed by, Russia's willingness to play a more assertive role in the former Soviet region even without an international *imprimatur*. As former Russian Vice-President and now active nationalist politician Aleksander Rutskoi put it, 'the historical consciousness of the Russians will not allow anybody to equate mechanically the borders of Russia with those of

the Russian Federation and to take away what constituted the glorious pages of Russian history'.[7] Even former Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, originally known in the West for his pro-liberal, anti-nationalist orientation, now refers to the former Soviet republics as comprising a *de facto* Russian dominion. Thus, for example, supporting the idea of sending Russian troops to Georgia on a 'peacekeeping mission', Kozyrev has emphasized that 'there is never a vacuum – if we refuse to live up to our geopolitical role, someone else will try and clean up the mess in our home'.[8]

Such a 'nationalist shift' in Russian foreign policy, however, manifests itself not only in more assertive statements. This rhetorical 'toughness' has been supplemented by the actual expansion of Russia's influence in the 'near abroad'. Thus, for example, since 1993 several important developments have occurred in security relations between the Russian Federation and other Soviet successor states, in part within the context of CIS institutions. Agreements with both Georgia and Armenia have resulted in the continued presence of Russian troops in the Caucasus and the establishment of joint guard units to protect the borders of both countries.[9] In Central Asia the Russians have been active in coordinating security-related activities with the countries of the region, especially concerning the civil war in Tajikistan. *De facto* Russia continues to view the borders of CIS members in the south as Russian borders and has committed the military personnel to defend them. In Azerbaijan the Russians were reportedly involved in the overthrow of the elected president in early 1993, and his replacement with an old Kremlin hand, Heydar Aliev, and in late 1994 in efforts to undermine the latter when he refused to abrogate a deal with Western oil companies for the exploitation of Caspian Sea oil.[10]

The more assertive stance that Russia has taken with respect to the 'near abroad' can be largely explained by examining domestic developments within the Federation. With the intensifying socio-economic crisis as well as the harsh psychological and material repercussions of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian citizens espoused an increasingly negative view of the process of democratization at home and pro-liberal, West-oriented policy abroad. It became quite common for many Russians to argue that the government's policy of economic liberalization had a more ruinous effect on the country's economy than did four years of war against Nazi Germany half a century ago. One of the leading Russian daily newspapers, *Izvestiia*, emphasized the severity of problems facing

Yeltsin's administration by citing the rapid economic decline as a primary explanation of the fact that for the first time since the Second World War the rate of mortality in the Russian Federation has exceeded the rate of birth.[11]

This growing dissatisfaction was closely paralleled by the rise of nationalist sentiment which gave the Russian people an illusive sense of purpose and identity in a rapidly changing environment. The progressively popular nationalist sloganeering, however, often spelled not only the end of domestic political and economic reforms, but also an aggressive policy abroad. Indeed, implementing a successful foreign policy campaign to defend the 'national interest' became more realistic and much more politically profitable for many aspiring as well as established politicians than any, inevitably painful, attempt to resurrect the collapsed economy. The 'diplomacy of smiles' and the 'policy of yes' became favourite targets for the right-wing opposition which attacked Yeltsin's government and especially the Foreign Ministry for 'selling out' Russian interests to the West and betraying 27 million ethnic Russians in the 'near abroad'.[12]

Moreover, since the collapse of communist structures, the Russian political arena has been characterized by a low degree of institutionalization. As the dramatic culmination of the protracted power struggle between President Yeltsin and the Russian Parliament in the autumn of 1993 clearly illustrated, the process of development of a stable, consolidated system of government which is capable of representing a variety of different interests is at its embryonic stage. Moreover, as emphasized by a number of analysts, political parties in Russia are largely underdeveloped. Rather than being 'protoparties' that will naturally evolve into full-fledged political parties, the majority can be better categorized as 'pseudo-parties', in all probability doomed to wither away after a short period of existence.[13] The Duma election of December 1995 did witness the emergence of three or four political parties.

The weakness of political institutionalization, combined with intense socio-economic problems associated with the transition to a free market economy, has created a situation in which the pendulum of popular preferences rapidly swings from one extreme to another, and militant programmes (both in the domestic and foreign realms) championed by extremist groups receive a frightening amount of popular support. For instance, Vladimir Zhirinovskii, who promised to restore Russia's territory to the borders of the

former Soviet Union and expel 'southerners' (that is, Armenians, Georgians, Uzbeks, and so on) from the Russian homeland, emerged as one of the major winners in the 1993 Parliamentary elections.[14]

The current situation in Russia contains similarities with that in the Weimar Republic in which a deep socio-economic crisis and the psychological humiliation of losing the First World War led to the rapid rise of right-wing forces. For millions of Soviet people who proudly regarded the USSR as their own state and homeland, its disappearance is a disaster. But, for imperially minded Russians it is also a 'national' catastrophe that is causing a deep psychological trauma.[15] Russian grievances over the collapse of the USSR have been further intensified by highly publicized accounts of violations of human rights of those ethnic Russians (or more generally, Russian-speakers) who found themselves outside the boundaries of the Russian Federation after the Soviet disintegration. Various constraints on acquiring citizenship imposed by local authorities, language discrimination, the loss of former privileges, and other explosive issues concerning the rights of Russians living in the 'near abroad' have substantially radicalized the political process within Russia itself, thus providing a fertile soil for the growth of nationalist sentiments.[16]

At the same time, however, because of the spread of democratic procedures and the concern for electoral support, Yeltsin's government has become extremely vulnerable to the nationalist pressures from below. Although such actions as the crack-down on the rebellious Parliament and the adoption of a super-presidential constitution were intended to relax the impact of internal influences on domestic and foreign policy formulation, the behaviour of Yeltsin's Russia abroad became increasingly reflective of the nationalist sentiment at home. Inevitably, Yeltsin himself has been drawn into the competition of 'who can be the best nationalist', which can explain the increasing assertiveness of his foreign policy.[17] 'That which is now taking place', wrote Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in *Izvestiia*, 'is reminiscent of 1933 in Germany, when some democrats began to adopt nationalist stances'.[18]

Thus, the progressive 'toughening' of Yeltsin's foreign policy in the 'near abroad', as well as the results of the 1993 Russian Parliamentary elections indicating the victory of the ultranationalist bloc, suggest what often went unnoticed in the West until quite recently: namely, the fact that the severity of Russia's domestic problems

seemed to be driving it to act aggressively abroad.[19] Nostalgia for the old empire is growing among many Russians disillusioned by harsh reforms. Although Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, one of the most consistent early advocates of Western orientation, has repeatedly denied any shift in his policies after the autumn 1993 Parliamentary elections, it was soon very clear that Moscow is much more eager to respond to the nationalist mood of the Russian public than to the preferences of the international community.[20] The subsequent strong performance of the communist party in Russia's December 1995 parliamentary elections has only reinforced this trend. In January 1996, after a protracted struggle with conservative forces and realizing that President Yeltsin perceived him as a political liability in the increasingly nationalist environment, Andrei Kozyrev resigned as Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation. He was replaced by Evgenyi Primakov, who is widely perceived as more willing than his predecessor to 'stand up to the West', to reassert Russia's influence in the former Soviet Union, and to defend 'more vigorously and effectively' Russian national interests.[21]

And yet, the international pressure can potentially have a strong constraining effect on the growing Russian hegemony in the region. To illustrate this point, as well as to examine more closely some of the intricacies of Russian foreign policy, the following pages scrutinize Russia's relationship with the countries of the European 'near abroad': the Baltics, Moldova, Ukraine, and Belarus.

RUSSIA AND THE BALTIC STATES

Russia's relations with the Baltic republics – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – are both very similar to and strikingly different from its relations with other 'near abroad' states. The similarity stems from the analogous character of the main issues that affect Russia's policy towards all former Soviet republics, including the Baltics: the status of Russian troops, territorial claims, the welfare and human rights of ethnic Russians in the 'near abroad'. The difference, however, lies in the special protection extended to the Baltic states by the international community, especially by the United States.

As noted by a number of analysts, the United States' position on the issue of Russian involvement in the 'near abroad' can be characterized increasingly as a form of 'Baltic exceptionalism', according to which the Russians are expected to behave in full

accordance with the norms and principles of international law in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in exchange for an implicit *carte blanche* in other parts of the former Soviet Union.[22] As a result, compared to its relations with the 'less fortunate' 'near abroad' states, Russia's policy towards the Baltics has been much more cautious and moderate. Thus, for example, the recently completed withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia and Estonia contrasts sharply with the expansion of Russia's military presence in other former Soviet republics.[23]

Nevertheless, the severity of the problems plaguing Russia's relationship with the Baltic states can potentially jeopardize Moscow's prudent stance. Perhaps the most significant stumbling block impeding the process of normalization of this relationship is the alleged continuous violation of human rights of ethnic Russians residing in the Baltics. For instance, in 1992 the Estonian Parliament re-established the 1938 Citizenship Law whereby persons without a claim to citizenship of the 1920–40 Republic are required to submit to a naturalization process mandating fulfilment of a number of requirements including language proficiency.[24] Given that the overwhelming majority of Russians in Estonia do not even have a rudimentary command of the indigenous language,[25] Moscow's leadership as well as local Russian communities wasted no time claiming that the Estonian citizenship law discriminates against non-Estonians (most of whom are Russians and arrived in Estonia after 1945), who comprise approximately 39 per cent of the republic's population. In response, Estonia made little effort to avoid confrontation, refusing to alter the citizenship law as well as another controversial law that allowed non-citizens to vote in municipal elections but not to run for office.[26] As a result, Estonian–Russian relations have remained very tense. On several occasions Moscow has singled out Estonia as the 'problem' country in the Baltics.[27]

The second major complicating factor in Russian–Baltic relations concerns the delimitation of borders. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the negotiations on border issues have received little attention in Moscow as well as in the capitals of the Baltic states. Recently, however, the diplomatic activities and the media coverage of them have substantially increased. While the Lithuanian–Russian talks focus primarily on transit regulations for Russian military transports which cross Lithuania *en route* from the Russian mainland to Kaliningrad *Oblast*, the Estonian–Russian and Latvian–Russian

negotiations are concerned with a number of issues associated with the annexation of Estonian and Latvian territory by the Russian Federation after 1945.[28] Given the extremely sensitive nature of territory transfers for all parties involved, as well as the potentially dangerous domestic political effects that hasty actions can have, the Russian–Baltic border issues are very unlikely to be resolved in the near future.

In sum, although Moscow has by no means lost its 'big brother' attitude, its policy towards the Baltics has, nevertheless, been characterized by a certain degree of moderation which can be explained by the extensive international support for the full sovereignty and independence of the Baltic states which have historically had strong cultural, political, and economic ties to the West. And yet, given the rise of nationalist sentiments in the Russian Federation as well as the continuing presence of a number of stumbling blocks jeopardizing the process of amelioration of Russian–Baltic relations, the future development of Moscow's policy towards the Baltics is far from being clear, as is obvious from the Russian role in the collapse of the largest bank in Latvia and the ensuing political crisis there and from Russia's refusal to accept the 1920 Peace Treaty as the basis for relations with Estonia.[29]

RUSSIA AND MOLDOVA

An almost complete reversal of Russia's seemingly cautious (though by no means conciliatory) stance with respect to the Baltic states is the Russian policy towards the republic of Moldova. Since 1992 many Russian officials have been explicitly supporting the move towards independence by the Russian-speaking minority located in the Transdniester region of eastern Moldova. Fearful of Moldovan nationalism and encroachments upon its linguistic and cultural rights, the Russian population of the Transdniester region has come to consider independence or significant political autonomy as the only adequate guarantee of its well-being.[30] In contrast, it is worth noting that, while similar fears are also typical of many representatives of the Russian-speaking communities in north-eastern Estonia (for example, the cities of Narva, Kohtla-Jarve, and Sillamae), Moscow has (at least officially) refrained from supporting the incorporation of the predominantly Russian territories of the republic of Estonia into the Russian Federation. Moreover, unlike the Baltic

states, Moldova failed to resist extensive economic pressure from the Russian Federation intended to force the republic to become a full member of the CIS.

The resolution of the Transdniester problem is complicated by the fact that Russia still maintains troops, the 14th Army, on Moldovan territory. Not surprisingly, Russia's 14th Army, with its patriotic former commander Lieutenant-General Aleksander Lebed, actively supported the 'Dniester republic' in its quest for independence. As a sovereign state, Moldova repeatedly asked that the Russian troops withdraw from Moldovan territory. In response, Moscow claimed that the 14th Army was 'playing a peacekeeping role and preventing bloodshed' in the Transdniester region.[31] Thus, Lebed was widely credited in Russia with having stopped a war in 1992 between Moldova and Transdniester separatists by resolutely stepping in with his troops.

Most recently, however, the Russian Defence Ministry has announced its decision to downgrade the 14th Army by transforming it into an 'amorphous group of troops' and cutting the number of commanding officers from 170 to 97.[32] And yet, according to the Russian media and parliamentarians, this decision has been caused not so much by Moldova's continuing protests as by a bitter feud between the insubordinate, outspoken, but extremely popular, Aleksander Lebed on the one side and Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev with President Yeltsin on the other.[33] Indeed, indicating Moscow's undiminished concern for the well-being of Russians living in Moldova, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Krylov has noted that the withdrawal of the remaining Russian troops from Moldova can proceed only when the issue of Transdniester's status is settled. In fact, reinforcements have been sent to Transdniester.[34]

RUSSIA AND ITS 'SLAVIC BROTHERS' – UKRAINE AND BELARUS

Because of a great number of historical, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic links among the three Slavic peoples, Russia's relations with Ukraine and Belarus enjoy a special place in Moscow's overall policy towards the 'near abroad'. The traditional argument developed by Moscow historiographers holds that the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian nations have always been socially intertwined. According to this view, the 'eternal oneness' of the Russian,

Ukrainian, and Belarusian peoples stems from the common Old Russian nationality that existed on the territory of Kievan Rus' in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. For Russian nationalists who advocate this historical approach, 'the whole of Ukraine..., Belarus, and European Russia is a single homogeneous space – homogeneous in every respect, even in the anthropological one'.[35]

To a significant extent, however, such closeness, if it exists, has been brought about by coercive policies pursued by Russia. They ranged from Peter I's decree in 1720 banning the publication of church books in the Ukrainian language to the All-Union Communist Party's (Bolsheviks') telegram in 1932 on the immediate Russification of all Ukrainian institutions in the USSR located outside the Ukrainian republic.[36] Perhaps the only region that, despite the policies of Russification, managed to retain a substantial degree of cultural autonomy is western Ukraine, which was not annexed by the Soviet Union until 1939 under the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. It is in the Uniate Catholic west (as opposed to the Orthodox east) where passionate nationalist sentiments run especially high.

As for Belarus (White Russia), it has been exposed even more intensively than Ukraine to the policies of Russification. Not surprisingly, the existence of Belarus as a separate national entity was virtually unknown in the West until after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Belarus was often seen as being a mere appendage of Russia.

As a result of the largely successful centuries-old process of Russification, the Belarusian political scene is currently characterized by strong 'back-to-Russia' tendencies. Widespread pro-Moscow feelings at the grassroots level are combined with the vividly manifested desire of the current government, which is composed primarily of former Soviet *nomenklatura* members, to establish closer political, economic, and military links with the Russian Federation. In the words of Belarusian Foreign Minister Uladzimir Syanko, 'we will never give up our sovereignty, but in our relations with Russia we have no alternative other than the closest possible economic, political, and military cooperation'.[37]

Especially desirable for the Belarusian politicians is an economic union with Russia which is perceived as a panacea for the catastrophic economic decline that has occurred in Belarus.[38] The pro-Russian orientation of the Belarusian elite became even more conspicuous in January 1994 with the defeat of the Belarusian President and Speaker of Parliament Stanislau Shushkevich who opposed the idea of forming military and political alliances with

the Russian Federation.[39] Moreover, in the May 1995 referendum Belarusian President Aleksander Lukashenka (who once called Russia Belarus's only friend and elder brother) won overwhelming support to bind the former Soviet republic closer to neighbouring Russia.[40] About 80 per cent of Belarusian voters approved economic integration with Russia, equal status for the Russian language alongside little-used Belarusian and restoration of symbols similar to those used in the Soviet era.[41]

Given the republic's bent for reintegration with Russia, Moscow's expansionist policies found a fertile soil in Belarus. With the agreement (yet to be implemented) on the Russian–Belarusian monetary union signed in April 1994, the lifting of customs control on the border between the two republics in May 1995, and the continuing presence of 30,000 Russian troops guarding the nuclear missiles which still remain in Belarus after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Belarusian republic is being steadily pulled into Moscow's orbit. Moreover, even the republic's army can be considered Belarusian in name only – the bulk of its officer corps remains Russian and their allegiance to Belarus is rather questionable.[42] On 2 April 1996 Russia and Belarus signed the Treaty on the Formation of the Community. Although the treaty clearly illustrates the friendly character of the Russian–Belarusian relationship, the exact nature of the proposed integration is unclear (according to the treaty, the countries are to be both sovereign and integrated).[43]

It is important to note, however, that closer economic ties with Belarus are not unanimously welcomed in Moscow. Thus, for example, Russia's influential daily newspaper, *Izvestiia*, has warned that following the unification of the customs area Russia is likely to forfeit trillions of rubles as a result of losing control over the movement of goods across the Belarusian border with Ukraine and the Baltic states.[44] Some Russian decision-makers have also criticized the prospects for the monetary union between the two republics, emphasizing that Belarus's economic policy which still relies heavily on the old mechanisms of state control is not in line with that in Russia.[45] Nevertheless, the Treaty on the Formation of the Community with Belarus won overwhelming support in the Russian nationalist parliament. The Duma's enthusiastic ratification of the Treaty is not surprising, given its earlier declaration (criticized by President Yeltsin) that the 1991. Belavezhskii Accord of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus that announced the disintegration of the Soviet Union is illegal.

The Belarusian pro-Moscow stance contrasts sharply with the nationalist policy which has been pursued by the Ukrainian government (especially during Leonid Kravchuk's administration). Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine has been extremely active in asserting its full independence in the political, economic, and security realms. This policy has ineluctably led to the deterioration of Ukraine's relations with Moscow. The three most important seeds of discord between Kiev and Moscow have included: a) ownership of nuclear weapons; b) partition of the Black Sea fleet; and c) status of the Crimean peninsula.

After the break-up of the USSR its nuclear stockpile became divided into four unequal parts, each owned by one of the newly independent states – Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. As a legal successor to the Soviet Union and the owner of the largest share of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal, the Russian Federation has channelled its every effort to ensure the nuclear-free status of the other three republics. Such a policy has also been supported by the United States government. It is in the interest of both the United States and Russia that no more than one nuclear power (that is, Russia) emerge from the former Soviet Union and that the removal of nuclear weapons from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus take place as soon as possible.

While Kazakhstan and Belarus made early commitments to their nuclear-free status, the question of retaining ownership of post-Soviet nuclear weapons became a key part of the Ukrainian debate over sovereignty, a central political issue activating many constituencies.[46] Ukrainian nationalists, fearful of Russia's imperial bent, wasted no time augmenting the perception of a security threat stemming from Moscow. The former 'sister republic' was portrayed as a potential aggressor, imbued with imperialist thinking threatening the Ukrainian state. The hysteria was especially stirred up by the debate about the feasibility of a Russian nuclear attack against Ukraine.[47]

In an increasingly nationalist atmosphere, Ukrainian military officers attending an international conference in Kiev in May 1992 informed the audience that 'Ukraine was, is, and will remain nuclear'.[48] One of the deputies and a member of the Ukrainian Parliament's Committee for Defence and Security Issues, Major General Volodymyr Tolubko, who had served in the Strategic Rocket Forces and was the director of a military institute in Kharkov, stated that a non-nuclear state could not expect to be treated

seriously by the international community, and he proposed the creation of a Ukrainian 'nuclear defence shield'.[49] In Ukraine's parliament this proposal by the representative of the military-industrial complex was reportedly greeted with applause.[50]

Although Russian imperialist thinking did not die with the collapse of the Soviet Union, it soon became obvious that, rather than being caused by the clear and present danger posed by Moscow, such a nationalist campaign was artificially inflated. Indeed, more moderate political parties in Ukraine repeatedly emphasized that 'confrontation with Russia over the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea, and nuclear weapons' was only the result of 'artificial provocation by conservatives and national chauvinists in both countries'.[51]

And yet, on 16 November 1994, in a vote that surprised many observers who had anticipated far greater opposition or even rejection of the treaty, the Ukrainian parliament finally decided to accede to the NPT. Such a sudden shift from the *Rada*'s nationalist preferences resulted primarily from two factors. First, for 11 million ethnic Russians and a large number of Russian-speakers in Ukraine, it is difficult to conceive of Russia as an enemy to be deterred by nuclear weapons. As 1994 presidential and parliamentary elections demonstrated, Ukrainian nationalist parties are incapable of getting their candidates elected in the mainly Russian-speaking areas, home to almost half of Ukraine's electoral districts.[52] Second, the Ukrainian political elite was effectively enticed by the promise of massive economic aid made by the United States in exchange for the republic's commitment to denuclearization. In particular, Ukraine has been guaranteed compensation for the highly enriched uranium, beginning with 100 tons of low-enriched uranium for its power reactors underwritten by an advance US payment of $60 million.[53] The total compensation promised by the United States government amounts to about $1 billion.[54]

The future of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet has been another extremely sensitive political issue for Russian–Ukrainian relations. In Ukrainian threat perceptions, Russia's naval power in the south, combined with the regular forces in the north-east, would create a geostrategic encirclement of Ukraine.[55] For Russia, however, the control over the Black Sea Fleet means not only a pure military advantage, but more importantly, the preservation of its historical status as a great power. Russia's claims on the Black Sea Fleet finally prevailed during the Massandra summit in September

1993, when President Yeltsin presented the Ukrainian delegation with an ultimatum: either start repaying your energy debts or the energy supplies will be cut off.[56]

The third major complicating factor in Russian–Ukrainian relations concerns the status of the Crimean peninsula which formed part of Russia until 1954, when it was presented to Ukraine as a 'gift' by the then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Under Soviet rule such a change in territorial jurisdiction had merely a symbolic effect. It was only after the collapse of the USSR that the question of 'who owns the Crimea' became extremely important. Actively supported by Moscow, the increasingly powerful Russian nationalist circles in the Crimea have demanded the peninsula's reincorporation into the Russian Federation. In contrast, Kiev's authorities, while willing to grant the Crimea some autonomy, are determined to preserve the present status of the peninsula as an integral part of Ukrainian territory.

Nevertheless, the severe economic problems plaguing the Ukrainian economy, as well as a large number of Russians and Russian-speakers living in Ukraine, contribute to the popularity of the idea of *rapprochement* with the Russian Federation. The most conspicuous manifestation of these pro-Moscow sentiments is the result of the summer 1994 Presidential elections in Ukraine which brought victory to Leonid Kuchma, who campaigned for the 'restoration' of harmonious economic relations with Russia.[57] Not surprisingly, Kuchma was victorious in the largely Russophone area of Eastern Ukraine and in the Crimea, where he received over 80 per cent of the total ballots cast. In contrast, his support in the extremely nationalist western part of Ukraine was rather limited. In this situation, a decisive factor for Kuchma was his ability to collect more votes in the less politically committed regions of central Ukraine in which people suffering from economic hardships have come to see cooperation with the Russian Federation as a prerequisite to the resolution of Ukraine's economic crisis.[58]

Thus, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Ukraine, just as Belarus, is likely to develop closer economic, political, and security ties with Russia. This trend would undoubtedly be welcomed (though with possible reservations concerning economic expediency) in Moscow's policy-making circles. Nevertheless, given the unique cultural heritage of western Ukraine and the strength of nationalism there, Ukraine's *rapprochement* with the Russian Federation cannot be taken for granted.

RUSSIA AND THE 'NEAR ABROAD': PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

The preceding analysis suggests that the future of Russia's relationship with its Western neighbours in the former Soviet region depends as much on domestic developments in the 'near abroad' republics as on what is happening within the Russian Federation itself. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the overriding concern with achieving full sovereignty is being slowly but steadily superseded by more pragmatic economic considerations. As recent developments in Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova illustrate, economic dependence on Russia forces these newly independent states to constrain their nationalistic aspirations. While also extremely vulnerable to the economic pressure exerted by the Russian Federation, the Baltic states enjoy, however, a more advantageous position which is based on their stronger political and economic ties to the West.

Thus, apart from the Baltics, the states of the European 'near abroad' can be seen as at least starting to move towards closer integration with Russia. This process is driven primarily by two factors. First, as noted above, sad economic realities emphasize the need for dependence of these countries on Russia's energy supplies and raw materials. Second, the strength of nationalist sentiments inside Russia pushes Yeltsin's administration to assume a dominant role in the former Soviet region. As argued by a number of analysts, a link between the Russian state and Russian-speakers living in the 'near abroad' has become firmly established as a basic principle for conducting external policy.[59] By implication, such a link suggests a wider definition of what the Russian nation is; the definition which broadens the parameters of the nation both ethnically and territorially, thus transcending the boundaries of the Russian Federation.

So far, the West has generally refrained from explicitly condemning Russia's involvement in the 'near abroad' – although the brutality of Russian military operations in Chechnya has been widely criticized. In fact, Western countries tend to consider Russian activities in former Soviet (non-Baltic) republics as largely benign – as a stabilizing factor in a strife-ridden region.[60] Such a position has not been unnoticed in Russia, where Boris Yeltsin has repeatedly declared that 'the world community' sees Russia as having a special responsibility for keeping peace in the region.[61]

Nevertheless, the unilateral, large-scale introduction of Russian military forces – especially in the conflicts in the European and

Caucasian areas of the former USSR – would without doubt exacerbate rather than mitigate regional tensions. In other words, Russia would be a likely contributor, in some cases at least, to regional conflict, with its security interests clashing with the interests of the neighbouring states.[62] From a Western perspective this would be highly undesirable.

It is important to note that the West has not attempted to influence Russian policy towards the 'near abroad' by offering (not merely promising) 'carrots' either. Immediately after Russia's independence, Russian democrats expected that their pro-liberal domestic and foreign policy would result in the blossoming of trade and massive financial aid.[63] Confronted with the discouraging indicators of their own economic performance, Western countries have been, however, quite reluctant to extend a helping hand to Russia, thus missing an opportunity to mould Moscow's international behaviour.

And yet, as is illustrated by this comparison of Russia's policy towards the Baltics and towards other European 'near abroad' states, the international community can make a difference. To be effective, however, actions taken by the international community should be extremely cautious so as not to provoke another wave of aggressive nationalism in the Russian Federation. Influencing Moscow's policies through cooperation rather than confrontation appears to be the only viable way to maintain stability in the former Soviet region and strengthen democracy in Russia.

NOTES

1. This argument is developed fully in John B. Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
2. Stephen R. Covington and John Lough, 'Russia's Post-Revolution Challenge: Reform of the Soviet Superpower Paradigm', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1992), pp. 5–22.
3. John Lough, 'Defining Russia's Relations with Neighboring States', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 20 (1993), p. 53. Also, see Lough's earlier article, 'The Place of the "Near Abroad" in Russian Foreign Policy', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 11 (1993), pp. 21–9 and two essays by Andrei Zagorski, 'Rußlands Beziehungen zum "fernen" und "nahen Ausland" and "Die Gemeinschaft unabhängiger Staaten: Entwicklungen und Perspektiven", nos. 46 and 50 (1992), respectively, of *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien.*

4. *Narodna Hazeta*, no. 48–49 (December 1992).
5. Cited in Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Seeks Leadership in Regional Peacekeeping', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 15 (1993), p. 28.
6. Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Promotes the CIS as an International Organization', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 11 (18 March 1994), pp. 33–8.
7. *Pravda* (3 February 1993).
8. Quoted in Leonid Bershidsky, 'Georgia Peace Force Riles Duma', *The Moscow Times* (18 June 1994), p. 3.
9. Bess Brown, 'Armenians and Georgians to Serve in Russian Border Troops', *RFE/RL Daily Report*, vol. 3, no. 52 (16 March 1994).
10. See Henry Huttenbach, 'Focus on the Caspian: The Pipeline War', *Association for the Study of Nationalities: Analysis of Current Events*, vol. 6, no. 4 (1994).
11. *Izvestiia* (30 March 1992).
12. For perceptive analyses of the shifts in Russian policy see Alexei Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 4 (1993), pp. 5–43; Heinz Timmermann, 'Rußlands Außenpolitik: Die europäische Dimension', *Osteuropa*, vol. 45, no. 6 (1995), pp. 495–508; Hannes Adomeit, 'Russia as a "Great Power" in World Affairs: Images and Reality', *International Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 1 (1995), pp. 35–68; and Paul A. Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand', *Prism*, Jamestown Foundation, 14 July 1995, part 1.
13. Richard Sakwa, 'Parties and the Multiparty System in Russia', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 31 (30 July 1993), pp. 7–15. On the impact of weak institutions on Russian foreign policy see Gebhardt Weiss, 'Die Russische Föderation zwischen imperialer Versuchung und legitimer Interessenpolitik: Zur westlichen Kritik an der russischen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik', *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*, no. 23 (1995).
14. Radio Moscow (8 December 1993).
15. Igor Torbakov, 'The "Statists" and the Ideology of Russian Imperial Nationalism', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, no. 49 (11 December 1992).
16. An important component of this issue has been the 'return' to Russia of tens of thousands of ethnic Russians from the other CIS states. According to demographer Natalia Voronina, 2.5 million refugees have already arrived in Russia from the 'near abroad', while an additional 3.3 million are expected over the course of the next two years. Interfax, 22 July 1995, cited in *Monitor*, Jamestown Foundation, vol. 1, no. 59 (25 July 1995).
17. Besides a more assertive stance with respect to the 'near abroad', other changes in Russian foreign policy include the improvement of relations with Iraq, repeated attempts to protect Russia's 'historical ally', Serbia, from international sanctions, a total opposition to the expansion of NATO membership eastwards into Central Europe, and explicit criticism of what is perceived as the United State's tendency to dictate its own terms on the international arena. Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Seeks Leadership in Regional Peacekeeping', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 15 (1993), pp. 28–32; Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand'.
18. Cited in Lena Jonson, 'The Foreign Policy Debate in Russia: In Search of a National Interest', *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1994), p. 190.
19. Paul Goble, 'The Situation in Russia', *Implementation of the Helsinki Accords* (October 1993). Briefing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Washington, DC.

20. Celestine Bohlen, 'Nationalist Vote Toughens Russian Foreign Policy', *New York Times* (25 January 1994).
21. For Primakov's views on Russian foreign policy, see *Izvestiia*, 6 March 1996.
22. See Goble, 'The Situation in Russia'.
23. See Dzintra Bungs, 'Russia Agrees to Withdraw Troops from Latvia', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 22 (3 June 1994), pp. 1–9; Stephen Foye, 'Estonia–Russia Agreement: Russian Perspective', *RFE/RL Daily Report* (27 July 1994).
24. 'Human Rights and Democratization in Estonia', *Implementation of the Helsinki Accords* (September 1993), p. 11. Prepared by the Staff of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.
25. Asked how it was possible that Russians living in Estonia for several decades had never learnt the local language, Vladimir Chuikin, chairman of the Narva City Council, responded that 'there was never any reason to learn Estonian... Who ever thought that we would be anything but part of the Soviet Union?' Cited in Mary Battiata, 'Ethnic Russian Minority Tests Tolerance of Estonians', *The Washington Post* (30 September 1991).
26. See Saulius Girnus, 'Reaching West While Eyeing Russia', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 1 (30 January 1995), p. 17.
27. See Saulius Girnius, 'Relations With Russia Turn Bitter,' *Transition*, 2, no. 11 (31 May 1996), pp. 42–45.
28. Dzintra Bungs, 'Seeking Solutions to Baltic–Russian Border Issues', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 13 (1 April 1994), pp. 25–32.
29. Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand'. On the Latvian banking crisis and the alleged role of Russia in bringing down the Banka Baltija, see *Prism*, Jamestown Foundation, 14 July 1995.
30. Russian concerns have been further intensified by the possibility of future reunification of Moldova with Romania, even though Moldova leaders have given little indication of an interest in unification. On Romanian criticism of Moldova's policy see Dan Ionescu, 'Straining Family Relations', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 7 (1995), pp. 6–8, 63.
31. Michael Shafir, 'Grachev Ends Romanian Visit in Clash over 14th Army', *RFE/RL Daily Report* (31 March 1994).
32. Leonid Bershidsky, 'Lebed Battles to Save the 14th Army', *The Moscow Times* (28 May 1995), p. 17.
33. Publicly protesting Grachev's decision to decimate the 14th Army, Lieutenant-General Aleksander Lebed retired in July 1995. After a strong showing in the first round of the presidential elections in June 1996, Yeltsin appointed Lebed as his national security adviser. At this point Lebed had his revenge on Grachev, who was removed from his post of defence minister.
34. Leonid Bershidsky, 'Lebed Battles to Save the 14th Army', *The Moscow Times* (28 May 1995), p. 17; Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand'.
35. Anatolii Glivakovskii, 'Russia's National Security and Geopolitics', *Kentavr* (October–December 1991), p. 50.
36. Golos Ukrainy (2 September 1992).
37. Interfax (6 September 1994).
38. Belarus relies on Russia for the major part of its raw material and energy supplies (oil: 90 per cent; natural gas: 100 per cent; light metals: 50 per cent). See Magdalene Hoff and Heinz Timmermann, 'Belarus in der Krise: Die

"Partei der Macht" drängt auf Rückwendung nach Rußland', *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*, no. 22 (1994).

39. Ustina Markus, 'Conservatives Remove Belarusian Leader', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 8 (25 February 1994), pp. 13–18.
40. See Ustina Markus, 'Business as Usual with Lukashenka', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 8 (26 May 1995), pp. 57–61.
41. Lida Poletz and Rostislav Khotin, 'Belarus Vote Favours Russia Ties', *The Moscow Times* (21 May 1995), p. 17.
42. Ustina Markus, 'Belarus a "Weak Link" in Eastern Europe', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 49 (10 December 1993), p. 24.
43. See Ustina Markus, 'Toothless Treaty with Russia Sparks Controversy', *Transition*, 2, no. 9 (3 May 1996), pp. 46–7.
44. *Izvestiia* (30 May 1995), p. 2.
45. *Minsk Economic News*, no. 11 (September 1994). In fact, Moscow has not come up with the financial support that Belarus expected, despite insisting that the latter fulfil commitments both in the defence area and on oil and gas pipeline issues. Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand'.
46. John Lepingwell, 'Ukraine, Russia, and the Control of Nuclear Weapons', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 8 (19 February 1993).
47. Sergei Kiselyov, 'Ukraine: Stuck with the Goods', *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (March 1993).
48. Cited in Eugene Rumer, 'Eurasia Letter: Will Ukraine Return to Russia?', *Foreign Policy*, no. 96 (Fall 1994), p. 138.
49. See Bohdan Nahaylo, 'The Shaping of Ukrainian Attitudes toward Nuclear Arms', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 8 (February 1993), p. 32.
50. *Izvestiia* (10 April 1992).
51. 'Pre-election Platform of the Interregional Bloc for Reforms', *Vybor* (March 1994).
52. See Dominique Arel and Andrew Wilson, 'The Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 26 (1 July 1994), pp. 6–17.
53. Sherman Garnett, 'Ukraine's Decision to Join the NPT', *Arms Control Today* (January–February 1995), p. 10.
54. Reuters (25 January 1994).
55. Frank Umbach, 'Russia and the Problems of Ukraine's Cohesion: Results of a Fact-Finding Mission', *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*, no. 13 (1994), p. 19.
56. *Izvestiia* (4 September 1993), pp. 1–2.
57. Mykola Tomenko, Victor Mel'nychenko, and Vasyl' Yablonskyi, 'Ukraine before and after the Parliamentary Elections: A Survey of Political Forces', *Political Thought*, no. 2 (1994), p. 159.
58. See David Marples, 'Ukraine after the Presidential Election', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 31 (12 August 1994), pp. 7–10.
59. See, for example, Neil Melvin, *Forging the New Russian Nation*, Discussion Paper 50 (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1994) and Vladimir Shlapentokh, Munir Sendich, and Emil Payin (eds): *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics* (Armonk, NY/London: M.E. Sharpe, 1994).
60. Bruce Porter and Carol Saivetz, 'The Once and Future Empire: Russia and the "Near Abroad"', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 3 (1994), p. 89.

61. Cited in Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Seeks Leadership in Regional Peacekeeping', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 15 (1993), pp. 28–32. It should be noted, however, that neither the United Nations nor CSCE has granted the Russian Federation an official *imprimatur* to act as a regional peacekeeper.
62. See the contributions by noted Russian and Western analysts in Stepan Sestanovich (ed.), *Rethinking Russia's National Interests* (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994).
63. Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 50 (17 December 1993), pp. 1–8.

3 Russian Policy Towards Central Europe and the Balkans

Aurel Braun

As recently as early 1989 Mikhail Gorbachev confidently advocated the strengthening of ties and organizational structures in the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The ignominious disintegration of both those organizations and the withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Central Europe, following the demise of the Soviet Union, eradicated not only Russian control but even influence in the region. In July 1994, for instance, nine East Central European foreign ministers meeting in Warsaw, including the representatives of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, all former WTO members, eagerly endorsed continued US military and economic presence in Europe.[1] Virtually every East Central European state is seeking membership in NATO and the European Union. Most signed the Partnership for Peace (PFP) agreement with NATO in 1994, an agreement which they view as a stepping stone to membership. Moreover, Western leaders have been promising several of the East Central European states that they will soon gain membership to the European Union. European Commission Chairman Jacques Delors, for example, told Polish leaders during a visit to Warsaw in May 1994 that Poland could join the European Union by the year 2000.[2]

Where does all this leave Russia? As in the case of the Cheshire cat, has Russian influence disappeared altogether except for a symbolic smile? Is a Russia preoccupied with dire domestic economic problems, political instability and ethnic strife in the 'near abroad' both incapable of, and unwilling to exercise, a strong role in current and future economic and political relations with the states in the region? These questions may best be answered, or at least elaborated upon, by first examining the legacy of the Soviet interest and its impact in the region, including the dramatic changes in Soviet, and later Russian, foreign policy and then by assessing

Russian interests and policies in the area by focusing on the political, psychological, economic and military factors.

THE LEGACY OF THE SOVIET PAST

Dramatic changes in the last few years certainly are a testimony to the ability of the states in the region drastically to change their relations with each other. This, however, does not mean that the past could not have an influence, both on the present and the future. The recent past especially – the period that the great British writer G. K. Chesterton called the 'prophetic past' – could help to illuminate current and future trends, although the former need not necessarily have predetermined the latter.

Stalin's approach to East Central Europe was relatively simple, but thorough. The region was a prize of war, a potential offensive launch pad or a defensive glacis and a cash cow, a kind of Marshall Plan in reverse, where enormous resources were extracted from these states and transferred to the Soviet Union to build up the latter's economy. Very importantly though, and this was perhaps not adequately articulated by Moscow, the imposition of Marxist-Leninist rule in East Central Europe also functioned as a crucial validating factor in building and sustaining the legitimacy of Marxist-Leninist rule in the Soviet Union itself. Whereas it would be hard to argue that Leonid Brezhnev had a sophisticated intellectual understanding of the desirability for Soviet control over East Central Europe and for the preservation of Marxist-Leninist regimes, he demonstrated repeatedly, most vividly and brutally in 1968 in Czechoslovakia, that he had a thorough instinctive appreciation of the crucial significance of the region for Moscow.

On the other side, for the vast majority of the people in East Central Europe, Soviet control came to be viewed as a conquest accompanied by the imposition of a foreign system of governance. But, given the Soviet willingness to crush rebellions in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1953, and in Hungary in 1956, and Moscow's repression of reform in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the people of the region, though resentful of Soviet hegemony, accepted Moscow's rule with resignation.

Under Mikhail Gorbachev the Soviet Union began to combine domestic and foreign policy experimentation. At first Gorbachev did not challenge the prevailing wisdom. Upon coming to power he

emphasized that of all the issues on his foreign policy agenda he would take as his 'first commandment' the strengthening of relations with Eastern Europe.[3] Gradually, however, he seemed to accept three propositions that, contrary to his hopes and expectations, helped to lead to the disintegration of Soviet control and Marxist-Leninist rule in East Central Europe: that East Central Europe represented an economic burden for the Soviet Union; that domestic Soviet political and economic reform needed to be replicated throughout the region; and that blatantly hegemonic control over East Central Europe was an impediment to a significant transformation of East–West relations.

In terms of retaining Soviet control over or even strong influence in the region, Gorbachev proved to be largely mistaken on the first two of these three propositions and did not understand adequately the implications of the third. All three, however, were closely intertwined, particularly the first two. Economic benefits could never be clearly separated from political ones, but in the decade following the Second World War it was, as noted, quite obvious that a massive transfer of wealth from East Central Europe to the Soviet Union occurred. By the 1980s the picture was far more complex and the calculation of benefits far more difficult. The Soviet Union did sell oil to East Central Europe at below world prices between 1972 and 1982, but the size of the subsidy has been the subject of considerable debate.[4] Moreover, for political reasons Moscow continued to ship underpriced oil to Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic (GDR).[5] Yet the costs of Soviet subsidies were not that clear-cut, first because the flow of benefits tended to be cyclical. Second, Moscow had a captive market in East Central Europe for many of its products. Third, Moscow's political benefits were so significant that in many instances they simply could not be separated from the temporary economic costs. Finally, some economists, in fact, argued that the elimination of Soviet subsidies and a tightening of trade conditions by Moscow would have had a salutary effect on East European economic development.[6]

The merits of the case, however, are not as important as Soviet perceptions of economic relations with East Central Europe under Gorbachev. The Soviet leadership firmly believed that it was making major economic sacrifices in its relations with East Central Europe.[7] At CMEA meetings Gorbachev never failed to chide the East European leaders over their poor economic and trade performance. He not only urged a higher level of integration between the

economies of the socialist states in the region but appears to have concluded that the East Central European states would need to restructure both politically and economically according to his reformist model, so as to become more efficient economic partners.

But Gorbachev's belief in the second proposition was also fundamentally flawed. First, he assumed that the political and economic system extant in the Soviet Union and East Central Europe could be reformed in the sense that the core of the ideology could be preserved and control over the 'commanding heights of the economy' could be maintained. That is, a kinder, gentler and truly efficient Marxist-Leninist system could be created.[8] Gorbachev was wrong. The system was not reformable. Second, he not only assumed that the peoples of East Central Europe would be satisfied with mere reform rather than fundamental economic and political transformation, but also that such reform would generate massive investments and transfers of technology into Eastern Europe from which the Soviet Union in turn would quickly benefit. That is, the need for Soviet subsidies would be obviated, the East Central Europeans would provide higher quality goods to the Soviet Union and Western technology would be transferred further eastward. The East Central Europeans though would not settle for mere reform. And Western countries and especially private investors proved to be no more satisfied with mere reform than the peoples of East Central Europe.

Gorbachev, though, was either not aware or not willing to recognize the basic flaws in the assumptions he made regarding the first two propositions. He remained confident, at least until the middle of 1990, that the Soviet Union could maintain preponderant influence in East Central Europe and that, moreover, an organic relationship could be built between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the East Central European states on the other. Precisely because Gorbachev felt so confident about building such a sustainable relationship he could convince himself over the years to allow for a fundamental change.

Gorbachev's statements at first seemed declaratory, but they certainly hinted at fundamental change. For instance, at the 27th Soviet Communist Party Congress, he specifically emphasized 'unconditional respect in international practice for the right of every people to choose the paths and forms of its development' and then added that 'unity has nothing in common with uniformity, with hierarchy'.[9] This became the antecedent of what was, or at least

was purported to be, overall 'new thinking' in Soviet foreign policy. And East Central Europe would then be fitted into a larger Soviet world view.

By the summer of 1987 Gorbachev and his advisers rejected the traditional 'two camp' doctrine which was based on the belief of implacable hostility between socialism and capitalism. The change was more clearly articulated by Evgenyi Primakov, an adviser to Gorbachev and the director of the prestigious USSR Academy of Sciences' Institute of World Economics and International Relations (Primakov, a remarkable political chameleon, has re-emerged as foreign minister under Boris Yeltsin). Primakov argued that the historic dialectic between communism and capitalism could proceed both on a competitive and a cooperative plane.[10] This new interdependence between socialism and capitalism would then give licence not only to closer East–West relations but also to East Central European–West European relations, as well. Furthermore, Primakov also suggested that the USSR must turn inwards in order to succeed in its domestic efforts and implied that not only would the Soviet Union need to seek a less confrontational approach with the West but that it should decrease its expenses, including those in Eastern Europe.[11]

East Central Europe, therefore, could no longer occupy the centre of Soviet foreign policy despite Gorbachev's early proclamation. Furthermore, as Gorbachev's attempt at reforming the Soviet system proved increasingly futile, he became convinced of the need not merely to end the confrontation with the West but also of the urgency of generating massive Western loans and investments to save his reform programme. Within certain economic and ideological limits the West responded generously to Gorbachev's desire to end East–West confrontation. But it required further proof of Soviet 'new thinking' before it would accept a fundamental change in political and economic relations. One of the litmus tests (though by no means the only one) for the West was the transformation of the Soviet–East Central European relationship. That is, the Berlin wall had to come down, Germany had to be allowed to unify, Soviet troops would need to be withdrawn from East Central Europe and these states would then need to be allowed to freely choose their governments and be able to formulate independently their foreign policies.

It is doubtful that Gorbachev fully understood (at least not until it was too late) the full extent of Western demands or the ineffectiveness

of the Soviet model, however reformed, or the hostility to Soviet hegemony, however revised, in East Central Europe. As his situation became increasingly desperate at home, as his dependence on Western aid and political approval grew exponentially, Gorbachev not only drastically de-emphasized the significance of East Central Europe in Soviet foreign policy but also embarked on the road to irreversible concessions. In 1989 the sardonic spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Gennadi Gerasimov, told Western reporters that the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty (in East Central Europe) was dead and added that Moscow was adopting the 'Sinatra doctrine'. He referred to Frank Sinatra's song 'I did it my way' [*sic*], and added that Poland and Hungary are doing it 'their way'.[12] (Ironically, the song has dark overtones, mentioning that the 'end' is near and that the singer is facing 'the final curtain'.) However, Gorbachev and Gerasimov still wanted to believe that socialism in these states would be preserved and that the WTO and the CMEA would survive.[13] But any Soviet move now to prevent the defection of the East Central European states from the socialist camp would need to be balanced with the danger of confrontation with the West. And the East Central European states were simply no longer sufficiently important to risk such a confrontation. By late 1989, then, as the communist regimes in East Central Europe began to fall like so many dominoes, Moscow was in no position to use force to prevent the *dénouement.* And it is worth noting that at this stage only the massive use of Soviet force could have halted the collapse of the communist regimes in East Central Europe, even if temporarily.

Perhaps Gorbachev rationalized away the loss of these regimes by hoping that now the West would come through with truly massive economic aid and that the Soviet economy freed of the East Central European 'burden' would be dramatically revitalized. At the very least he believed that the revolutionary transformations taking place in East Central Europe could be stopped at the Soviet borders and reform instead would satisfy his people. He was mistaken on all counts.

The domino effect could not be halted at the Soviet frontiers. The West could not save Gorbachevism. Historically, it was perhaps fortunate that Gorbachev did not have Brezhnev's instinctive understanding that only massive force could preserve communist rule and Soviet hegemony in East Central Europe. But his intellectual inability to comprehend that only a fundamental transforma-

tion to pluralistic democracy of the Soviet and all the East Central European domestic systems would provide the opportunity for creating an organic relationship meant that the latter disintegrated in disillusion and bitterness.

For the democratic Russia that emerged from the Soviet Union years after the *de facto* collapse of communism in much of East Central Europe, the withdrawal from the region was both humiliating and burdensome. Russian extremists, from the left and the right, bemoaned the loss of status and influence. Hundreds of thousands of troops returning to Russia, looking for housing, food and employment, posed an enormous burden on the emerging democratic state. In East Central Europe, moreover, the late, grudging consent of the Gorbachev regime to the fall of reformist communist leaderships and its rearguard though ultimately futile opposition to the dissolution of the WTO and the CMEA, preserved and even enhanced suspicions of the giant in the East. Once free, these states turned almost completely to the West – *ex occidente lux*. Virtually all now want to integrate with the West and be protected by the West. The pendulum therefore has swung to the other extreme. If some balance is to be restored, though, and a sustainable, mutually beneficial relationship in the region is to be created, Russia must avail itself of the opportunity to transcend Gorbachev's delusion-ridden foreign policy towards the region.

A NEW FOREIGN POLICY?

Russia, though the legal successor to the Soviet Union, did not need to take on the burden or the blame of empire. As imperfect as democratic developments under the Yeltsin government may be, Russia did embark in 1992 on a revolutionary domestic transformation not unlike those in East Central Europe. All the states in the region now would have an opportunity to join the family of democratic nations. Therefore, Russia could have tried to pursue a revolutionary change in foreign relations as well, particularly with the East Central Europe states.

Broadly, this was one of the goals of the Yeltsin government. Instead of the Gorbachev government's claims of creating a new dialectic between communism and capitalism, which could proceed both on a competitive and cooperative plane, a democratic Russia now sought membership among the family of democratic states.

Russia could have joined with the East Central European states in the celebration over the collapse of communism, the end of a devastating and fundamentally flawed social experiment. And initially the Russian government at least appeared to move in that general direction. Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev who, until his replacement by Evgenyi Primakov in January 1996, survived repeated attempts by critics from the left and the right to remove him, always emphasized the need to build cooperative relations with the West and with the East Central European states and criticized Russian advocates of strong-arm tactics.[14] And, during his August 1993 visit to Poland, Boris Yeltsin, as a reflection of the fundamental change in relations, stated that he had no objections to Poland joining NATO.[15]

However, three factors diminished the effectiveness of Russian foreign policy towards the East Central European states. First, although the mechanics of implementing the withdrawal of former Soviet and now Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) troops from East Central Europe was important to Moscow, the significance of the region paled in comparison with relations with Western Europe and the United States. And, Russia's concern with maintaining its status as a primary international power, if no longer a superpower on a par with the United States, made it insist on a special role for itself which negated the possibility of building on the commonalty of democratic transformation throughout the region. Second, the rise of Russian nationalism, incorporating elements both from the left and the right, which was superimposed on the trauma of the loss of empire, not only within the territory of the former Soviet Union but also in East Central Europe, quickly began to constrain the ability of the Yeltsin government to formulate an accommodating policy towards the East Central European states. Third, the East Central European states which had suffered enormously under Soviet hegemony and socialist rule, were so eager to reduce political and economic relations with Russia to a minimum, and were so insensitive to hurting Russian pride that they made it difficult for Moscow to seek accommodation without the latter leaving an impression of weakness and even supplication.

Still, relations are changing in a very fundamental way from the Soviet era. Russia has no troops in any of the East Central European states. Trade patterns in the region have been dramatically altered. True, democratic forces in Russia do now have something of a vested interest in the success of democracy in the East Central European

states. But, in a sense, Russian lack of interest in re-establishing political, economic and military hegemony over the region remains a test of the success of the fundamental transformation of Russia itself. All this is not meant to suggest that Russia does not or should not have any longer a strong direct interest in the region. It does not mean that Russia, or the East Central European states, do not have legitimate security concerns in the region. Security interests are evident particularly in Russian and East Central European attitudes towards NATO and in Moscow's concerns over developments in the former Yugoslavia. And domestic factors continue to play a crucial role in the formulation of Russian foreign policy. All this remains evident in the political, psychological, economic and military realms.

The Political Determinants

Currently Russian foreign policy, particularly towards East Central Europe, remains in transition. The de-ideologization of Russian foreign policy in the sense that Moscow no longer considers itself the principal custodian and advocate of a scientific, universalistic ideology, has not yielded a clear alternative vision. As Russia searches for a comfortable, sustainable position for itself in the international system, it continues to try to find an effective policy towards the East Central European states. Since the latter are not a central concern of Russian foreign policy makers, that policy is often reflected indirectly. Russian domestic factors blend in with security concerns and questions of international status as the preponderant elements shaping Russian policy towards the East Central European states. These, therefore, must be taken into account together with specific Russian statements and policies directed at the region or at specific states in the area.

The collapse of the WTO and the CMEA, of course, did not result in a complete absence of all formal ties between Russia and the East Central European states. Russia has signed agreements with several states in the region. For example, in 1993 Russian and Bulgarian leaders ratified a ten-year treaty of friendship and cooperation which had been negotiated in the previous year.[16] In June 1993, Russia and Hungary signed an agreement which was to resolve Moscow's debts to Budapest.[17] On 26 August 1993 Boris Yeltsin initialled a friendship treaty with the Czech Republic and another treaty with Slovakia which included accords on military cooperation and closer economic relations.[18] And, in June 1994

Moscow and Prague agreed on terms for the payment of the Soviet debt that arose in the final years of the USSR's existence and which has been inherited by Russia.[19]

However these and other similar bilateral agreements are mere shadows of the extensive bilateral and multilateral linkages during the Soviet era. Not that any of the parties would wish to replicate that era, but the vagueness of most of these agreements, with specifics largely directed at resolving some clearly defined and limited problems inherited from the old regimes, is emblematic of the fact that the major issues remain unresolved. Moreover the main parties may not be paying sufficient attention to formulating policies which would create long-term mutually beneficial relations. There are two issues of significant concern to Russia, however, which should tell us a good deal about the interplay of Russian domestic political problems and the international factors in the formulation of Russian foreign policy towards East Central Europe: NATO and the former Yugoslavia.

The Dilemma of NATO

NATO membership for the East Central European states should no longer be controversial. Boris Yeltsin has stated that Russia itself wants to consider NATO membership.[20] In June 1994 Russia initialled a Partnership for Peace Agreement with NATO, and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev finally endorsed Russian participation in the partnership programme.[21] The East Central European states (including Slovenia from the former Yugoslavia) and the three Baltic states have also signed the PFP Agreement. During visits to Warsaw and Prague, in August 1993, as noted, President Yeltsin stated that Russia had no objection to the two East Central European states joining NATO.[22]

However, Yeltsin's statements in August proved to be, if anything, anomalous. Shortly afterwards the Russian government qualified it and then expressed outright opposition to the East Central European states joining NATO. There is now a remarkable consensus across the entire political spectrum in Russia opposing NATO enlargement. Among the most vocal opponents are liberals and westernizers such as former Foreign Minister Kozyrev. The latter do not fear a military threat to Russia from such alliance enlargement, but are very concerned that this would play right into the hands of the increasingly powerful nationalist factions. The

great success in the December 1993 parliamentary elections of the ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii had not only weakened, but tremendously frightened, the democratic forces in Russia. With about 23 per cent of the vote going to Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party the extremist leader became a powerful force in Russia. Moreover, his nationalistic message has resonated far more widely than the ranks of his party. Although Zhirinovskii himself did not do well in the presidential elections in June 1996, his Liberal Democratic Party did win a similar number of seats in the parliamentary elections of December 1995.[23]

In a personal interview in May 1994 Zhirinovskii indicated that he did not see a place for the East Central European states in NATO.[24] The future of these states, he contended, was in the East and it was his opinion that they should form an Eastern European community together with Russia. As far as the Baltic states were concerned (part of the 'near abroad', in the view of many Russians), Zhirinovskii argued that in the longer term it will be impossible for them to remain independent from Russia.[25]

The 'Zhirinovskii factor' has become a code for ultranationalism and anti-Westernism across the political spectrum in Russia. It has also awoken fears among the East Central Europeans of the re-emergence of a non-democratic and aggressive Russia. The fear of adverse domestic reaction to concessions to the East Central European states is a pivotal factor driving the Russian government's policy towards these states. This was bluntly admitted by Russian presidential spokesman, Viacheslav Kostikov, in January 1994. He declared that 'expanding NATO by granting membership to countries located in immediate proximity to Russia's borders will elicit a negative reaction from Russian public opinion and promote the development of undesirable sentiments in civilian and military circles, and could ultimately lead to military and political destabilization.'[26] This concern is pervasive among democrats. For example, Vladimir Lukin, the former Russian Federation Ambassador to the United States and now the head of the International Affairs Committee of the State Duma and a leader of the Yabloko bloc, has also viewed East Central European membership with considerable trepidation.[27] Igor Gaidar claimed in May 1995 that 'NATO expansion creates the best possible argument for our opponents that there is a world plot against Russia.'[28]

Although the military does not have the same kind of strong influence on policy towards East Central Europe as in the case of

the 'near abroad', they have repeatedly expressed their unhappiness with the prospects of the East Central European states joining the Western alliance. Russia's new military doctrine, introduced in November 1993, for instance, expressed this opposition by classifying the 'widening of military blocs and alliances damaging the security interests of the Russian Federation' as one of the potential threats to Russia.[29] Frequent statements by former Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, voicing concern about enlargements, have reinforced this. There has also been opposition from the left. Mikhail Gorbachev, for example, desperately seeking a political comeback, also decided to play on nationalistic and security fears by opposing the enlargement of NATO to East Central Europe. He contended that it would lead directly to new divisions and demarcation lines in Europe.[30]

The attempt to accommodate nationalism has been vividly illustrated in the case of Moldova. There, Lieutenant General Aleksander Lebed, former commander of the 14th Russian Army of the Dniester region and now head of Russia's Security Council, created a virtual fiefdom in a portion of the new state. His continuous disregard, not only of Moldovan sovereignty, but of orders from Moscow, led to repeated attempts to remove him. But by appealing to nationalism he so intimidated the democratic leadership in Moscow that President Yeltsin felt compelled to praise General Lebed's performance[31] and then countermanded orders from the Ministry of Defence to disband the 14th Army. Instead Yeltsin left General Lebed in charge of the renamed Group of Russian Forces.[32] It took numerous additional acts of insubordination from Lebed before President Yeltsin forced the general to resign in June 1995. In the first round of the 1996 presidential elections Lebed ran an unexpectedly strong third, and was appointed by President Yeltsin to head his National Security Council.

Russia's difficult decision in accepting membership in the PFP also illuminated the issues driving policy on East Central Europe. Andrei Kozyrev, for instance, declared in March 1994 that, although Russia was prepared to sign the PFP agreement, he was concerned by various reactions including those of an anti-Russian nature in East Central Europe. He claimed that if the agreement 'is accompanied by anti-Russian hysteria, [it] can only strengthen the position of Zhirinovskii and company'.[33] So, again, we have the fear of such reactions playing into the hands of the ultranationalists.

When Russia did finally sign the Agreement in June 1994, it insisted that a protocol should be attached to the agreement pack-

age which reflected Russia's special status. The sentence 'Russia and NATO have agreed to draw up an extensive individual partnership programme that is in keeping with Russia's size, importance and potential'[34] at least left open the possibility of some special partnership. Here clearly Russia was differentiating itself from the PFP partners in East Central Europe. Whereas Russian pride is understandable and its insistence on status not entirely surprising, this differentiation and the seeming grandstanding hardly reassured the East Central European states that Russia would no longer present a hegemonic threat.

Lastly, as a counter to possible NATO enlargement to include East Central Europe, the Russian government has been emphasizing the importance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The East Central European states which have little faith in the ability of OSCE to provide them with protection in case of aggressive action, have viewed Russian attempts to strengthen the mechanism of the OSCE as a cynical ploy to undermine NATO. Nevertheless, Andrei Kozyrev, in an important speech in March 1994, not only warned against an 'overemphasis on NATO and partnership with it' but declared that 'the CSCE [now OSCE] should play the central role in transforming the system of Euro-Atlantic cooperation'.[35] This clearly goes against the hopes of the East Central European states, particularly the Višegrad Four. Poland, for example, has already begun to adapt its military structure to that of NATO.[36] If anything, opposition to the enlargement of NATO continues to grow in Russia. The Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, a non-partisan Russian organization that includes legislators from many political parties, officials in the executive branch, business people, journalists and scholars, recently denounced NATO's plans for enlargement.[37] And Boris Yeltsin himself vociferously opposed enlargement in his speech at the 50th anniversary of the United Nations.[38] Of course, East Central Europe is not homogeneous. There are parts where Moscow's involvement is somewhat more welcome, but even in Bulgaria and Slovakia it is still likely to be controversial.

The Yugoslav Conundrum

For nationalists in Russia, policy towards the former Yugoslavia, particularly support for Serbia, has become a litmus test of patriotism. For the Yeltsin government which has been eager to build

strong cooperative relations with the West and to burnish Russia's image as a responsible state with a permanent vote on the Security Council, dealing with the issues in the former Yugoslavia has been extremely difficult. The intransigence, until recently, not only of Slobodan Milosevic's government in Serbia, but also of the Bosnian Serb leadership made it difficult for Moscow to act as an honest broker. There has been tremendous pressure on the government to try to safeguard the interests of the Serbs in the former Yugoslavia. The powerful forces of the extreme right and left are united in supporting the Serbs. Vladimir Zhirinovskii and the leader of the Communist Party, Gennadi Zyuganov, have both stressed the need to support the Serbs.[39] Centrist leaders as well, such as Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, were quick to condemn the NATO bombing of a Serbian position near the city of Gorazde in the spring of 1994, despite clear Serb provocations.[40]

It would seem, therefore, that the Yeltsin leadership has to take a strong position (at least) on what may be viewed as legitimate Serb security interests in the former Yugoslavia and in particular in Bosnia at the minimum to protect itself from being undermined by the non-democratic factions. There is another element, though, and this is Russia's insistence on status in the region. In February 1994, for instance, Boris Yeltsin firmly told British Prime Minister John Major that Moscow would not allow the Bosnian conflict to be resolved without its involvement.[41] Russia, in fact, has played a powerful role in attempting to mediate the conflict in Bosnia. They sent a very capable individual, Deputy Foreign Minister Vitalyi Churkin, to Bosnia. He was able to prevent a large-scale NATO bombardment of the Serbs in Bosnia in February 1994.[42] Furthermore, Russia is a key member of the Contact Group which has unveiled the latest joint plan for the resolution of the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Though the conflict long continued, the Russian government has made it very clear that it would persist in its demands for an important role in international decisions and actions on Bosnia. As Foreign Minister Kozyrev stated following a bombing raid by NATO in April 1994, 'trying to make such decisions without Russia is a big mistake and a big risk'.[43] In September 1995 President Yeltsin not only expressed his outrage at the recent NATO bombings of Bosnian Serb forces, but also warned that 'if such actions continue, it could come to something hotter'. Part of his outrage, he made clear, was derived from the fact that 'nobody even asked Russia'.[44] Yeltsin was somewhat mol-

lified by President Clinton's strong reassurances during their October 1995 meeting that Russia's views as a great power were respected, and Moscow agreed to participate in peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, but not under direct NATO command. This arrangement, though, is fragile and the former Yugoslavia remains a significant domestic political issue in Russia.

Russia's position on the former Yugoslavia, however, is sharply at variance with that of most of the East Central European states. Most of these countries view the Serbs as aggressors and have strongly supported NATO action in Bosnia. Russian attempts to protect the Serbs have been interpreted as an indicator of a continued inclination to hegemony. Explanations by Russian democratic leaders that they need to take a strong stand on supporting the Serbs as a means of countering the extremist anti-democratic forces has had the unintended effect of further fuelling East Central European worries about the stability of democracy in Russia and of making their desire to join NATO even more urgent (as a means of protecting them against the possibility of the collapse of democracy in Russia). East Central European concerns in this area, however, have generated very little Russian attention. It is an indication both of the relatively low priority that Russia assigns overall to relations with these states, except on issues which can create domestic problems, and of insensitivity. On all the issues outlined in this section, Russia and the East Central European states have been very ineffective in communicating their political, economic and military concerns with each other. It would be useful, therefore, to examine briefly some of the possible psychological barriers to better communication.

The Psychological Factor

The collapse of communism should have created opportunities for establishing a new kind of dialogue between Russia and the East Central European states. Several psychological factors, however, have functioned as a barrier to effective communication. First, in the case of Russia, the loss of the empire and of international status has created such a degree of hypersensitivity to real and imagined international slights that a sense of humiliation and, on occasion, even of victimization appears to inhibit the ability of Russia to be generous or sensitive towards the East Central Europeans. This is not just the case with the ultranationalists like Vladimir Zhirinovskii (whose extremism has further driven the East Central Europeans to

eagerly seek shelter in NATO), but is also evident in varying degrees among many democrats. For instance, Sergei Stankevich, a member of the State Duma and a former adviser to President Yeltsin, viewed the prospect of Russia joining the PFP as a prelude to further international humiliation.[45] He complained that Russia was being transformed from a victorious great power which had been one of the co-founders and guarantors of the post-war order in Europe and the world into a politically second-rate state which had to be taken under 'collective guardianship'. Moreover, he suggested that NATO states, in seeking to contain imagined Russian 'expansionism' (and here clearly the possible enlargement of the alliance to include the East Central European states was a provocative factor for Stankevich) were invoking a presumption of Russian guilt, with Moscow now being suspected of imperial ambitions.[46]

Second, although Russian attempts at preserving its status as an important international player may be legitimate, the manner in which Russia insists on it indicates that it is not usually cognizant of, or interested in, the negative effects this has on the East Central European states which, in fact, would like to be reassured that Moscow no longer has hegemonic aims. In the debate over joining the PFP, Moscow in its insistence on special status disregarded entirely East Central European sensitivities. Some commentators, for instance, declared bluntly that all 14 countries which had already joined the PFP by April 1994, combined could not have the same significance as Russia when it came to changing geopolitics and geostrategy.[47] Furthermore, although Moscow's insistence on the inclusion of a special protocol when Russia did sign the PFP agreement was determined largely by domestic factors, the message that this conveyed to East Central Europe was inevitably that Moscow wished to differentiate itself from the East Central European states in terms of status and influence. And this, without a proactive effort to reassure the latter that such a move was not directed towards any possible limitation of their sovereign rights, enhanced existing suspicions. It is true that in August 1993 Boris Yeltsin, during his first official visit to Poland, declared that 'there was no place for hegemony and diktat, the political psychology of Big Brother and Little Brother'.[48] But subsequent opposition by Russia to Polish and East Central European membership in NATO and its attempts to receive special status in the PFP increased suspicion that Russia was not merely seeking to be respected and consulted but was attempting to remain dominant in the region.

Third, fear of the West remains pervasive among some segments of the Russian population. Opposition to East Central European membership in NATO or to Russia's joining the PFP may well largely represent a Russian defensiveness in the face of Western strength and dynamism rather than a rejection of democratic values or an attempt to dominate the East Central European states. But, given the post-war history of the region, this is not likely to be the conclusion that is drawn in the capitals of the East Central European states. Moreover, real fear of the West and the values it stands for is present in Russia. Democracy is more fragile and more distrusted in Russia than in East Central Europe. For instance, whereas the New Democracies Barometer finds that a majority of East Central Europeans have a negative view of communist regimes and a positive view of the current regimes, in Russia the majority consistently give a significantly more positive rating to the pre-*perestroika* communist regime than to the new one.[49] When a small US infantry unit arrived in Russia for manoeuvres in September 1994, the anti-American demonstrations[50] evidenced the ambivalence of many Russians towards the West. Even the more 'moderate' politicians such as Mikhail Gorbachev have continually tried to take advantage of these fears. In January 1994 the latter denounced the PFP as a means of moving NATO's infrastructure gradually closer to Russia's borders and as an aspiration of the United States 'not only to preserve and strengthen its influence in Western Europe, but also to expand an authoritative presence in the eastern part of Europe'.[51] Lastly, the way in which Russians have rationalized their opposition to the extension of NATO to East Central Europe is a further indication of insensitivity and of a continuing Big Brother mentality. For instance, some influential Russian commentators responded to East Central European security concerns, when NATO membership was postponed in January 1994, by urging them to show more concern for their economies than their armies and by warning them not to upset the Russians.[52]

The East Central European states have not been much better at dialogue or reassurance than the Russians. It is true, as the Nobel Prize winning writer Czeslaw Milosz argued, that the East Central Europeans, having been reduced to the role of a historical object in the twentieth century, have been left with deep wounds and therefore take a cautious view of their great neighbours including Russia.[53] Decades of pain and humiliation distinguish the countries of Eastern Europe from those in Western Europe. In their eagerness,

though, to separate themselves from the Soviet Empire in 1989 and their current efforts to protect themselves from possible turmoil in Russia in the 1990s, the East Central European states have not been sufficiently sensitive to wounded Russian national pride and to the possibility that in attempting to enhance their security by joining NATO and the Western European Union they could be undermining the democratic forces in Russia and provoking ultranationalistic reactions.

Following the December 1993 parliamentary elections in Russia, in which the democrats did badly, Polish President Lech Walesa reacted almost with panic. In early January 1994, he declared that 'Warsaw insists on immediate admission to NATO, with security guarantees.'[54] In other instances East Central European states, in repositioning themselves for entry into NATO or to help the West in resolving the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, have been and continue to be insensitive to the possibility that their actions could be viewed as provocative by Moscow. For example, Hungary allowed NATO's WAC reconnaissance planes to use its air space to enforce the UN's flight ban over Bosnia.[55] Thus, despite attempts both by some Russian and East Central European leaders to open a productive dialogue, to be reassuring about regional security and to be sensitive to the fears of the other side, in general, the relationship between the Russians and the East Central Europeans has not been based on effective communications. And yet, they need to communicate better because not only political, but also economic and military issues continue very much to involve the interests of all parties.

The Economic Elements

As Gorbachev tried to reform the Soviet economy, he understood that he also needed to restructure economic relations with the East Central European states. The CMEA, the multilateral instrument for Soviet economic relations with the region, reflected Gorbachev's thinking. At the 43rd Session of the CMEA in October 1987, the joint communiqué emphasized 'the necessity of a restructuring (*perestroika*) of the mechanism of collaboration and socialist, economic integration'.[56] Furthermore, in July 1988 at the Prague meeting of the CMEA, nine out of the ten members (Romania abstained) issued a communiqué which stated that they had reached an 'understanding on gradually creating conditions for the mutual

free movement of goods, services, and other production factors with the aim of creating an integrated market in the future'.[57]

Such grandiose hopes for a socialist common market now seem absurdly optimistic, given the precipitous disintegration of Russia's economic relations with the East Central European states following the fall of the communist regimes in the region. That the East Central European states freed of Soviet political control and the threat of military intervention should switch their economic ties to the West as soon as possible is not entirely surprising. They not only sought to escape what they perceived to be a Soviet political and economic yoke, but held at the time tremendously optimistic expectations of economic rescue from the West. What is somewhat more surprising is the relative ineptitude and seeming Soviet and then Russian reluctance to preserve strong economic ties with the region. Perhaps this is a result of the Soviet perception that East Central Europe was an economic burden. And it may be due in part to Russian expectations that, free of communist rule, they too would be quickly rewarded with massive Western economic help including loans, investments and the opening up of markets.

Although the Russians and the East Central Europeans have been sorely disappointed by the level of Western aid and the reluctance of Western industrialized states to open up their markets, these post-communist states have dramatically reoriented their foreign trade. Russia's Trade Ministry statistics show a radical shift of trade to the Western industrialized states.[58] Further, trade with the former CMEA countries not only declined precipitously after the fall of the communist regimes, but continues to diminish, while Russia is running a significant trade surplus with the West.[59]

The shift in the trade of the East Central European states is even more dramatic. For example, in the case of the Czech Republic, in 1989 almost two-thirds of its trade (as part of Czechoslovakia) was with the other communist states. In 1993 those same trading partners accounted for less than 20 per cent of the Czech Republic's trade.[60] As trade with the Soviet Union and the other former members of the CMEA collapsed, the East Central European states dramatically increased their exports to the Western industrialized countries. But the enormous rates of increase, such as the 48 per cent jump in exports to the Western industrialized states that Poland enjoyed in 1990 (over 1989),[61] could not be sustained indefinitely. OECD figures indicate that by 1993, for instance, the East Central European states (with the exception of Bulgaria)

showed a significant fall in their export growth rates to the Western industrialized states.[62] By 1995, though, there was improved growth of trade with the West.[63] This is a reflection both of the difficulties encountered by the East Central European states in becoming competitive and of the restricted access to Western markets.

If the East Central European states, however, continue to transform their economies, remain politically stable and are granted membership in the European Union, then it may be possible to keep increasing and intensifying their economic links with the Western industrialized states. However, even in a best-case scenario it is highly unlikely that the East Central European states will be accepted into the European Union before the turn of the century. In the meantime there are opportunities for Russia and these states to build stronger economic ties. Not that Russia, as Zhirinovskii would like to believe, is an alternative to the European Union. Rather there are not only economic opportunities but there is also economic logic to strengthening linkages that derive from compatible economic strengths and geographic proximity.

Some of the friendship and cooperation agreements that Russia signed with the various East Central European states do have an economic dimension but there seems to be little political will on the part of Moscow to back them up. Instead the impetus, at least for the time being, comes from three sources: the settlement of debts, the need to market Russian military hardware, and the continuing attractiveness and potential of Russian natural resources.

In June 1994, Russia and the Czech Republic agreed on terms for repayment of the Soviet debt that arose in former years, during the USSR's existence, and that were subsequently inherited by Russia.[64] The debt was recalculated in transferable rubles, with a total Russian debt of $3.5 billion, to be repaid in increasing increments, beginning in 1994 and terminating in 2003. Significantly, the plan called for repaying part of the debt with the property owned by privatized Russian enterprises.[65] Therefore, this agreement not only opened the door to stepped up Russian/Czech economic ties in which both sides at least expressed a formal interest, but it also created a stake for the Czech Republic in the Russian economy. Moreover, this agreement may become the model for settling mutual financial claims between Russia and Poland and Bulgaria.

The agreement that two other countries, Hungary and Slovakia, previously reached on debt settlement with Russia points to some

other possibilities. Hungary and Slovakia both accepted MiG-29 aircraft as partial payment for Russia's debts.[66] This was, in part, a result of Russian pressure but also of some creative thinking. It was not merely a case where Russia could not have provided other exports. Rather, the sale of advanced military aircraft has been very important to the military-industrial complex and to the Russian armed forces, a means of maintaining jobs and generating funds for arms production. Russia has been pushing the sale, not only of advanced military aircraft, but also of its new T-80 and T-84 tanks which are vastly better than those manufactured in Eastern Europe but still cheaper than comparable Western models.[67] A lesser, but not insignificant, concern that Russia has had about the East Central European states joining NATO has been that they would shift from advanced Russian-manufactured weapons to Western ones. The agreements with Hungary and Slovakia, though, are likely to prove to be anomalous. Arms-for-debt settlements cannot be a long-term solution to the problem of forging productive economic relations in the region or a viable means of preserving the oversized Russian military industries. In some respects current Russian–Bulgarian economic relations may represent a more sustainable model. Bulgaria sees major economic benefits in dealing with Russia, particularly in joint ventures that would supply Russian gas and oil to Bulgaria and other Balkan countries. A gas pipeline from Russia to Greece, via Bulgaria, is already planned, and the socialist government of Zhan Videnov in Sofia has been discussing other projects and trade liberalization.[68]

The export of Russian natural resources has certainly better long-term prospects. Geographic proximity and the vast quantities of Russian resources means that there is, indeed, tremendous long-term potential for sales to East Central Europe. But this, too, will depend on a number of factors. First, the Russian economy needs to become more efficient and stable so that it can become a cost-efficient and dependable supplier of raw materials. Second, a successful restructuring of the Russian economy, with its enormous scientific and research talent, could radically increase Russian manufacturing competitiveness in international markets and allow Russia to produce goods that would have a chance to compete successfully in the East Central European markets with Western imports. This would downgrade the importance of the trade in raw materials. Overall, though, there is a need for new political thinking regarding economic ties whereby Russia, on the one hand, and the

East Central European states, on the other, recognize the advantages of finding a productive middle ground between the distorted hegemonic economic relations of the socialist era and the neglected economic ties that largely characterize relations today. On the margins there have been some improvements already. Significant change, however, will depend not only on political and psychological shifts but also, to an extent, on changes in military relations and threat perceptions among the parties.

The Military Strategic Factor

The collapse of Soviet military power in East Central Europe has been so abrupt and the strategic reconfiguration so complete that there should have been a fundamental change in the security concerns of the states in the region. Yet not just the East Central European countries but Russia itself, all continue to voice significant regional security concerns. Political transformations in the states in the region and the geographic changes following the collapse of the Soviet Union (which in turn has meant that several of the East Central European states now no longer have borders with Russia), are important, but there are other factors that will most probably continue to shape Russian military strategic policy towards East Central Europe. These include Russian security concepts and threat perceptions, East European policies and actions which impinge on Russian security concerns, Russian decision-making on military strategic issues, and the weight of economic-military factors.

First, Russian security concepts have continued to broaden by giving the political factors a greater play. This means that, even though Russia perceives little military threat from East Central Europe or from NATO, as evidenced in part by its decision to join the PFP agreement, it evidently fears the political threat of exclusion and the possibility that such exclusion in the longer term could turn into a military threat. Therefore a good deal of Russian foreign policy effort has been focused on preventing such an exclusion. A sophisticated and persuasive argument could be made about the indivisibility of security on the continent of Europe, that is from the Atlantic to the Urals, and the need for the creation of a zone of security from Vancouver to Vladivostok, to underpin these efforts. The Russians have not articulated this argument effectively and the harshness with which they have rejected the possibility of the East

Central European states (alone) joining NATO has contributed to fears in the region, as already noted. It certainly did not help matters that in September 1995 President Yeltsin used particularly incendiary language to oppose the enlargement of NATO. He asserted that 'when NATO comes right up to Russia's borders, one can consider there to be two military blocs' and that this would lead Russia to form a new organization to replace the Warsaw Pact. Such an expansion would be a 'major political mistake that is fraught with the potential for war throughout Europe'.[69]

The military doctrine enunciated by Russia in 1993 does incorporate the political element of the indivisibility of security by inferring that Russia is and will be acting defensively if it is threatened. But at the same time the doctrine, in suggesting that the enlargement of NATO could provide cause for Russia to act against countries which now would be covered by a nuclear umbrella, can indeed be viewed in East Central Europe as provocative and threatening. Moreover, the drastic reduction in Russian military power (as compared to that of the Soviet Union) which would make an invasion of Western Europe impossible does not mean that Russia's capacity to intervene militarily in East Central Europe has disappeared altogether. For example, the authorized strength of the Russian armed forces in December 1994 was 2.2 million individuals (although the number in uniform is believed to be about 1.5 million)[70] and this included powerful tank forces stationed in the Kaliningrad district bordering on Poland. Despite attempts to downscale the military industries, the first deputy Defence Minister Andrei Kokoshin asserted in the summer of 1994 that Russia intended to create dual-use technology which would preserve the defence sector's mobilization potential.[71] And despite the government's budgetary deficits and the attempt to hold the overall level of spending down, the 1995 budget projected that the armed forces will receive almost one-quarter of total central government spending.[72] At a time when there does not appear to be any significant external military threat to Russia the maintenance of such high troop and expenditure levels is not reassuring to the East Central European states, where the experience of Soviet occupation is so recent and vivid.

Secondly, the East Central Europeans have not helped their case by pursuing policies and expressing views which play into the hands of Russian ultranationalists and cause discomfort even to the most

committed democrats. In their haste to join the European Union and NATO, the East Central Europeans have been insensitive to Russian concerns that security ought to be indivisible throughout the continent. On the contrary, in an attempt to protect themselves from possible turmoil in Russia, they have reinforced the impression of exclusivist foreign and security policies. Rather than building bridges, they have singly sought to construct walls. True, some of the East European states have been more forthcoming in relations with Russia, particularly Bulgaria. The ten-year Russian–Bulgarian treaty of friendship and cooperation ratified in 1993 does allow for some military cooperation. But it is very limited. And this treaty is more the exception in the region. Even some of the most sophisticated East Central European leaders, individuals who in the past have shown a deep understanding and considerable empathy for Russian problems and concerns, have often been insensitive to Russia's fears of exclusion. Czech president Vaclav Havel, for instance, at the end of June 1994 praised the Western nations for not giving Russia special status within the PFP.[73] He added that Moscow should not feel threatened by NATO's possible expansion and then rejected as 'almost senseless' the idea of Russian alliance membership. Other Czech and Polish leaders have taken an even more strident anti-Russian tone in seeking NATO membership,[74] only further to increase Russian apprehension and ire.

Third, Russian politico-military decision-making regarding East Central Europe has caused some disquiet. There is not the same kind of duality of foreign policy as there is towards the states of the 'near abroad' although there is some overlap as in the case of Moldova. The military is not a homogeneous body. But the leadership around Pavel Grachev took a harder line on the enlargement of NATO than Yeltsin and Kozyrev. Moreover, hard-liners in the military have been gaining strength. An opinion poll among officers of the Moscow garrison and that of staffs of the Moscow military academies taken in the summer of 1994 have purported to show that the hard-line commander of the 14th army in Moldova's Transdniester region, General Aleksander Lebed, was by far the favourite, with 76 per cent for the post of Defence Minister.[75] General Lebed, who admires Chile's General Augusto Pinochet,[76] has high political ambitions. But even in his role as commander of Russian forces in the Transdniester region his actions worsened fears in Romania, in particular, and caused concern elsewhere in the region. In April 1995, before he resigned his command, he

asserted that the expansion of NATO to include Poland and the Czech Republic could mean the start of the Third World War.[77] With Lebed leading the Security Council and his ally General Igor Rodionov appointed as the new Minister of Defence, in the military, at least, hardliners appear to be in the ascendancy.

Fourth, economic factors play a role in military-strategic calculations. Sophisticated Russian aircraft, as we have seen, have been provided by Russia to Hungary and Slovakia as partial payment for debts incurred by Moscow during the Soviet era. Additional sales to East Central Europe would help preserve at least some of the military industries and aid the weapons procurement of the Russian military by continuing long production runs and thus diminishing costs. The enlargement of NATO, conversely, would not only deprive Russia of a market that until recently it owned, but sophisticated Western technology in the region would induce the kind of technological competition that the financially constrained Russian military cannot afford. Even the possible expansion of NATO to Russia (as unlikely as that may seem) would create, in the short and intermediate term, enormous problems for the Russian military because the cost of standardization or even of weapons interoperability with NATO would require massive replacements and the introduction of new technologies. The costs undoubtedly would require a far more drastic reduction of the size of the military forces than anything envisaged to date. It is little wonder, therefore, that hegemonic habits and a lack of sympathy for East Central European independence are more prevalent among the Russian military than among any other segment of the Russian population save for the ultranationalist politicians.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of Russian–East Central European relations cannot and should not focus on an apportionment of blame. It is, however, impossible to avoid the impression of lost opportunities. First, Russia as the legal successor to the Soviet Union did not need to assume the imperial burden of the latter. As an emerging democracy it could have developed a far better understanding of the transformational processes taking place in East Central Europe than had the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, who worked under the delusion that Marxist-Leninist rule could be made so attractive that an

organic socialist community would be created in the region. Russia, thus, simply did not avail itself sufficiently of the opportunity to break with the Soviet past. The East Central Europeans, in their turn, have had difficulty in transcending the fears of a colonial past. Ironically, in their attempt to protect themselves from turmoil in Russia they have and may continue inadvertently to contribute to the undermining of the Russian democratic forces. The political relationship therefore has not been altered sufficiently to correspond to the dramatic domestic changes that have occurred.

Second, there is a need to restructure the very psychology of the relationship between Russia and the East Central European states. This involves not merely the relinquishment of habits of empire and fears of hegemony but increased attention and greater sensitivity to the insecurity, pride or sense of historical hurt of the various parties. There have been too many lapses of attention in the past two years, to the point where it may not be unfair to suggest (to borrow a Canadian term concerning relations between Francophones and Anglophones) that Russia on the one hand and the East Central European states on the other have been very much like two solitudes.

Third, the dramatic collapse of trade and economic relations should be addressed in terms of constructing long-term mutually beneficial relations. It is not that a new eastern common market can or should be built, but rather that there is both geographic and economic logic to much stronger and more productive relations among the parties.

Fourth, there has to be an acceptance of the indivisibility of security in the whole region and a much more determined move to construct stable sustainable relations among the parties. But the ability to do this and to achieve progress in the other three areas is ultimately predicated on the states in the regions successfully resolving the problems of political legitimacy and stability through the creation of pluralistic democracy. That is, we come full circle in that we have to start with the domestic variables. Democratic transformation will remain crucial and necessary for successful Russian–East Central European relations. And if democratic institutions and processes become successfully entrenched in Russia as has already occurred in much of East Central Europe, there is reason to believe that relations in the region are likely to evolve organically in a way which could never have been achieved under Communist rule.

NOTES

1. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty News Briefs* (hereafter *RFE/RL News Briefs*) (5–8 July 1994), p. 18.
2. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (24–27 May 1994).
3. *Pravda* (12 March 1985).
4. Michael Marrese, 'CMEA: Effective but Cumbersome Political Economy', *International Organization*, vol. 40, no. 2 (Spring 1986), pp. 287–327; Maurice Bornstein, 'Soviet Economic Growth and Foreign Policies', in S. Bialer (ed.), *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1981), pp. 227–35; and Paul Marer, Statement before Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East, Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC, 7 October 1985.
5. Dina R. Spechler and Martin C. Spechler, 'The Political Economy of Soviet Imperial Power: Reassessing the Burden of Eastern Europe', paper delivered at the 1989 Conference of the American Association for Slavic Studies, Chicago, p. 23.
6. Paul Marer, 'Reforms in the USSR and Eastern Europe: Is There a Link?' in Aurel Braun (ed.), *The Soviet–East European Relationship in the Gorbachev Era* (Boulder, CO, and London, UK, Westview Press, 1990), pp. 84–100.
7. For instance, the Soviet Union estimated that the oil subsidies for the period at $18 billion were all of the CMEA's. Cited in Raimund Dietz, 'Advantages and Disadvantages in Soviet Trade with Eastern Europe: The Pricing Dimension', in Joint Economic Committee, *East European Economies: Slow Growth in the 1980s*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC, United States Government Printing Office, 1986), p. 283.
8. Aurel Braun and Richard B. Day, 'Gorbachevian Contradictions', *Problems of Communism*, no. 3 (May–June 1990), pp. 36–50.
9. *Pravda* (26 February 1986).
10. Evgenyi Primakov, 'Kapitalizm vo Vzaimosviazannom Mire', *Kommunist*, no. 13 (September 1987), p. 102.
11. Evgenyi Primakov, 'Novaia filosofiia vneshnei politiki' *Pravda* (10 July 1987).
12. *The New York Times* (26 October 1989).
13. Ibid.
14. O. Dmitrieva, 'War and the Foreign Ministry. Our correspondent talks with Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev', *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (3 June 1993).
15. *The Financial Times* (London) (26 August 1993).
16. *The Financial Times* (21 April 1993).
17. *The Financial Times* (24 June 1993).
18. *The Financial Times* (27 August 1993).
19. *Izvestiia* (Moscow) (10 June 1994).
20. *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto) (20 October 1994).
21. *Segodnia* (23 June 1994); *Transition* (Prague) (11 August 1995), p. 36.
22. *The Financial Times* (26 and 27 August 1993).
23. *The Economist* (23 December–5 January 1996), pp. 59ff.
24. Author's interview with Vladimir Zhirinovskii (Moscow) (25 May 1994).
25. Ibid.

26. *Segodnia* (6 January 1994).
27. *Segodnia* (1 April 1994).
28. *The New York Times* (10 May 1995).
29. *Kommersant Daily* (Moscow) (17 November 1993).
30. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (Moscow) (13 January 1994).
31. *Izvestiia* (16 August 1994).
32. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (30 August 1994).
33. *Pravda* (24 March 1994).
34. *Segodnia* (23 June 1994).
35. *Izvestiia* (11 March 1994).
36. *Izvestiia* (31 May 1994).
37. 'No Role for Russia in a Security Order that Includes an Expanded NATO', *Transition*, 15 December 1995, p. 21; reprinted from *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 21 June 1995.
38. NTV *Segodnia* (24 October 1995).
39. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (4 February 1994).
40. *Rossiiskie vesti* (13 April 1994).
41. *Izvestiia* (24 February 1994).
42. Ibid.
43. *Segodnia* (12 April 1994).
44. *Rossiiskie vesti* (Moscow) (9 September 1995).
45. *Segodnia* (8 April 1994).
46. Ibid.
47. Iakov Plyais, 'Challenges of the Times and Partnership for Peace', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (20 April 1994).
48. *The Financial Times* (26 August 1993).
49. Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 'New Russian Barometer', cited in Richard Rose, 'Russia as an Hour-Glass Society', *East European Constitutional Review*, vol. 4, no. 3 (summer 1995), p. 39.
50. *Globe and Mail* (Toronto) (20 October 1994).
51. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (13 January 1994).
52. Leonid Mlechin, 'Another's Humiliation Is No Cause for Celebration', *Izvestiia* (12 January 1994).
53. *Izvestiia* (12 January 1994).
54. *The Washington Post* (4 January 1994).
55. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (16–19 August 1994), p. 16.
56. (Emphasis added). Tass International Service (13 October 1987).
57. *Pravda* (8 July 1988).
58. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (18–22 July 1994), p. 3.
59. Ibid. In the first half of 1994, for example, Russian exports amounted to $21.3 billion (US) compared to imports of only $13.3 billion. See, also, *The Economist* (18–24 November 1995), p. 116.
60. *The Economist* (22 October 1994), p. 27; Statistics Directorate, OECD, *Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade*, May 1996, pp. 68–9.
61. *The Economist* (5 November 1994), p. 106.
62. Ibid.
63. IMF, *Direction of Trade Statistics Quarterly* (Washington, IMF, 1996), pp. 43 ff.
64. *Izvestiia* (10 June 1994).
65. Ibid.

66. *Izvestiia* (16 February 1994).
67. *The Economist* (22 October 1994), p. 27.
68. *Kommersant-Daily* (Moscow) (19 September 1995).
69. *Segodnia* (3 September 1995).
70. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (13–17 June 1994), p. 2.
71. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (27 June–1 July 1994), p. 5.
72. *The Economist* (29 October 1994), p. 62.
73. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (27 June–1 July 1994), p. 11.
74. Michael Mihalka, 'Eastern and Central Europe's Great Divide over Membership in NATO', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 14 (August 1995), pp. 48–55.
75. *RFE/RL News Briefs* (5–8 July 1994), p. 2.
76. *The Economist* (27 August 1994), p. 48.
77. *Lidove Noviny* (12 April 1995); cited in Michael Mihalka, 'Continued Resistance to NATO Expansion', *Transition*.

4 Neither Adversaries Nor Partners: Russia and the West Search for a New Relationship

Paul J. Marantz

In December 1991, a new Russian state emerged from the wreckage of the Soviet Union. At first, there was much optimism in both Russia and the West that the collapse of Soviet power, the demise of Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the end of the Cold War would lead to a more tranquil world, one in which Moscow would cease being a threatening adversary and would instead become a cooperative member of the international community.[1]

Yet the honeymoon in East–West relations did not last long. Within just two years it became apparent that this earlier optimism was misplaced. Support within Russia for close cooperation with the West declined, Russian foreign policy became more assertive and nationalistic, and Moscow clashed with the West over a number of important issues.

By early 1994, influential figures in Russia and the West were warning of deteriorating relations.[2] William Perry, the US Secretary of Defense, cautioned that 'a renewal of some new version of the Cold War' was even possible.[3] What went wrong? How has Russian foreign policy changed in recent years? What are the prospects for constructive East–West relations in the future?

Initially, the foreign policy of the new Russian state had a very strong pro-Western orientation. Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, a key proponent of this policy, favoured close relations with the West on both practical and philosophic grounds.[4] In his eyes, the central objective of Russian foreign policy should be to support and facilitate the process of economic and political transformation taking place inside Russia. He saw the highly industrialized nations of the West as the main source of the economic assistance that Russia so desperately needed to make the difficult transition to a market economy. Only the West could provide the large-scale foreign aid,

loans, trade, investment capital, advanced technology and entrepreneurial expertise that Russia required. While countries such as South Korea, Japan, and Saudi Arabia might also be of assistance, the Russians viewed them as far less important than the United States, Germany, and other major Western nations.

Improved relations with the West would also facilitate a sharp reduction in the bloated military budget that had absorbed some 20–25 per cent of the GNP under the Soviet regime. A decrease in the external threat would permit the reductions in the size of the military to go forward safely. What is even more important, improved East–West relations would undercut the position of the still powerful military-industrial complex that was attempting to slow the conversion of military industry to civilian production.

Beyond these important practical considerations, however, there was a broader rationale for a pro-Western policy. In terms of the recurring division within Russia between Westernizers and Slavophiles, Kozyrev was an unabashed Westernizer. He believed that it was vitally important for Russia to become an integral member of the Western community of nations. He argued against the view that Russia should find its own unique path of economic and political development distinct from the institutions and practices that have arisen over the centuries in the West. Quoting the nineteenth-century Russian writer Alexander Herzen, Kozyrev declared: 'Open hatred of the West is... open hatred of the whole process of evolution of mankind.'[5] Reformers like Kozyrev hoped that if Russia identified with the West, financial assistance and critical political and psychological reinforcement would become available for the processes of democratization and marketization.

In framing Russian foreign policy, Kozyrev took a very benign view of the West's intentions. Echoing the views of many Western experts on international politics, he argued that Western militarism and imperialism were things of the past. Economic interdependence, the spread of political democracy, and a broad recognition of the unprecedented destructiveness of nuclear weapons were transforming the international system. For example, in an article that appeared in the Soviet publication *New Times* in October 1990, he stated: 'The main thing is that Western countries are pluralistic democracies. Their governments are under the control of legal public institutions, and this practically rules out the pursuance of an aggressive foreign policy.... In the system of Western

states... the problem of war has essentially been removed.'[6] Contrary to the views of those Russians who took a more negative view of Western intentions, Kozyrev stated: 'We proceed from the premise that no developed, democratic civil society based on reasonable and rational principles can threaten us.'[7]

On the basis of this perspective, Kozyrev, with the strong backing of President Boris Yeltsin, set a course in early 1992 aimed at burying all traces of Cold War rivalry and winning the full support of the West by demonstrating that the new Russian state was fundamentally different from its Soviet predecessor. He wanted to show that Russia could be trusted and that close cooperation could indeed replace tense confrontation. To this end, the Russian Government sought to demonstrate that it would not seek unilateral advantage by allying itself with anti-Western forces, as the Soviet Union had so often done. It would cooperate fully on matters of deep concern to the West such as the disciplining of Iraq and the containment of war in the former Yugoslavia.

From the standpoint of the West, Russian foreign policy during 1992 could scarcely have been better. Moscow supported sharp cuts in nuclear arms and signed the START II Treaty to bring this about. Russia was cooperative at the United Nations, refrained from using its Security Council veto, and even voted in May 1992 in favour of Western proposals for economic sanctions against rump Yugoslavia to punish it for aiding Serbian expansion in Bosnia. Moscow voted for these sanctions despite Russia's traditional ties to Serbia and widespread sympathy in the Russian legislature for Serbia. This was done to demonstrate that Russia had decisively rejected the anti-Western manoeuvring of Soviet foreign policy and could now be counted on as a constructive partner in the building of a new post-Cold War international system.

Equally important from the perspective of the West was the fact that Russia embarked upon a policy that emphasized good relations with its neighbours. Russian troops were withdrawn from Germany, Eastern Europe, and a number of the former Soviet republics. Whereas the Soviet regime had habitually subordinated domestic policy to foreign policy – engaging in a continual military buildup and an expansionist foreign policy at the expense of the Soviet people's depressed standard of living – the Yeltsin Government attempted to construct a foreign policy that served domestic needs and in particular that supported the ambitious economic and political reforms that were taking place.

THE END OF THE HONEYMOON

At the start of 1992, Yeltsin still enjoyed enormous prestige as the hero of the resistance to the attempted coup of August 1991. However, his political honeymoon did not last long. By the summer, members of the Russian parliament and various Russian foreign policy experts were sharply criticizing Russian foreign policy. By the end of 1992 there was widespread speculation that Kozyrev might soon be forced to resign as Foreign Minister.[8]

Kozyrev's critics made a series of wide-ranging accusations. They argued that the Russian Government, in its quest for the West's friendship, supinely supported Western and especially American policies even when these were not in the Russian national interest. In so doing, Russia was no longer behaving as a proud and independent Great Power.[9]

The critics of Russian foreign policy also charged that the Russian Government, in its excessive concern for Western goodwill, was neglecting other states that were especially important to the country, such as China, India, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia.[10] They argued that more attention should be directed towards building good relations with these countries and less towards the West. Russia's alleged betrayal of its past friends, such as Cuba, Iraq, Libya, and Serbia, was also attacked as being short-sighted and unprincipled. In the eyes of these critics, the pro-Western policy of the Yeltsin Government had exacted a great price in terms of Russia's international standing, its autonomy, and its national interests. Moreover, in their view, this policy simply had not paid off. Despite extravagant promises, little Western aid was actually reaching Russia. There was also little foreign investment, and the Russian economy was being damaged by the country's acquiescence to Western sanctions against Iraq, Libya, and Serbia.

Most significantly, Kozyrev and Yeltsin were condemned for not following a sufficiently forceful policy towards the so-called 'near abroad', the 14 new states that emerged alongside Russia from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Government was faulted for not doing more to protect the physical security of Russians in the 'near abroad' and to ensure that they were not being discriminated against or treated as second-class citizens.

Kozyrev's critics argued that Russia had a special role to play as the pre-eminent regional power. Russia should ensure stability, dampen regional and ethnic conflict, and overcome the fragmentation

that was dragging down the economies of all the states in the region. Greater economic and political integration under the leadership of Russia was said to be the only way for Russia to overcome her present difficulties.

The growing chorus of criticism of the pro-Western foreign policy of Kozyrev and Yeltsin comes from all across the Russian political spectrum. The so-called Eurasianists advocate a foreign policy that is more independent of the West. They argue that Russia cannot simply become the eighth member of the G-7 (the Group of Seven leading industrialized states). Russia's economy is too weak, the European Union is moving towards more inward-looking integration, and without Ukraine, Russia is now further from Western Europe than it has been at any time in the past 300 years. The Eurasianists contend that Russia needs to develop a clear conception of the distinctive national interests it possesses by virtue of its unique geographical and historical position straddling Europe and Asia. The Eurasianists are not anti-Western, but they stress the need to preserve Russia's freedom of action and the importance of defending Russia's national interests, even when this produces some discomfort in the United States or other Western countries.

A second significant group, the ultranationalists, go much further than this. Militant nationalists and former communists have joined forces in a 'red–brown' coalition that forcefully condemns the West for humiliating Russia, reducing it to a second-rate power, ruining its economy, and robbing it of its national resources.[11] They advocate a reinvigorated Russia that will expand beyond its present truncated borders and reunite in one country the vast territory of the former Soviet Union. Vladimir Zhirinovskii is the most visible representative of this political tendency.

Finally, even among those who consider themselves political moderates and believe that Russia should transform itself along Western lines by acquiring a market economy and viable institutions of political pluralism, there has been widespread criticism of Russian foreign policy for being naive, unprofessional, unfocused, and not sufficiently attentive to Russia's national interests.[12]

The storm of domestic criticism that greeted Russia's pro-Western policy is one reason why this policy began to change by the end of 1992. However, there were other reasons as well. In January 1992, the Yeltsin Government launched 'shock therapy', an ambitious programme to create the basis for a market economy by freeing prices from governmental regulation. By the end of 1992,

it was clear that, while there had indeed been a 'shock' to the economy – as inflation hit an annual rate of 2,000 per cent for 1992 – there unfortunately had been very little beneficial 'therapy'. Production was dropping, new businesses were not being created, people's savings had been wiped out, and their standard of living declined as prices increased far faster than most salaries.

Moreover, one of the few areas of undeniable growth was in crime and corruption. A sharp increase in murder, extortion, and robbery led to a widely shared perception that law and order were breaking down. Rampant corruption meant that businesses could not function without paying bribes and protection money. Well-placed individuals, including former members of the communist *nomenklatura* (the party elite), were able to enrich themselves by gaining ownership of newly privatized state enterprises on highly favourable terms. The well connected got richer, ordinary citizens got poorer, and the newly created inequalities were all the more galling as this new wealth was publicly flaunted. These developments undermined people's confidence in the government and weakened its ability to adhere to its original foreign policy agenda.

The deterioration of the economy and the collapse of many people's standard of living also affected Russian foreign policy by fuelling the growing sense of disorientation and humiliation that people were feeling. For many, it seemed as though their whole world had been turned upside down. The reigning ideology had been discredited, leaving nothing in its place. The history that they had been taught under the Soviet regime was revealed to be a lie. The Soviet state that they had been raised in, and that many had dutifully served in the armed forces, had ceased to exist. A trip to familiar places on the Black Sea or in Central Asia now meant travelling to a foreign country and the use of a foreign currency. Whereas the Soviet Union had undeniably been a superpower which carried great weight in the world, Russia was behaving like a battered supplicant, its arms outstretched in the hope of receiving foreign aid. Many of the foreign goods now being displayed in stores or on television were out of the reach of the average citizen, while social ills long associated in people's minds with capitalism – crime, pornography, abject poverty, highly visible inequality – were spreading.

The critics of Yeltsin's foreign policy were able to appeal to people's sense of outrage and humiliation. They drew a direct link between foreign policy and the way people were living. They

argued that if Russia stood tall, if it vigorously defended its interests, if it prevented the West from taking advantage of its weakness, if it actively competed in the sale of arms abroad, then surely this would produce better results than the present weak-kneed policies.

The Yeltsin government was also vulnerable to this criticism because of the deterioration of conditions in the 'near abroad'. Despite the intention of Yeltsin and Kozyrev to give priority to Russia's relations with the West and to deal with Moscow's newly created neighbours through even-handed diplomacy and constructive cooperation, growing problems in the 'near abroad' compelled a reconsideration of this policy. The 'near abroad' was simply too important to Russia to be treated with benign neglect. Russia has many vital economic, political, and security interests in the 'near abroad'. The Russian economy has been harmed by the balkanization of the highly integrated economic system of the former Soviet Union. Transportation has broken down, sources of supply are no longer available, markets have been lost, and the division of labour that existed between different regions of the former Soviet Union has been disrupted. Some 25 million Russians often living in difficult conditions in the 'near abroad' cannot be ignored, and the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing to Russia to avoid instability and ethnic tension are also imposing an increasingly heavy burden on the Russian economy.

On political grounds as well, instability and conflict on Russia's borders is of great concern to the Russian Government. Conflict in neighbouring states can easily spread to Russia, and a growth of radical Islam could inflame the situation within Russia where millions of Muslims reside. Political instability in the 'near abroad' also provides opportunities for other states, such as Turkey, Iran and China, to extend their power into areas bordering Russia.

All of these factors provided a very strong impetus for a more assertive Russian policy in the 'near abroad'. Moreover, by 1993 it became clear that the policy of tilting towards the West was not meeting expectations. The transition to a market economy was proving to be much more difficult than originally envisaged. While some post-Communist states like Poland and Estonia were making a relatively successful transition, progress in Russia was much more limited. Despite grandiose promises, the amount of Western aid reaching Russia was rather meagre, and the aid that was being delivered was having little visible impact. Foreign investment in Russia was equally modest. All this meant that a strong domestic

constituency in favour of Western assistance did not emerge in Russia, since most people could see little tangible benefit from it in their daily lives.

Given this situation, it is hardly surprising that Yeltsin and Kozyrev soon found it necessary to make some adjustments to Russia's initial foreign policy course. However, what is striking is that the Russian Government has, on the whole, been able to maintain friendly relations with the West. While far-reaching changes have occurred in Russian policy towards the 'near abroad', the shifts in policy towards the West have been much more limited.

One of the most visible and dramatic changes in Russian foreign policy occurred at the verbal level. By 1993, Yeltsin and Kozyrev adopted a much tougher tone to explain and defend their policies. However, it would be a mistake to make too much of this. They were simply behaving as politicians do everywhere. Having come under attack for alleged weakness, subservience to the West, and a failure to defend Russia's national interests, they adopted more militant rhetoric aimed at demonstrating their toughness and convincing people that they were staunchly defending the interests of Russia.

As early as January 1993, Yeltsin began to respond to criticism of the pro-Western tilt in his foreign policy. He pointed to his recent visits to South Korea, China, and India, and claimed that these were 'indicative of the fact that we are moving away from a Western emphasis' in Russian foreign policy.[13] In a speech to the Russian parliament on 24 February 1994, he acknowledged past shortcomings in the Government's foreign policy and declared: 'The main task of our foreign policy is the consistent advancement of Russia's national interests.... Russia has the right, if this is required to protect the legitimate interests of the state, to act firmly and toughly, when this is truly necessary.'[14]

THE SHIFTS IN RUSSIAN POLICY

Kozyrev also adopted a firmer tone to defend his policies. In the autumn of 1993, he stated: 'In the future, our foreign policy will continue to defend Russia's vital interests, even in those cases where it is contrary to the interests of the West and to the interests of our partners within the CIS and the former Soviet republics.'[15] On another occasion he stated: 'Either we learn to conduct military

actions to support and establish peace in the zones of our traditional geopolitical interests or we risk losing influence there and the vacuum will be filled by others.'[16] Kozyrev continued to advocate a partnership with the democracies of the West, but he also noted that 'partnership based on common values and even feelings does not mean renouncing a firm – aggressive if you will – policy of defending one's own national interests, or, at times, competition and disputes.'[17]

The significance of these verbal shifts should not be exaggerated. The language in which Russian foreign policy towards the West is defended has changed, but the policy remains largely intact. Kozyrev continued to advocate a 'mature partnership with the world's leading democratic states', a policy of 'advancing our national interests through partnership, not confrontation, and through unswerving compliance with international law'.[18] As he explained to a Western audience, in an article written for *Foreign Affairs*: 'Russian foreign policy inevitably has to be of an independent and assertive nature. If Russian democrats fail to achieve it, they will be swept away by a wave of aggressive nationalism, which is now exploiting the need for national and state self-assertion.'[19] Western statesmen often argue that there is no inherent conflict between expanding international cooperation and the pursuit of enlightened self-interest, and Kozyrev was simply making the same claim for Russian foreign policy.

Russia and the 'Near Abroad'

Russian foreign policy did change, however, in one very important area, namely in regard to the 'near abroad'. At first, the Russian Government adopted a very moderate policy towards the former republics of the Soviet Union. Official pronouncements emphasized the Russian Government's desire to establish good relations with its neighbours, to develop cooperation based upon shared interests, and to resolve disagreements through negotiation and compromise. Kozyrev stressed that the rights of Russians should be protected not by the use of armed force but by upholding international law and by working through international organizations such as the United Nations and the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe). When criticized for not protecting Russians in Moldova, he angrily retorted that Russia 'could not send a military helicopter for every Russian-speaking boy or girl in Moldova'.[20]

By mid-1993, however, there was a sharp shift in Russian policy towards the 'near abroad'. This change in policy was fuelled by growing instability in the 'near abroad', by nostalgia for a greater Russia on the part of many, and by a recognition among the Westernizers that developments in this region would determine the fate of economic and political reform in Russia to no less a degree than Russia's relations with the West. Ethnic conflict, the disruption of transportation links, the loss of markets and sources of supply, and concern that outside powers (for example, Iran, Turkey, and China) might gain influence on Russia's borders all pulled Moscow in the direction of more active involvement in the 'near abroad'.

During 1993, Russian troops were involved in conflicts in Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan. Russia was soon successful in bringing its superior economic and military might to bear. As a result, Azerbaijan reluctantly agreed to reactivate its membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Georgia, which had steadfastly refused to join the CIS, reluctantly bowed to Russian pressure and became a member as well. The alternative would have been continued Russian support for the secessionist movement in the Abkhazian region of western Georgia. This, in turn, would most likely have led to the break-up of Georgia and the collapse of the Georgian Government headed by Eduard Shevardnadze.

Moldova responded to the continued presence of Russian troops in the eastern part of the country by cooling aspirations for closer relations with Romania and by improving its ties to Moscow. Russian troops were sent to intervene in the civil war raging in Tajikistan and to protect the beleaguered government from opposition forces that had established themselves across the border in neighbouring Afghanistan. Tajikistan became a virtual Russian protectorate, and only a few short years after the withdrawal of Russian forces from Afghanistan, Russian troops were once again launching military strikes into that country. Although Chechnya is not in the 'near abroad', since it lies within Russia's post-1991 borders, the Russian government's decision to use massive force in December 1994 in an attempt to quell the independence movement there is further evidence of how diplomacy has been superseded by reliance on raw military power, at great expense in human life and with little hope of resolving this conflict.

By mid-1993, a broad consensus had emerged among Russian policy-makers in favour of a kind of Russian Monroe Doctrine. Prodded by members of parliament and influential foreign policy

critics, Yeltsin and Kozyrev embraced the view that the entire territory of the former Soviet Union constituted a sphere of vital Russian interests where Russia had a special responsibility for maintaining peace and order. The Russian Government even went so far as to urge the international community to endorse Russia's role as regional policeman. In a speech on 28 February 1993, Yeltsin declared:

> Russia continues to have a vital interest in the cessation of all armed conflicts on the territory of the former U.S.S.R. Moreover, the international community is increasingly coming to realize our country's special responsibility in this difficult matter. I believe the time has come for authoritative international organizations, including the United Nations, to grant Russia special powers as guarantor of peace and stability in this region.[21]

Specific proposals along these lines have been presented by the Russian Government to the United Nations.[22]

The reassertion of Russian influence in the 'near abroad' will obviously have important implications for the people of the region. However, the impact of these actions on Russia's relations with the West is not so clear. Is this evidence of the continued existence of an imperial mentality in Russia? Might this be the beginning of renewed Russian expansion that will eventually lead to threats to the former Communist states of East Central Europe and hence to Germany and the West?

There are strong reasons not to view these developments in such an alarmist fashion. Thus far, the use of Russian troops has been limited to Moldova, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In these areas, the interests of the West are very limited. Western governments do not want to commit troops or funds to peacekeeping in the region. Faced with the prospect of prolonged instability, ethnic conflict, and a power vacuum that might allow inroads by outside countries or the forces of radical Islam, many in the West are not adverse to Russia taking on the role of regional policeman. As long as Russia acts with circumspection, securing the consent of the relevant governments whenever possible (as in Tajikistan and Georgia) and employing a minimum of force, so that public opinion in the West is less likely to be aroused, the United States and other Western countries are prepared to accept Russian predominance in these regions. For now, the Russians are indeed proceeding cautiously, not just because of their concern about the reaction of the West, but due to their desire

to avoid overburdening their fragile economy. The lessons of the quagmire of Afghanistan have not been forgotten.

In effect, a tacit understanding seems to be emerging between Russia and the West. The Russian leadership recognizes that the West makes a sharp distinction between Central Asia and the Caucasus on the one hand, and Ukraine and the Baltic states on the other. Any use of Russian military power in Ukraine and the Baltic states or any attempt to incorporate these nations into an expanded Russia would produce a very strong reaction in the West. The Baltic states and Ukraine are viewed as an integral part of Europe. They border important Western states, and they have the strong support of émigrés and other political constituencies, especially in the United States.

Given the economic crisis in Ukraine, its conflict with Russia over the Black Sea fleet, and the explosive situation in Crimea, Russian–Ukrainian relations may well take a sharp turn for the worse in the near future. If this happens, Russia's relations with the West will be affected as well. However, for now, Russian intervention in Moldova and along Russia's southern borders does not pose a direct threat to Western interests and need not harm its ties to the West.

Russia and Former Yugoslavia

Another major area where Russian diplomacy has been active is in the former Yugoslavia. Many Western policy-makers were surprised and angry when Moscow suddenly announced in February 1994 that it had reached an agreement with Serbian forces to send several hundred peacekeepers to the hills around Sarajevo, thereby complicating potential NATO air strikes against Serbian artillery. After several years in which first Gorbachev and then Yeltsin followed the Western lead in international politics, this act of unilateral Russian diplomacy came as something of a shock. Fears were expressed that Moscow was once again positioning itself as the supporter of forces opposed to the West.

The importance of this incident should not be over-dramatized. The Russian Government is not motivated by a desire to challenge the West in the former Yugoslavia. In fact, while Russian foreign policy is motivated by self-interest, it may help to advance Western objectives as well. The agreement with Serbian forces to place Russian peacekeeping forces around Sarajevo gave the Serbs a face-saving way to bow to NATO's ultimatum that the Serbs

withdraw their heavy artillery. Thus, it produced the outcome that NATO wanted while avoiding the use of force, which might have resulted in a dangerous escalation of Western involvement in the conflict.

The Russian Government was under enormous domestic pressure to do something to support the Serbs. Due to the ties that have historically existed between Russia and Serbia, the religious affinity between the Orthodox form of Christianity in the two countries, and the widespread sense that both countries are on the front line resisting the spread of militant Islam, Russian public opinion strongly supported the Serbian side. On several occasions, the Russian parliament had voted overwhelmingly in favour of resolutions demanding the lifting of economic sanctions against Serbia and protesting any use of military force by NATO against the Serbs fighting in Bosnia. If NATO had gone ahead with extensive air strikes against the Serbs, there would have been a firestorm of disapproval in Russia.

The agreement with Serbian forces to place Russian peacekeepers around Sarajevo to oversee the withdrawal of Serbian artillery was a diplomatic masterstroke which considerably enhanced the domestic standing of the Russian Government. It was widely hailed within Russia as a bold move which had finally proved that Russia was not a puppet of the West, that it was still a power to be reckoned with, and that it could simultaneously advance the cause of peace and protect the interests of the Serbs. Insofar as the position of Yeltsin and Kozyrev was strengthened by this action, and some of the wind was taken out of the sails of the highly nationalistic opposition, the West came out ahead as well.

It is true, of course, that significant differences remain between Russia and NATO in their approaches towards the resolution of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. But these differences should be seen as quite natural. Even the closest allies often have divergent interests and perspectives (for example, the differences between the United States, South Korea, and Japan over how to deal with North Korea's nuclear programme). Constructive diplomacy can minimize and contain the resulting friction.

Russian Arms Exports

Russian–American relations have also been troubled in the past two years by sharp disagreements concerning policy towards India,

Iran, and Libya. Yet what is most noteworthy about these disputes is that in contrast to the East–West confrontations during the Cold War, these disputes were rooted in economics and domestic politics rather than ideology and foreign policy. In attempting to sell military equipment to India and Iran, and in disagreeing with sanctions against Libya, Moscow was simply trying to bolster its declining economy. Russia was not motivated by ideological zeal, and it was not trying to strengthen anti-Western forces in the Third World.

Russia was prepared to sell India advanced rocket engines in order to gain badly needed funds for its military and space industries. The United States, on the other hand, wanted to limit the proliferation of long-range missile technology, and it brought considerable pressure to bear on Russia to stop the sale. Moscow reluctantly bowed to Washington's wishes even though there was a storm of protest in the Russian press attacking the Government's alleged subservience to the US and the loss of income that would result. In another disagreement, American policy-makers were unhappy over the sale of Russian nuclear reactors and submarines to Iran, but the Russian Government is going ahead with these sales.

In the autumn of 1993, Russia threatened to veto new UN Security Council sanctions against Libya. These sanctions were proposed by the Western powers in retaliation for Libya's refusal to surrender two suspects in the bombing of a Pan American World Airlines plane over Scotland five years earlier. Russia's threatened veto was not aimed at shielding Libya from Western pressure, as the Soviet regime had attempted to do on numerous occasions. Rather, Russia's main concern was to protect its economic interests and in particular to collect the four billion dollar debt that Libya owed it. Russia was unhappy that the proposed sanctions had been carefully crafted to protect British and French economic interests (for example, by allowing a French company to proceed with the development of an oil field in Libya), while neglecting Russian economic interests. In fact, Russia was willing to support even tougher measures against Libya than those advocated by the US and its allies. Russia proposed the seizure of Libya's overseas assets so that they could be used to pay off that country's debt to Russia.[23]

Although these disagreements over policy towards India, Iran, and Libya clouded Russia's relations with the West, the very fact that they were rooted in economics rather than ideology made them more susceptible to compromise and resolution. Moscow was no

longer championing a rival world view and it no longer saw East–West relations as a zero-sum game.

Another incident that threatened to damage East–West relations was the announcement in early 1994 that a CIA official, Aldrich Ames, had been arrested for spying for Russia. Ames was the most highly placed CIA official to have been charged with spying for Moscow, and his activities were especially damaging, since he was able to reveal the names of many Russians who had been recruited by the CIA.[24]

There were howls of outrage in the United States, and influential American politicians were soon charging that the Ames case demonstrated that the Russians could not be trusted, that talk of Russian–American partnership was a sham, and that the US should not be giving foreign aid to a country engaged in such untrustworthy and hostile behaviour.[25]

Despite the vituperation, it is hard to see this as a real issue of any long-term significance. After all, Ames was evidently recruited by the KGB in the mid-1980s, at a time when the Soviet Union still existed and Cold War tension remained high. The only sin of the post-Communist Russian Government was that the Russian intelligence agency did not disown him and continued to use his services. Russian spying was rather unexceptional, since even among allies, spying is a common occurrence. If it is true that Ames revealed to the KGB the names of American agents active in Russia, then the United States was obviously engaged in spying as well. The Ames affair was seized upon by Republican politicians who were eager to attack President Clinton and impugn his handling of foreign affairs. While this incident momentarily inflamed American public opinion, it will quickly be forgotten. Over the long haul, Russian–American relations will be shaped by more substantial issues, where the interests of both countries are significantly engaged.

Russia and NATO Expansion

If recrimination concerning the Ames case constituted a relatively unimportant sideshow, Russian opposition to NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe accurately reflects the complex nature of Russia's present relations with the West. Russia has its own distinctive interests and perspectives which set it apart from the West and prevent it from fully sharing the West's sense of common identity and purpose.

Former communist states of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, have been pleading for rapid admission into NATO. Fearful of instability and potential aggression emanating from the East, they want the security guarantees that would accompany membership in NATO. NATO membership would also signify the full acceptance of these nations by the West. It would strengthen the case for their membership in the European Union, and it would be popular domestically, paying significant political dividends to the politicians who were able to bring this about.

In contrast, the reaction in Russia to the possible expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe has been very different. Yeltsin and Kozyrev were rather vague about Russia's attitude towards NATO during 1992 and the first half of 1993. However by late 1993, Russian opposition to NATO's expansion was loud and clear. Privately and publicly, the Russian Government firmly opposed the extension of NATO membership to the states of Eastern Europe.[26]

In response to Russia's opposition, and because the United States and other key NATO members were themselves uncertain as to whether they really wanted to be committed to the defence of new member states in the East, with all the dangers and increased costs that this would entail, NATO announced a compromise plan in January 1994 grandly named the Partnership for Peace. The Partnership for Peace is open to all of the former Communist states, including Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union. It offers various forms of military cooperation, including joint military exercises, the discussion of military doctrine, and the harmonization of standards for military equipment. However, participation in the Partnership for Peace confers a junior status well below full membership in NATO. There are no firm security commitments, and there is no timetable guaranteeing eventual membership as a regular member of NATO.

Political leaders in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic expressed undisguised disappointment over this proposal. They unenthusiastically accepted participation in the Partnership for Peace because nothing better was being offered and because they could at least hope that this small step might move them a bit closer to their goal of full membership. In Russia, however, the Partnership for Peace was strongly attacked, not because it did not go far enough, but because it allegedly went too far. The Partnership for Peace was condemned as constituting a first step in the expansion of a hostile military alliance right up to Russia's doorstep.

The strongly negative reaction in Russia to the Partnership for Peace indicates that as much as Russia wants to heal the scars of the Cold War, to integrate into the world economy, and to make use of Western financial assistance and technical expertise, it is still far from being an integral part of the Atlantic Community. Russia stands apart from the West due to its historical experience, its geographical position, its aspirations for great power status, and the outlook of its influential elites.[27]

In the West, the post-Cold War existence of NATO is widely supported as an instrument of trans-Atlantic cooperation, as a means of keeping the United States from disengaging from Europe, as a mechanism for anchoring Germany to the alliance and reassuring her nervous neighbours, and as a low-cost insurance policy offering protection in a turbulent world. In Russia, however, perceptions are very different. NATO is viewed with much suspicion as a remnant of the Cold War and as an organization which was directed against the Soviet Union in the past and might well be aimed at Russia in the future. There is also concern in Russia that the Partnership for Peace will serve as a counterweight to Moscow's power in both Central Europe and the CIS, since its existence will encourage the post-Communist states on Russia's borders to look westwards rather than eastwards for security.

The Partnership for Peace is also viewed as having undesirable consequences for the Russian economy, since participants will be encouraged to adopt NATO specifications for their military equipment. This will further reduce the interest of East European countries in Russian arms, and thus weaken the ailing Russian military industry.

Despite these objections to the Partnership for Peace, the Russian Government slowly moved towards joining it. While Russian leaders would have liked to wish the Partnership for Peace out of existence, they were forced to accept it as a *fait accompli.* According to an article in the Russian press, Vladimir Lukin, a former ambassador to the United States and the present chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the State Duma, angrily 'compared the proposition that Russia join the programme to the propositions made by a rapist who has cornered a girl: She can either resist or submit, but the result will be the same.'[28]

By June 1994, 20 post-Communist countries had already joined the Partnership for Peace. Given this situation, the Russian Government decided that the costs of not participating in the Partner-

ship outweighed the disadvantages of membership. Outright rejection of the Partnership for Peace would have lessened Moscow's ability to influence its future development, would have cast a pall over Russia's relations with the West, and would have made it easier for Yeltsin's critics to portray the Partnership for Peace as an anti-Russian scheme and to blame him for not preventing its establishment.

Attempting to make the best of a difficult situation, the Russian Government eventually announced its willingness to join the Partnership for Peace, provided that NATO agreed to sign a declaration acknowledging Russia's special status as a great power. Such a declaration would have helped the Russian Government deflect the charges of its critics who were asserting that the Partnership for Peace was demeaning to Russia because it treated Russia no differently from minor countries such as Estonia and Kazakhstan. It also would have lent credence to Russian claims that Moscow has a special responsibility for the maintenance of peace regionally and internationally. Not surprisingly, the countries of Eastern Europe had a very different perspective, and they strongly objected to anything that would relegate them to second-class status and could be taken as recognition of Russian predominance in the region. The NATO countries stood firm, and Russia did not get the declaration it sought.

Finally, on 22 June 1994, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev journeyed to Brussels to sign an agreement making Russia the twenty-first nation to join the Partnership for Peace. A watered-down statement was also signed which vaguely acknowledged Russia's important role in international affairs but did not confer any special privileges on Moscow.[29]

The long delay and the accompanying acrimony and diplomatic wrangling constitute a vivid reminder of the distance that remains between Russia and the West. Further evidence of this is the vote on 22 June 1994 in the State Duma (the lower house of the Russian parliament) aimed at blocking Russia's membership in the Partnership for Peace. It failed by only nine votes.[30] A few weeks earlier, Yeltsin had unsuccessfully attempted to placate those opposing closer cooperation with the West by cancelling joint American–Russian military exercises which were scheduled to be held on Russian soil in July.[31]

During the second half of 1994, Russia and NATO worked on developing the formal document that would outline the specific

areas in which Russia would cooperate with NATO under the Partnership for Peace. Kozyrev was in Brussels to sign this Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) on 1 December 1994. However, instead of going ahead with the scheduled signing of this document, he unexpectedly refused to do so. He chose instead to use this occasion to denounce the recently announced plans to expand NATO eastwards.[32] Only after a further six months of uncertainty, persuasion, and negotiation did Russia formally sign its Individual Partnership Programme on 31 May 1995.[33] In contrast, Poland signed its IPP without great controversy in July 1994, and Hungary and the Czech Republic concluded their IPPs in November 1994.[34]

When the Partnership for Peace was first formally announced in January 1994, many analysts expected that it would be used to postpone for several years a controversial decision on full NATO membership for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, as a result of prodding and pressure from the United States, growing support for NATO's enlargement developed during 1995. At the same time, it was also recognized that with the election to the Duma scheduled for December 1995 and the Russian Presidential election set for June 1996, a showdown with Russia over NATO enlargement would only aid Yeltsin's more nationalistic rivals and improve their electoral prospects. For this reason NATO has moved slowly on deciding who the new members will be and when they will be added to the organization. Now that Russian elections are over and Yeltsin has been returned to power for a four-year term, NATO is likely to move ahead with enlargement, and this issue will return to centre stage as a major source of contention between Russia and the West.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

If we step back from day-to-day events and survey the entire period of post-Communist Russia's relations with the West from January 1992 to the present, there are more reasons for satisfaction than disappointment. It is true, of course, that the euphoria that accompanied the end of the Cold War and the birth of the new Russia has long since dissipated. The honeymoon in East–West relations, like most honeymoons, did not last long. However, it has been replaced not by marital violence or bitter divorce, but by a mature recognition of the importance of sustaining the relationship through

improved communication, understanding of the other side's viewpoint, and hard work.

It is difficult to find the right concept or metaphor to sum up the present state of Russia's relations with the West. Early on, politicians in Washington and Moscow, eager to put the Cold War to rest and to impress their constituents with how much they had accomplished in international affairs, embraced the concept of 'partnership'. In June 1992, Presidents George Bush and Boris Yeltsin solemnly affixed their signatures to a document on mutual relations grandly entitled the Charter for American–Russian Partnership and Friendship, and the term 'partnership' has been widely used ever since. However, continued disagreements between Russia and the West make it clear that such talk is, at best, premature.

Yet if the term 'partnership' is misleading because it suggests a much more harmonious relationship than in fact exists, it would be equally mistaken to view Russia as an 'adversary' or 'enemy' in the way that the Soviet Union surely was during the Cold War. Today, Russia is not quite a partner, nor is it an adversary, and we need to find the proper terminology for conceptualizing this new relationship.[35]

In January 1996 Andrei Kozyrev resigned as Foreign Minister. In the run-up to the election, Yeltsin decided that Kozyrev's unpopular pro-Western orientation was too great a liability. Nonetheless, it is striking that Kozyrev was able to retain his position as Foreign Minister for more than five years, despite the vehement attacks on his policies and the repeated calls for his resignation from mid-1992 on. A major reason for this is the success that he had in forging a beneficial relationship with the West. Despite the weakness of Russia's position in world affairs, resulting from its continuing economic decline and political instability, Kozyrev was able to accomplish a great deal.

In a spirited defence of Russian foreign policy directed to the Russian parliament in February 1994, Kozyrev listed Moscow's many accomplishments: Russia had avoided becoming an international outcast, as had happened in 1917; it also escaped the tragic fate of Yugoslavia; a favourable international environment was created permitting a major reduction in military expenditures; Russia had become a member of major world economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; Moscow was receiving international assistance in the form of loans and debt deferment; NATO had taken into account Moscow's

views and adopted the Partnership for Peace rather than immediately expanding NATO to the borders of the CIS; and cooperation with Washington had resulted in the tripartite agreement between Russia, Ukraine, and the United States to eliminate Ukrainian nuclear weapons.[36] In private, Kozyrev might also have pointed to another even more important accomplishment of Russian foreign policy, that of winning the West's tacit acceptance of a Russian sphere of influence in the 'near abroad', so that Russian activism in that region did not come at the price of damaging its relations with the West. The fact that Russian foreign policy has a solid record of accomplishment and that, contrary to the accusations of Kozyrev's critics, Russian national interests have been effectively defended under very difficult conditions, provides an important reason for believing that the Russian Government may continue to orient its policy in future years towards cooperation with the West despite the changes that the Duma elections in December 1995 and the Presidential elections of June–July 1996 are sure to bring.

Nonetheless, there is no denying the fragility of current East–West relations. The main threat to the continuation of a constructive relationship between Russia and the West arises not in the realm of foreign policy but from the explosive situation within Russia. The economic crisis in Russia has not abated, law and order are breaking down, political infighting is as vicious as ever, new political institutions lack widespread legitimacy, the conspicuous consumption of the newly rich angers people, Yeltsin's health is precarious, there exists a strong feeling of humiliation within the military, and there is a very real danger that the continued deterioration of the population's standard of living will lead to an upsurge of anger against the West for supposedly foisting an alien, unworkable economic programme on Russia.

All things considered, Russia and the West have done a rather remarkable job of keeping their relations on an even keel over the period 1992–95, the first four years of Russia's existence as an independent post-Soviet state seeking to find its place on the world stage. Despite their sharply divergent perspectives on a host of critical issues – which include NATO enlargement, peacekeeping in Bosnia, Russia's use of force in Chechnya, Russia's sale of nuclear reactors to Iran, and the renegotiation of the limits on Russian arms contained in the 1990 treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) – reasonable compromises and face-saving agreements have been worked out again and again.

Unfortunately, it is one thing to paper over differences with well-crafted ambiguity, and quite another matter to achieve a common outlook and similar conceptions of fundamental national interests. Russia and the West still remain far apart in how they view European security, Russia's role as a great power, and Russian security interests. Much of the diplomatic accomplishment of recent years is precarious and could easily be reversed depending upon future contingencies: Will NATO enlargement remain a priority of the United States or will its achievement be deferred to less turbulent times? Will some sort of stable settlement emerge in the former Yugoslavia or will large-scale ethnic violence resume? Will the slow and painful development of Russian democracy and constitutionalism continue or will authoritarianism and ultranationalism gain the upper hand?

The West can best prepare for the political storms that lie ahead, not by giving up on its relationship with Russia, but by deepening its cooperation with Moscow and by demonstrating that any future Russian rejection of cooperation with the West would harm Russia's national interests by jeopardizing much of what that country has gained in recent years. The stronger Russia's stake in cordial relations with the West is, the greater the probability that these relations will withstand future shocks.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this chapter appeared in the Canadian Institute of International Affairs' *International Journal*, vol. 49, no. 4 (Autumn 1994), pp. 725–50.
2. Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'The Premature Partnership', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 2 (March/April 1994), pp. 67–82; Georgi Arbatov, 'Eurasia Letter: A New Cold War?', *Foreign Policy*, no. 95 (Summer 1994), pp. 90–103; Alexei K. Pushkov, 'Letter from Eurasia: Russia and America: The Honeymoon's Over', *Foreign Policy*, no. 93 (Winter 1993–94), pp. 76–90.
3. *The New York Times* (March 15 1994), p. A4.
4. Jeff Checkel, 'Russian Foreign Policy: Back to the Future?', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, no. 41 (October 16 1992), pp. 20–21.
5. Cited in Stephen Sestanovich, 'Andrei the Giant', *The New Republic* (April 11 1994), pp. 24–5.
6. Andrei Kozyrev, 'Building a Bridge – along or across a River', *New Times*, no. 43 (October 23–29 1990), p. 7.
7. *Izvestiia* (January 2 1994), as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 44, no. 1 (February 5 1992), p. 22.

8. Leon Aron, 'The Battle for the Soul of Russian Foreign Policy', *The American Enterprise*, vol. 3, no. 6 (November/December 1992), p. 16; *Financial Times* (London), February 25 1993, p. 2.
9. Vera Tolz, 'Russia: Westernizers Continue to Challenge National Patriots', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, no. 49 (December 11 1992), pp. 1–9; Suzanne Crow, 'Competing Blueprints for Russian Foreign Policy', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, no. 50 (December 18 1992), pp. 45–50.
10. Sergei Stankevich, 'Russia in Search of Itself', *The National Interest*, no. 28 (Summer 1992), pp. 47–51; Vladimir P. Lukin, 'Our Security Predicament', *Foreign Policy*, no. 88 (Fall 1992), pp. 57–75.
11. *Pravda*, March 17 1994, as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 46, no. 11 (April 13 1994), pp. 27–8.
12. Alexei G. Arbatov, 'Russia's Foreign Policy Alternatives', *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 10–12, 18–26; Alexei G. Arbatov, 'Russian National Interests', in Robert D. Blackwill and Sergei A. Karaganov (eds), *Damage Limitation or Crisis?: Russia and the Outside World* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1994), pp. 55–76; Carol R. Saivetz, 'The Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy: Political Debates and Russia's National Interest', in Sanford R. Lieberman, *et al.* (eds), *The Soviet Empire Reconsidered: Essays in Honor of Adam B. Ulam* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), pp. 211–27.
13. ITAR-TASS, January 30 1993, cited in Suzanne Crow, 'Why Has Russian Foreign Policy Changed?', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 3, no. 18 (May 6 1994), p. 1.
14. *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, February 25 1994, as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 46, no. 8 (March 23 1994), p. 8.
15. Cited in Charles Dick, 'The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Special Report no. 1 (January 1994), p. 3.
16. Ibid.
17. *Izvestiia*, March 11 1994, as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 46, no. 10 (April 6 1994), p. 2.
18. *Izvestiia*, February 2 1994, as translated in ibid., no. 6 (March 9 1994), p. 4–5.
19. Andrei Kozyrev, 'The Lagging Partnership,' *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 3 (May/June 1994), p. 61.
20. Cited in Aron, 'The Battle for the Soul of Russian Foreign Policy', p. 14.
21. Suzanne Crow, 'Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 50 (December 17 1993), p. 2.
22. Ibid., p. 3.
23. *The New York Times* (October 31 1993), p. 9.
24. *The New York Times* (April 27 1994), p. A11; *The New York Times* (November 1 1995), p. A1.
25. *The New York Times* (February 28 1994), p. A1.
26. Crow, 'Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda', pp. 5–6.
27. S. Neil MacFarlane, 'Russia, the West and European Security', *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 3 (Autumn 1993), pp. 4–18; Neil Malcolm, 'The New Russian Foreign Policy', *The World Today*, vol. 50, no. 2 (February 1994), pp. 28–32.
28. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (March 18 1994), as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 46, no. 11 (April 13 1994), p. 7.
29. *The New York Times* (June 23 1994), p. A3; *RFE/RL Daily Report*, no. 118 (June 23 1994).

30. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, no. 118 (June 23 1994).
31. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, no. 103 (June 1 1994).
32. Andrei Kozyrev, 'I am a Russian First and Foreign Minister Second', *New Times*, January 1995, pp. 29–31; *The New York Times* (December 2 1994), p. A4.
33. *The European* (June 2–8 1995), p. 1.
34. Robert E. Hunter, 'Enlargement: Part of a Strategy for Projecting Stability into Central Europe', *NATO Review*, vol. 3, no. 3 (May 1995), p. 5; Douglas L. Clarke, 'Uncomfortable Partners', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1995), pp. 27–31.
35. The complexities of Russia's relations with the West are dealt with in: Hannes Adomeit, 'Russia as a "Great Power" in World Affairs: Images and Reality', *International Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 1 (January 1995), pp. 35–68; Michael Cox, 'The Necessary Partnership?: The Clinton Presidency and Post-Soviet Russia', *International Affairs*, vol. 70, no. 4 (October 1994), pp. 635–58; Stephen Foye, 'A Hardened Stance on Foreign Policy', *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 9 (June 9 1995), pp. 36–40; Franklyn Griffiths, 'From Situations of Weakness: Foreign Policy of the New Russia', *International Journal*, vol. 49, no. 4 (Autumn 1994), pp. 699–724; Peter Shearman (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990* (New York: Westview, 1995); Leon Aron and Kenneth M. Jensen (eds), *The Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994).
36. *Rossiiskaia Gazeta* (February 2 1994), as translated in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 46, no. 6 (March 9 1994), pp. 4–5.

5 Russia and Asia: The Emergence of 'Normal Relations'?

F. Seth Singleton[1]

The debates on Russian foreign policy and, more generally, on the Russian self-image itself have always been about Russia's place in relation to the West. Is Russia European, or not? If it is not European, is it 'Asiatic' or some variant of its own distinctive self?[2] If Russia is European, what must be done to integrate the country fully into Western civilization? Conversely, if Russia is distinctive, what must be done to protect it against the subversive forces of Western rationalism and liberalism?[3] This debate goes to the heart of the Russian character and it emerges at times of crisis or transition: the era of Ivan IV and the Time of Troubles, of Peter I, during the late nineteenth century, and at the present time.

Soviet communism had its own variant of the answer, which was precisely Stalinist: the Soviet Union represented a higher stage of world civilization and was the centre of human progress. This was a modified version of the Slavophile argument which has historically portrayed Russia as distinct and exceptional and emphasized the necessity to protect the country from the hostile and subversive West. Against this background, the anti-communist democratic movement which emerged after Stalin's death can be clearly seen as Westernizing. According to its champions, Russia's future progress depends upon rejoining the Western world of science, technology, and human rights.

The premise of this chapter is that Russians are much more European than Asian, and as Europeans they look at the world in two directions, both 'west' and 'east'. Such a dual outward view is most conspicuously reflected in the organization of the Russian (or Soviet) Foreign Ministry and academic institutes. Consider, for example, the distinction between the 'occidental' and 'oriental' departments of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations or the Institute of 'oriental' languages in which Arabic, Turkish, and Persian along with Chinese and Japanese are taught.

In the Russian world view, 'the east' is a series of civilizations bordering and confronting Russia in a geographic arc stretching from Constantinople and the Dardanelles through Asia Minor, Persia, Central Asia and Mongolia to the long border with China and the sea frontier with Japan. The entire Russian–Asian border zone is best understood as an historically contested zone among civilizations and empires: Turkish, Russian, Persian, Mongol, Chinese. Local inhabitants of distinct culture, mixed and interspersed by conquest and migration, are often caught among and suppressed by the powerful centres far away. This ebb and flow of power in the inner Asian borderlands shows every sign of continuing; the collapse of the Soviet Union and the creation of uncertain new states in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia is only the latest of many historical episodes.

As a unique creation of European culture, the nation-state system, with its emphasis on well-defined boundaries and sovereignty based on ethnicity, has never worked well in the interior of Asia, and there is no reason to expect it to work in the future. Consider, for example, the Armenians, the Mongols, and the Uzbeks. In each case, it is impossible to define the proper boundaries of these ethnic groups and, consequently, the appropriate limits of their sovereign jurisdiction, except by imposition or force of arms. Thus, Armenians want to create by force of arms an expanded state that would include their ethnic brothers put inside the borders of their historical enemy, Azerbaijan, by Stalin in 1922. Mongols live in the Russian Federation (Tuva and Buryatia), in Kazakhstan, and in Chinese Inner Mongolia, as well as in the Mongolian Republic. Uzbeks find themselves in a similar predicament, for they live in all countries of the former Soviet Central Asia, and also in Afghanistan. Politically, Uzbekistan, with its indirect control of the government of Tajikistan, is the potential base for a larger Central Asian confederation (or Uzbek empire).

Further to the east is located the north-east Asian and north Pacific security zone, which encompasses four giants: Russia, China, Japan, and the United States, with Korea as a potential fifth power. In contrast to their central Asian counterparts, China, Japan and Korea are distinct nation-states with governments that control their clearly delimited national territory and with national interests linked to those of Russia in a traditional way. The stability of this region is largely dependent upon the issues of trade, military balance, regional security arrangements, borders, diplomatic coalitions and alliances – the classical concerns of *Realpolitik.*

RUSSIAN INTERESTS IN ASIA

Foreign policy is a reflection of domestic politics and circumstance. The foreign policy of the Yeltsin government is no exception, for it reflects precisely the state interests of Russia in its period of revolutionary transformation after the fall of communism, under conditions of extreme political and economic uncertainty. From the moment that the Gorbachev government lost authority over the territory of the Soviet Union, Russia has been confronted with three basic and simultaneous questions: (1) how to reconstruct the Russian state so that it can actually control the country; (2) how to create a modern economy from the backward and inept neo-Stalinist dinosaur industries and collective farms and the vastly deteriorated social services of the past; (3) where physically is the Russian state? Does it or does it not include the peoples and nations of the 'near abroad' and, if so, in what form? Does it, in fact, include the non-Russian ethnic areas of the Russian republic, for instance Tuva, Chechnya, or Tatarstan, or even the outlying Russian regions of Siberia and the Far East? Since 1991 these questions have been all-consuming.

The period from August 1991 to October 1993 – from Yeltsin's stand against the coup atop the tanks at the Russian Parliament building on the banks of the Moscow River to the assault by Yeltsin's troops against that same parliament building in October 1993 – was a period of total uncertainty. From October 1993, however, began the era of consolidation of the new Russian regime, with a working constitution, a process of privatization which, however imperfect, now seems to be irreversible, and a territorial policy for the 'near abroad' that represents a strong majority consensus of the Russian people and their leaders.

In 1991–93 the arguments for and against various foreign policy orientations were often presented as a debate between 'Atlanticists', who wanted integration with the West and liberal democracy at home, and conservative 'Eurasians', who demanded a reassertion of Russian domination in the region of the former Soviet Union, regardless of Western interests and concerns. The debate was a Russian variant of the classic argument between internationalists seeking collective solutions and nationalists. It is important to note, however, that this discussion never concerned Asia in the sense that Westerners understand it. 'Eurasian' referred to the former USSR, and the underlying issue was Russia's national self-identification and its relations with the West.

The result of the fierce Russian struggle over foreign policy has been a compromise, which currently commands widespread public support. On the one hand, it is deemed necessary to continue peaceful cooperation with Europe and the United States. On the other hand, reassertion of Russian interests and power and prestige on its borders and in the 'near abroad' has been put forward as a major foreign policy goal. In practical terms, Bosnia or North Korea or an arrangement with NATO are negotiable, but Chechnya or Tajikistan or the Kurils are within Russia's exclusive sphere of influence. The United States and the West appeared to have accepted the compromise, and a new era of hostility has been averted. Russia after the presidential elections of summer 1996 remains a prickly partner seeking its status as a great power, but a partner nonetheless.

Russia's territorial and foreign policy has four elements of importance for our understanding of its behaviour in Asia. First, inside the Russian republic the central government will continue to rule allowing, however, for some regional autonomy. Russia now has a Federation Council strongly representing regional interests in its bicameral parliament. But Russia is not breaking up into 'republics' of the Urals or the Far East, nor will it allow its ethnic enclaves, particularly Tatarstan, to secede as separate national states. The 1993 constitution and the 1996 elections sealed those issues. Second, Russia will seek to regain its position as the controlling power on the territory of the former Soviet Union. What sort of control or hegemony will emerge is vehemently debated. The 'near abroad' is obviously the zone of great sensitivity and potential crisis, particularly in places with a high concentration of ethnic Russians – Estonia and Latvia, eastern Ukraine, Crimea, Transdniester, and northern Kazakhstan. The question is not whether Russia will assert itself in the near abroad, but by what means and how fast. Note that with the exception of northern Kazakhstan, these places are in Europe, not in Asia, and whatever tensions may occur will involve the West, not the East. Third, Russia will maintain its borders. Fourth, outside the region of the former Soviet Union, Russia will carry out a 'normal' foreign policy of national interest, designed to maximize Russia's economic benefit (for example, through arms sales) and its security.[4]

Farther afield, the potentially serious disputes, as always in Russia, concern its relations with the West and the United States in particular – not relations with the countries of Asia. Russia sees no imminent threats to its interests in Asia, while other regions of the

world and the stabilization of Russia itself demand attention and expenditure. Moreover, the public is little interested in foreign affairs, and beyond symbolic issues like the Kuril Islands is unconcerned with the Asian region.

One of the most important goals of Russia's policy in Asia is to maintain and build prestige. And yet, as the ships of the Pacific fleet deteriorate, this objective becomes quite difficult to achieve. Besides bolstering its regional status, Russia is also committed to the pursuit of economic interests through trade and arms sales. Arms and military technology are the only highly profitable products made in Russia which Asians want.

As with many foreign policies, the objectives of Russian policy in Asia appear to be somewhat contradictory. The domestic economic pressure to sell arms to China and India, and possibly to Iran and Iraq, conflicts with the need to build good relations in Asia and with the United States. Moreover, the need for prestige is especially at odds with the imperative of stable neighbourly relations with Japan and China. Building prestige in conditions of weakness may require a certain inflexibility, as is obvious in the Russo-Japanese dispute over the Kurils which will be discussed later in this chapter.

For the longer run, Russians recognize that their position in the region is weak. Asia is a region of large and powerful countries, with rapidly increasing wealth and technology, which are beginning to assert their weight. In Asia, Russia is a 'small and fragile' country – in the sweep of geography from Lake Baikal to the Pacific about nine million Russians live north and west of 65 million Koreans, 130 million Japanese, and 1.2 billion Chinese. Even a prosperous and technologically advanced Russia is a 'small' country in Asia, and today Russia is neither. The South Koreans, not to mention the Japanese, are far ahead of Russia in both respects. So is southern coastal China. To make a different comparison, today the city of Shanghai has a larger economic product, a greater population, and possibly a higher standard of living than all Russia from Lake Baikal to the Arctic and the Pacific. A weak Russia needs time and stability to recoup its position.

EAST ASIAN POWER POLITICS

Russian decision-makers realize that a highly armed Asia, particularly a nuclear Asia, will be a dangerous place. Asian countries have

new wealth, high ethnic consciousness verging on racism, and a history of deeply rooted resentments. Moscow is well aware, from a century and a half of turbulent and violent Asian history, that Asia is unlikely to remain stable and quiet. Russian statesmen also realize that Asian countries, including both India and China, are fully capable of absorbing, deploying, and using advanced military technology.

While Europeans invented the modern balance-of-power system and the politics of nationalism, Asia may become its new home. East Asia today, as Europe before 1914, shows sustained economic growth and rapid gains in mass education and technology, which feed national pride and provide the money to increase military capabilities. As Mikhail Gorbachev put it in his 1986 Vladivostok speech:

> The Pacific region has not been militarized to the extent of Europe. But the potentialities for militarization are truly immense and the consequences are extremely dangerous. A glance at the map will convince one of that. Major nuclear powers are situated here. Powerful armies and mighty air forces and navies have been established. The scientific, technological, and industrial potential of many countries, from the Western to the Eastern fringes of the ocean, makes it possible to boost any arms race. In Europe, there operates – with its ups and downs – the Helsinki process of dialogue, talks and agreements. This brings about a certain stability and reduces the probability of armed conflicts. In the region in question there is nothing or next to nothing of the kind.[5]

In the 1990s, Japan and particularly China have begun to replace Russia and the United States as the region's military giants. China's military expenditures have been growing by 10 per cent or more annually, and like Japan, China is building a strong navy. China makes no secret of its wish for military dominance in its region. Until the recession of 1992–95, Japan's military budget was also growing rapidly, by some 6 per cent a year, and the Japanese debate over its future role, particularly in relation to a rapidly arming China, has only begun.[6] Russia is now too weak to project power. The United States, which maintains its Seventh Fleet and air bases in the western Pacific, now watches China and is having second thoughts about continuing the withdrawal begun in the Philippines.

The Asian region has recently shown several signs of instability. In 1994 North Korea's probable development of nuclear weapons threatened a serious crisis, and in 1996 the Chinese navy threatened Taiwan with warplanes and missiles, provoking an American counter-deployment. Other potential flashpoints in the region include the Kurils/Northern Islands, the Spratley Islands in the South China Sea, Mongolia and Inner Mongolia, now being colonized by Han Chinese, the Xinjiang–Kazakhstan border, and the Russian–Chinese frontier itself, where ethnic tensions have been rising.

So far, military-political tensions have been contained, as opportunities to make money expand. East Asia is stabilized by the Japanese–Chinese entente that has developed since the 1978 Sino-Japanese Friendship Treaty, coinciding with the onset of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms. The basis of the accord is both economic and strategic. The economic accord promotes Japanese investment in return for an eventual huge market. Japan's favourable balance of trade with China continues to expand, as does China's with the United States, in a triangular pattern. The strategic accord aims at stability on the basis of no Japanese rearmament, no Chinese hostility towards Japan, and Japanese help to preserve the Chinese communist leadership. Neither Japan nor China has any reason to allow relations with Russia to disrupt their co-operation.[7]

As for Russian policy towards the region, its orientation under Yeltsin has shifted from that of Gorbachev because of changed circumstances. The aim of Gorbachev's policy in Asia, as elsewhere abroad, was to reorient the Soviet Union from confrontation (based on 'class struggle') towards integration into the world community, while maintaining Soviet integrity and superpower status. In the Asian region, Gorbachev's policy was above all a response to China – a successful effort to end the Soviet Cold War with the Chinese which lasted from 1959 until the mid-1980s. Indeed, Eurocentric Westerners have not generally realized that Mikhail Gorbachev achieved not one great *rapprochement*, but two: with the West and also with China. *Rapprochement* with Beijing required settlement of the outstanding Asian issues: the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan, gradual defusing of the Chinese confrontation with Vietnam over the civil war in Cambodia, and Chinese–Soviet border demilitarization.

What has changed under Yeltsin's administration is Russia's reduced ability to play a key role in the region. Policy has shifted

from active and grandiose to reactive and limited. The dramatic downscaling of expectations is most evident in the economic relations – Russia at present is not able to become an Asia-Pacific economic player of consequence, expanding trade and importing prosperity, although it continues to encourage investment in the Russian Far East. Instead, the central issue for Moscow is economic survival and the need to keep Russia's resentful and turbulent Far Eastern provinces tied to a national economy.

What has not changed, however, is the tone and basic content of diplomacy and security policy. The Yeltsin government continues the search initiated by Gorbachev for a solution to the conflict in Korea, military downscaling in the Far East and the north-east Pacific, good relations with the United States on issues of north-east Asian security, and non-involvement in Asian crises elsewhere.

The Yeltsin government has maintained such a continuity of policy by keeping key Soviet specialists in charge of decision-making. One of these Russian Asianists, Vladimir Lukin, was Ambassador to the United States from 1992–94, ran for parliament in December 1993 on the ticket of the moderate Yabloko party, and is now head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the State Duma. Lukin, like many other Russian policy-makers, is a moderate in foreign affairs, but also very much a realist and a nationalist who believes in looking after Russian interests, particularly in the 'near abroad'. In Asia he supports Russian independence of policy and good relations with China, even at the expense, if necessary, of cordial relations with the United States.

Present intentions of the Yeltsin government are clear enough: to maintain a non-threatening environment in Asia; to do whatever is needed to help the Russian economy, to stabilize frontiers and protect territory; to maintain prestige; and to prevent so much decentralization of power to the Russian Far East (and other regions) that the national government loses control. In these terms, the Yeltsin policy in Asia has so far been successful.[8]

RUSSIA AND CHINA

China is and will be the focus and central concern of Russia's Asian relations for reasons both historical and contemporary.[9] Indeed, Chinese policy affects every other aspect of Russian–Asian relations. The Russian–Chinese interaction has been one of the great stories of

this turbulent century, from the opening in 1903 of the Russian-built and managed Chinese Eastern railway across Manchuria to Vladivostok to the present day. The Russian revolution of 1917 inspired the May 4th movement of 1919 in China and the formation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. Subsequently Soviet Russia trained and organized Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang army in the 1920s. During the Chinese civil war Stalin maintained good relations and, from 1937, a military alliance with the Kuomintang government against the Japanese, while Mao's communists gained internal support and strength after the Long March of 1934–36.

Soviet alliance with the victorious Chinese communists lasted, however, only a decade, from the Mutual Assistance Treaty of 1950 to the bitter break-up of the two great communist powers in 1959–60. At that time the Korean war, begun by Kim Il-sung and Stalin but eventually requiring Chinese intervention and three years of Chinese combat against the Americans, strained the relationship. Khrushchev's repudiation of Stalin and Soviet refusal to share nuclear technology with China strained it even further, and in 1959 China finally decided to assert its independence and centrality and sent the Soviet experts home. It is quite accurate to describe Chinese–Soviet relations from 1960 to the mid-1980s as a Cold War, with continuing struggles for control in Vietnam and Cambodia, North Korea, and south-west Asia, not to mention the bitter ideological battles in the world communist movement. In Indochina, the Chinese pulled out of the Vietnam war in 1968, to be replaced by the Russians. In 1978 the Vietnamese invasion of communist Cambodia and the Chinese invasion into northern Vietnam almost triggered Chinese–Soviet war. The Sino-Soviet border was highly militarized from the 1960s to the late 1980s. In 1969 fighting on Damanskii (Chenpao) island in the Ussuri river near Khabarovsk almost escalated to war; at that point, the Politburo even considered, and rejected, use of nuclear weapons against China. Furthermore, in South Asia the Chinese took the Pakistani side against the Soviet–Indian alliance. Also, the resistance of the Afghan *mujahiddin* was supplied through Pakistan by China as well as the United States. From 1979 the United States maintained facilities in Xinjiang for surveillance of Soviet missile tests in neighbouring Kazakhstan, in *de facto* military cooperation with China against Soviet power.

Gorbachev's *rapprochement* with China ended that Cold War. Chinese economic growth under Deng Xiaoping, from 1978, and the accelerating weakness of the Soviet economy from about the

same time, changed the military and economic balance in China's favour. The collapse of the USSR transformed the entire geography of inner Asia, also to China's benefit.[10]

In Soviet times, the Soviet–Chinese border (including Mongolia as a dependency occupied by Soviet troops) stretched from the Pamirs to the Pacific. Today, with the territorial retreat to the frontiers of the Russian Republic, the direct boundary runs only from Mongolia to Vladivostok. But the space vacated by Soviet power, in Mongolia and particularly Kazakhstan, has created a huge inner Eurasian buffer zone between the Chinese and Russian spheres, with all the difficulties and vicissitudes of buffer zones elsewhere. The ambiguities of the buffer zone exist on both sides: the map shows Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang as Chinese territory, but these are volatile areas where nationalism and resistance to Chinese power and colonization may spread, just as nationalism and resistance to Russian power have taken root in Mongolia and Kazakhstan. The final border zone, of the Russian Far East and Manchuria, is also more fluid than it looks on the map.

It is important to emphasize that the whole system of regional security from the Pamirs to the Pacific depends to a large extent on Russian–Chinese relations. For Russia, all security arrangements in East Asia, including those with the United States in the north Pacific, are influenced by the relationship with China. If China is a friendly power, Russia can afford more confrontation with Japan or the United States. If China is an enemy, détente with the United States or Japan or both becomes essential.

Moreover, hostility with China affects Russia's budget, too, in a very direct way. The 1994 Russian policy of cutting the army to 1.5 million men while reviving technical modernization would be impossible if it were necessary to confront China in Asia. Finally, from a commercial perspective, China is Russia's natural Asian trading partner. By implication, what is happening to China, whether it becomes a truly great power or a country plagued by depression, will be the central concern of Russia's Asian affairs.

In May 1994 Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin met in Beijing with Chinese President and party head Jiang Jemin and proclaimed a 'new high' in Russian–Chinese relations. Seven agreements were signed on border control, river transport, fishing rights, and other matters. Continued cooperation in arms sales and military technology was also reported. Indeed, in present circumstances, Russia must sell abroad whatever military equipment it

can. The most basic reason is that without foreign orders military factories cannot continue to employ hundreds of thousands of Russian workers. Military sales are supported most vehemently by the regional leaders in the Federation Council of the Russian parliament, in whose regions the factories are located. Consultations between Russian and Chinese leaders touching on military sales have been almost continual.[11] In 1992 Russia agreed to sell 24 Sukhoi-27s to China and is apparently ready to sell whatever other arms China wants to buy: MiG 31s, T-72 tanks, C-300 surface-to-air missiles, Kilo class submarines, and advanced naval coordination systems.[12] The SU-27s can be refuelled in flight and thus are capable of extending China's range of influence including air delivery of nuclear weapons. In addition, naval technology will help establish Chinese dominance in the South China Sea.

In August 1994 the *Hong Kong Mirror* reported that China had agreed to buy $5 billion worth of Russian goods: fighters, a tank factory, and anti-missile systems. Through such huge orders, Russia gets an affluent customer for its military industries, with a large and growing demand, and also obtains a security window into China's military development. In exchange, the Chinese side gets the advanced technology. Moreover, China has been using the possibility of buying from strapped Russian factories as a lever to make the United States sell its own military equipment.

From the late 1980s until 1994 Chinese–Russian trade, both military and non-military, expanded at a very rapid pace – a development not matched in other areas of Russian trade. In 1991, Soviet–Chinese commercial transactions were estimated at $3.9 billion; in 1992 Russian–Chinese trade climbed to $5.8 billion; in 1993 – to $7.68 billion, up 35 per cent. Border trade was $860 million in 1991 and $1.8 billion in 1992 according to official data (many border transactions remain unrecorded).[13]

However, expanded border trade had its own negative repercussions for Russian–Chinese relations. A number of Russian politicians and publicists in the Far East, especially in Khabarovsk and Primorskii regions, are now proclaiming a new 'yellow peril' and clamouring for border control, citing estimates of one million illegal Chinese in the Russian Federation, with border crossings of 200 000 daily.[14] The response from Moscow has been reinforcement of the border troops and the establishment of new regulations requiring visas from both sides. In August 1995, Russia also signed an agreement with China on strengthening cooperation in guarding their

joint border. The agreement was designed to provide for better information exchange and to allow for improved means of preventing violations on both sides, such as smuggling and poaching.

Another issue complicating Russian–Chinese relations is also related to the border between the two countries.[15] While there has been much international publicity concerning the Kurils, little is known about the border issues between Russia and China. Since the late 1980s a Russian–Chinese commission has been labouring to demarcate and define the boundary and put all conflict-producing issues to rest. Eventually, in 1991 agreement was reached on the channel in the Amur river. According to the agreement, Chinese ships can pass from the Ussuri to the Amur at Khabarovsk.

Remaining issues concern islands in the Argun river (Chita *oblast*) and a small amount of land on the border between Primorskii krai (the Russian Maritime Province) and Heilongjiang (Manchuria). Primorskii governor Evgenyi Nazdratenko has publicized the last issue, declaring repeatedly that he will never give a square metre of Russian land to the Chinese. This is part of the local political game of seeking electoral support, often in demagogic fashion, while blaming Moscow for economic depression and social problems.

While Russian–Chinese cooperation is likely to continue – neither side has anything to gain from ending it – not all will be easy. In May 1994 Duma Chairman and Security Council member Ivan Rybkin mentioned differences of opinion in the parliament concerning China, specifically with respect to the border issues.[16] Rybkin also mentioned that the Chinese economic development model was not applicable in Russia because, unlike China, Russia had no affluent external Russian community from which to draw capital – an interesting argument. In the longer run, as (or if) Chinese power continues to grow, the advantages to Russia of military transfers will be less than the dangers of an ever more powerful China dominating Central Asia and threatening the Russian Far East, which is still, in the minds of some Chinese, an illegitimate Russian territorial conquest. Russian–Chinese rivalry is now muted, and cooperation ascendant, but this will not be a permanent state of affairs.

JAPAN AND THE ISLANDS DISPUTE

Posted on the second floor of the Khabarovsk historical museum overlooking the Amur river is a small notice, which reads that

546 086 Japanese prisoners of war were imprisoned in Soviet camps after 1945. Several years later, the survivors came home. Some 65 000 did not return. This is but one episode in the 140-year history of Russian–Japanese tension, which long pre-dates the Cold War and continues after its end. The tension has usually involved the United States, which has at various times supported the Russian side, the Japanese side, or acted as intermediary. The constant in this North Pacific triangle is Russian–Japanese hostility. Key dates in the triangular relationship are 1853, 1905, 1939–41, 1945, 1951, 1956, and 1991.[17]

Four islands north of Hokkaido (Northern Territories to the Japanese, southern Kurils to the Russians) are the primary source of current tensions.[18] The Kurils were divided in the original Japanese–Russian Treaty of 1855 and, along with southern Sakhalin, have changed hands several times since. Legal arguments about their possession centre on the September 1951 Treaty of San Francisco, signed by Japan but not by the Soviet Union, in which Japan renounced its claim to 'the Kuril Islands'. Japan maintains this designation never included the four islands now disputed, which were always Japanese.

On the islands, the 25 000 inhabitants were strongly in favour of Russia's retaining them at the time of Gorbachev's visit to Japan in 1991, but since then have grown disillusioned: an autumn 1992 poll showed 20 per cent support for Japan's taking the islands and a large number who didn't care. The bravado of the 'Sakhalin Cossack Army' to defend the islands – one of several border situations in which Cossacks have put themselves forward as military superpatriots – is not particularly welcome.[19] Japanese visitors have reportedly offered jobs to those inhabitants who stay or large compensation, rumours range as high as $100 000 to $300 000 per person, to those who leave.

Many proposals have been brought forward to settle the issue, which took on urgency, as Japan was pressed to give aid to the Soviet Union and now Russia. Gorbachev proposed demilitarization, joint development and a peace treaty, with territorial negotiations to follow, and probably would have added transfer of tiny Shikotan and Habomai. The Yeltsin government initially backed this proposal. In 1991–92 Foreign Minister Kozyrev favoured the agreement which Japan had been willing to accept in 1956 but which was blocked by the United States – transferring Habomai and Shikotan, leaving negotiation on Etorufu and Kunashiri for

later, and signing a peace treaty. And yet, as Russia's nationalist sentiment grew stronger after 1991, the Russian government shifted to its present position, which allows for no return of the islands at least in the near future. The key event marking this shift was President Yeltsin's abrupt cancellation of his visit to Japan in September 1992.

As President Yeltsin's September visit drew closer, the Japanese stood firm for return of all the islands before approving substantial government aid. Japanese experts had for some time argued that since Japanese aid was essential to Russian recovery, the Japanese position should harden.[20] Thus, for example, when Japanese Foreign Minister Watanabe went to Moscow in September 1992, he proposed only $100 million in emergency humanitarian aid and $700 million in export insurance for gas and oil projects, which had already been discussed.[21] When he touched upon the islands issue, the Russian side was not prepared to make any firm commitment to return even Habomai and Shikotan. Discouraged by Japanese sparse economic assistance and driven by increasingly nationalist domestic politics President Yeltsin, after a long Security Council meeting on 9 September, decided to cancel his upcoming visit to Japan. The abrupt cancellation led to confusion and recrimination in both countries. Some in Japan argued that the negotiating posture should have been softer, providing the Russian President with an opportunity for dialogue. And yet, in October 1993 Yeltsin finally visited Tokyo, when the Japanese reform government of Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, a weak coalition, replaced the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Although Yeltsin's visit did not resolve the Kurils problem, some symbolic gestures of friendship have been made. Thus, for example, the Japanese have been permitted to visit the camps where Japanese POWs died in the years following the Second World War. Every Russian politician now maintains that the islands are and will remain part of the country's territory, regardless of international pressures.[22] The official Russian position is that the islands issue exists, and a peace treaty with Japan is necessary, but can be left for 'future generations'. Like Russia, Japan follows a long-term policy of wait and see.

In June 1994 Foreign Minister Kozyrev announced that Russian–Japanese relations had 'normalized'. He also turned the usual Japanese disdain for Russian turbulence upside down with a wry remark that Russia was waiting for political stability in Japan, which at that time had had four governments in two years. The fact is that

both countries have little political energy to spare for a quarrel, and both understand how emotionally explosive a quarrel might become. Moreover, other regional matters – China and North Korea – demand the attention of both. And yet, the Russian–Japanese tension over the islands will not disappear. It will emerge again in the unpredictable context of larger East Asian economic and power shifts.

It is the common impression that because of the islands issue there are no economic relations between Russia and Japan. This is, however, not the case. Although Japan has linked bilateral government aid to return of the islands, there are no political obstacles now to inhibit Japanese investment or trade with Russia. Nevertheless, Japanese corporations have been reluctant to do business in the Russian Federation primarily for economic reasons. The last major investment was, in fact, the Tiumen oil project of the early 1970s. Investment slowed, then stopped in the 1980s, as Japan decided to import Middle Eastern oil rather than invest in Siberian fields. In part this was due to the United States pressure, but mostly it was because Japanese investors could make money more easily elsewhere. Japanese firms, however, still trade heavily with the Russian Far East, buying Russian fish, timber and coal.

In general, caution with respect to business investments into the Russian economy has continued through the first half of 1996. It is critical to reiterate, however, that Japanese reluctance to invest is a purely pragmatic decision. As the Japanese themselves put it, 'there is no need to worry about the passiveness of Japanese firms; they are very cautious, but ready to enter into any economies, if they are convinced that it is profitable.'[23]

RUSSIA AND KOREA

South Korea and Russia are natural allies. Geopolitically, both fear rearmament of Japan, or the possible overwhelming power of China. Economically, South Korean capital and manufacturing know-how is a perfect complement for Russian raw materials and military-industrial technology. Both countries profit from economic connections which lessen their dependence on Japan in East Asia. South Korea seeks a region for investment, while Russian engineers can provide technology useful to Korean civilian and military industries. Moreover, the Korean *chaebol*, large hierarchically man-

aged conglomerates accustomed to state intervention, have an organizational culture similar to ex-Soviet resource and military-industrial firms. Nor is there a border or population issue which would turn Russian nationalists against Korea. Furthermore, both South Korea and Russia seek a gradual solution to the problem of North Korea through a long period of economic contacts and opening of the North before reunification.

South Korea had several motivations for its dramatic 1990 *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union. The first was to open a new, potentially promising market and a source of raw materials. The second was to enlist one of North Korea's protectors in the diplomacy of reunification. The third was to find a future ally that was neither America nor Japan. Russian connections give South Korea a leverage in negotiations with the United States, and a possible geopolitical partner in the event of future tensions with Japan or China.

The fourth motivation for South Korea's *rapprochement* was a need to establish closer contacts with Koreans residing in the USSR. Soviet Koreans were deported from their homes in the Soviet Far East to Central Asia in the 1930s. Some Koreans, who now live in Kazakhstan, have asked for a special Korean zone in Primorskii krai to which they might return. In general, South Korea favours this request and is interested in safeguarding the rights of the deported Korean population.

To establish the new relationship, South Korea promised in 1990 to loan the Soviet Union $3 billion, of which $1.53 billion was granted through 1991. A Korean consortium for trade with Russia, KOTRA, was formed to channel Korean investments. The Korean *chaebol* quickly established business contacts inside Russia, for example, the Hyundai timber project in Primorskii krai (which has drawn environmental protests from Russians) and the Daewoo joint venture with the military technology company Positron in St Petersburg.

South Korea's Russia fever cooled, however, with the collapse of the USSR. Little investment has taken place after August 1991. Debt repayments became a major problem: $1.47 billion, with $400 million outstanding, was owed by Russia to South Korea in May 1992. The debt issue has clouded Russian–South Korean relations ever since. Russia initially balked at assuming the entire Soviet debt to South Korea. In spring 1994, however, Russia finally agreed to repay the whole sum, but asked for deferment of payments, which

South Korea rejected. Subsequently, the Russians proposed sending arms to South Korea to settle the debt.[24]

Politically one of the most serious concerns shared by both countries is the problem of North Korea. From the Russian and South Korean viewpoints, the North Korean question involves much more than nuclear weapons development. By a 1961 mutual defence treaty Russia was committed to defend North Korea. Considering the treaty as an unnecessary burden, the Russian government claims that the 1990 amendments release Russia from any obligation to act except in case of a direct invasion of the North. It was generally expected that the treaty would be terminated when it came up for renewal on 10 September 1995, as former Foreign Minister Kozyrev had declared. Yet, the treaty was not formally terminated. Moscow sent to the North Koreans a draft of a new treaty without a military assistance clause, but the old treaty remains in force until agreement has been reached on a new one.[25] It is important to recall that Moscow's relations with North Korea had already gone sour during Gorbachev's period. Thus, after 1990, Moscow switched its energy deliveries to North Korea to hard currency repayment, effectively ending its aid to the country. Furthermore, military assistance was also entirely cut.

Russia has every interest in preventing North Korea (or South Korea) from building nuclear weapons. But Russia also has little interest in becoming a protagonist in the dispute between the United States and North Korea over international inspections of North Korean nuclear facilities. Nor does Russia want its policy to become hostage to the unpredictable relations between the two Koreas. The result of such concerns has been a Russian proposal, akin to many from the Gorbachev era and before, for an international conference on North Korean nuclear weapons of which Russia would be a co-sponsor.[26]

Unfortunately for Russian decision-makers their country is caught amidst contradictions on the entire nuclear issue. In the long term, Russia has every interest in opposing proliferation, as did the Soviet Union. In the short term, however, nuclear and military technology are Russia's best hope for foreign currency earnings apart from export of raw materials. Moreover, some Russian conservatives still argue for an even-handed treatment of North and South Korea, and it has become a virtual tenet of policy that Russia must not be perceived as a faithful running-dog of the United States initiatives, over North Korea or anywhere else.

KAZAKHSTAN AND POST-SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

Historically China and Russia have divided and colonized Central Asia, sending settlers along with administrative and economic control. Russian rule in the region was established in the 1860s, and was re-established in 1920–23 with the repression of the *basmachi* rebellion in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Recently, the situation in Central Asia has changed in three fundamental respects. First of all, the ex-Soviet Asian countries now have independence and bargaining power. Although Russia tries to reassert itself in Central Asia, it cannot dictate its policy the way the Soviet Union used to. Second, China has replaced Russia as the dynamic economic force in the region. Third, the entire region is extremely fragile. The area consists of a number of territorially mixed-up nationalities. Take, for example, the Uighur and Kazakh populations of Kazakhstan and Xinjiang, or the Uzbek and Tajik populations in the Ferghana valley and in northern Afghanistan. To complicate the ethnic situation even further, every Central Asian capital city has a significant portion of Russian population.

As the USSR broke up, several alternative scenarios for Central Asia emerged. The first was a continued close association with Russia, with some central control from Moscow over monetary policy, defence and external trade. The second alternative was integration of the Central Asian countries into a political and economic bloc. This policy would have undoubtedly threatened China because it might promote anti-Chinese feeling among Uighurs and Chinese Muslims in Xinjiang, and a strong Central Asian federation would threaten Russia as well. The third possibility was a go-it-alone nationalism for each country – the Ukrainian model. As in Ukraine, neo-communist leaders could keep power by wearing, for local consumption, anti-Russian clothes and could seek allies outside the former USSR, for example Iran, Turkey, China or the United States.

So far, the post-Soviet Central Asian countries show no sign of forming an anti-Russian bloc or of assuming a pan-Turkic identity.[27] Rivalries exist among them, particularly between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Each country is becoming distinct in political style and international connections. At the same time, under governments led without exception by former Soviet communists, cooperation with Russia has continued and, since 1992, expanded. The one exception is Turkmenistan, where Saparmurad Niyazov maintains a neo-Stalinist regime and cult of personality even as he

asserts independence from the Russian economy. In his independent policy, Niyazov is substantially aided by the fact that Turkmenistan floats on a sea of highly marketable natural gas.

As Russian domestic politics shifted towards nationalism, Moscow announced the 'Yeltsin doctrine' of Russian policing of the 'near abroad' and its commitment to the defence of the borders of the former USSR. This doctrine was successfully carried out on the Tajik–Afghan border, among other places. Indeed, since November 1992, Russian troops, who number 25 000 in Tajikistan, have clashed on numerous occasions with Tajik opposition fighters and their Afghan *mujahiddin* supporters. Despite its expanding involvement in the region, however, Russia at present enjoys good relations with all Central Asian governments, including Uzbekistan, which is the natural centre for Central Asian unity against Russia. One reason for such cooperation is a shared fear of Islamic nationalists, which could sweep away Russian influence and Central Asian neo-communists alike.[28]

It is very important not to overgeneralize about Russian policy towards Central Asia. Russia's relationship with the region's most important country, Kazakhstan, is necessarily different from its relations with the others. Only with Kazakhstan does Russia share a border, and Kazakhstan is thus a buffer zone between the Russian Federation and the states of Central Asia proper. Only in northern Kazakhstan are Russians settled on the land; elsewhere in Central Asia Russians were (and are) administrators, professionals, and technicians concentrated in the capital cities. Only Kazakhstan has oil, coal, copper, uranium and gold; its power plants supply energy to the Urals, and it hosts key military facilities such as the Baikonur space complex and the Emba missile test range.

Kazakhstan is a huge new country exactly in the middle of Eurasia, sharing a 2500-mile border with Russia and a 2000-mile border with China. It is also a very fragile place, beset with ethnic divisions and a failing economy. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev remains a Western favourite because of his policies of ethnic consensus and the country's possession of large oil reserves. Among Kazakhs, Nazarbaev inherited the mantle of 1970s national leader Dinmukhamed Kunaev, whose monuments in Almaty include the huge marble Government House and a luxurious central bath which covers an entire city block. Like Kunaev before him, Nazarbaev is seen as a great khan of the people, who knows how to manipulate power and increase Kazakh prestige.[29]

Kazakh nationalists do not emphasize Islam, and there is no Islamic opposition party. The political divisions in Kazakh politics are between the majority national coalition, 'Azad', which supports Nazarbaev, and more radical nationalists who took their name 'Alash' from the anti-Russian and anti-Bolshevik independence movement of 1905–30. Kazakh nationalists oppose rapid privatization of the economy for a simple reason: Kazakhs control the state, while privatized mining and industry would be controlled by the Russians.

Most importantly, private property in land would entrench the rights of the Russian farmers in the north, who are the majority population in that area. The Russian government has never threatened annexation of northern Kazakhstan, although nationalists, such as former Russian Vice-President Aleksander Rutskoi and the extremist Vladimir Zhirinovskii, have repeatedly mentioned it. Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, on his May 1994 train journey across Russia from Vladivostok to Moscow, also referred to northern Kazakhstan as a Russian region. Shortly afterwards copies of Russian newspapers carrying his remarks were publicly burned in Kazakhstan. Cossacks, the symbol of militant Russian nationalism, have tried to organize in Kazakhstan, but have been thwarted by the government.

Nevertheless, despite ethnic tensions and the history of Soviet nuclear and military testing on Kazakh territory which has caused severe environmental damage, Kazakhstan remains quite peaceful and continues to cooperate with Russia. The recent decision to move the capital from Almaty to Akmola (formerly Tselinograd) in the north underscores both ethnic cooperation and Kazakh determination to keep its territory. If, however, Kazakhstan were to embrace anti-Russian nationalism, or if Russia were to seek annexation of northern Kazakhstan, Eurasian affairs could break loose from their present fragile moorings.

CONCLUSIONS

Russian policy in Asia, particularly since the consolidation of the Yeltsin government in 1993, can be summarized in five main points. First, Russia will try to avoid major crises in Asia; currently, security can better be provided by diplomacy and accommodation than by confrontation. Second, Russia will hold on to its sphere of influence

in the 'near abroad', which in Asia extends to the borders of the former Soviet Union but not beyond. Third, Russia will do whatever it can to further its economic interests. Trade expansion, including arms sales, becomes a virtual imperative. Fourth, Russia will defend its prestige as a great power, even if this leads to occasional inflexibility. Finally, Russian leaders must listen to the voices of nationalist voters, particularly on such emotional issues as illegal Chinese immigration, Russians in northern Kazakhstan, or the Kurils. Some Westerners persist in seeing Russian nationalism as sinister, but in fact it now resembles the often irrational nationalism fed by electoral democracy in other places, for example the Helms-Burton law in the United States. In 1996 Russian voters utterly rejected ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii, who won only 5.6 per cent of the votes in the first round of the presidential poll.

In sum, Russia now follows a normal foreign policy towards Asia, devoid of ideological propaganda or messianic spirit, and influenced by public opinion. In the late 1990s, policy in Asia will seek accommodation and avoid confrontation, but it may shift toward greater assertiveness with the political and economic stabilization of the Russian state. Russians recognize the fragility of the present Asian era of good feelings and hope it will last long enough for their recovery to take hold.

NOTES

1. The author, who has been engaged in university administration in Ecuador since 1994, without access to a research library, wishes to express special thanks to Alexander V. Kozhemiakin for his revisions to the chapter.
2. Andrei Sakharov, by no accident a nuclear scientist, was the most recent great Russian Westernizer. In his essay, 'Progress, Co-existence, and Intellectual Freedom' (1968), Sakharov argued that only rejoining the liberal West could assure progress and overcome backwardness in Russia.
3. See Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, 'The Emergence of Eurasianism', *California Slavic Studies*, vol. 3 (1967); Karen Brutents, 'Russia and the East', *International Affairs* (Moscow), nos. 1–2 (1994).
4. For an analysis of the growing importance of economic considerations in Russia's relations with developing nations, see Chapter 7.
5. Text in *Information Bulletin: Documents of the Communist and Workers' Parties* (October 1986), p. 5.
6. *The Economist* (31 Oct.–1 Nov., 1992), p. 72.

7. The official *Beijing Review* has referred to cooperation between China and Japan in the following way: Sino-Japanese relations are entering a new stage in the 1990s. The two sides will expand their ties from bilateral to Asia-Pacific and global cooperation and strive to develop both economic and political relations... Japan perceives Sino-Japanese relations as a 'trump card' to counter US pressure. It stressed its relations with China whenever its relations with Washington became strained so as to offset US criticism... Japan strives to win a favourable position in establishing a new international order with the help of China. At present, the United States is trying to establish a new world order under its domination and European countries are stepping up their unification process. Clashes between Japan and the United States and between Japan and Europe are sharpening, while relations between Japan and Russia have made no breakthrough. Under the circumstances, Japan hopes to get the help of China to occupy a favourable position in the future international set-up. See *Beijing Review* (12–18 October 1992), p. 25.
8. For a comprehensive overview of Russian policy in Asia, see Hongchan Chun, 'The Russian Federation and a New Security Order in the Asia-Pacific Region', in William E. Ferry and Roger E. Kanet (eds), *Post-Communist States in the World Community* (London: Macmillan, forthcoming).
9. For a comprehensive analysis of the Sino-Soviet rocky relationship, see 'The Strategic Context' and 'The Roots of Friction: Cultural, Territorial, Geo-political and Ideological', in C. G. Jacobsen, *Sino-Soviet Relations since Mao: The Chairman's Legacy* (New York: Praeger, 1981), chs. 1 and 2.
10. And yet, it is important to note that post-Soviet Central Asia, rife with ethno-nationalism, may potentially threaten the integrity of multinational states such as China. See Rajan Menon, 'In the Shadow of the Bear: Security in Post-Soviet Central Asia', *International Security* 20, no. 1 (Summer 1995), esp. pp. 178–9.
11. For the examination of various pressures on the Russian government to increase arms exports, see P. Felgengauer, 'Vse v Rossii khatiat torgovat' oruzhiem', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (1 October 1992).
12. *Kommersant*, no. 35 (24–31 August 1992), p. 24.
13. *RA Report* (July 1993), p. 56 and (January 1994), p. 26 and *RFE/RL Daily Report* (26 June 1994).
14. Interfax (17 November 1993), cited in *RA Report* (January 1994), p. 129.
15. *OMRI Daily Digest* (24 August 1995).
16. *RFE/RL Daily Report* (18 May 1994).
17. 1853: Russian and American ships compete to 'open' Japan; 1905: The US mediates the settlement of the Russo-Japanese war in the Treaty of Portsmouth; 1941: after holding off Japanese forces at Lake Hasan (1938) and Khalkhin Gol (1939), the Soviet Union signs a non-aggression treaty with Japan, thus freeing Japanese military planners to attack south-east Asia and Hawaii; 1945: at Yalta the United States persuades the Soviet Union to break its non-aggression treaty and attack Japan no later than three months after the end of the war in Europe. The Soviet attack of August 1945 takes southern Sakhalin and the Kurils and captures the Japanese army in Manchuria; 1951: at the height of the Cold War, with fighting in Korea, the San Francisco Treaty formally ends the Pacific war. The Soviet Union does not sign; 1956: Khrushchev's offer to return the two smaller southern islands in return for

later discussions on Etorufu and Kunashiri and a formal peace treaty is rejected by Japan under US influence; 1991: Mikhail Gorbachev visits Japan, with the US now supporting Russo-Japanese détente and settlement of the islands dispute.

18. The Treaty of Shimoda of 1875 gave Sakhalin to Russia and the entire Kuril chain as far as Kamchatka to Japan. The Treaty of Portsmouth following the 1904–05 war added Sakhalin south of the 58th parallel to Japanese territory. At Yalta in 1945, Stalin and Roosevelt discussed Japanese territory, and agreed that in return for a Soviet attack on Japan (violating the Soviet–Japanese non-aggression treaty) the USSR would take southern Sakhalin and 'the Kuriles'. Apparently the State Department raised the issue of the four southern Kuril islands as distinct from the rest, but this detail was never discussed by Roosevelt and Stalin, who had other matters to consider.
19. Cossacks have been active in Transdniester and the north Caucasus and have made statements regarding northern Kazakhstan. They seek restoration as a political force in Russian politics, with delegations active in St Petersburg as well as in Moscow. Some groups have been associated with the extremist National Salvation Front and ultranationalist politicians.
20. See, e.g., Hiroshi Kimura, 'Recent Japan–Soviet Relations', in Peter Drysdale (ed.), *The Soviet and the Pacific Challenge* (1991), pp. 72–3. Kimura argues that only Japan can really help the Soviet economy, and 'with the worsening economic crisis in the Soviet Union, the Soviets now seem to have no choice but to approach Japan' over the islands.
21. *Kommersant Daily* (7 September 1992), p. 3.
22. An extreme variant of such proclamations is a remark by Vladimir Zhirinovskii, one of the most well-known Russian nationalist politicians. According to Zhirinovskii, Russia will invade Japan, if Japan does not drop its claims; Japanese should visit Russia only to do 'dirty work'. *RFE/RL Daily Report* (27 July 1994).
23. See, e.g., Shinchiro Tabata, 'The Japanese–Soviet Future', unpublished paper (May 1990), Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido.
24. *SUPAR Report*, no. 13 (July 1994), p. 61.
25. This issue is discussed at some length in Klaus Fritsche, 'Neue Annäherung Moskaus an Pjöngjang? Rußland und die koreanische Halbinsel', *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien*, no. 13 (1996), pp. 33–6.
26. For a perceptive analysis of the decline of Soviet–North Korean cooperation, see Charles E. Ziegler, *Foreign Policy and East Asia: Learning and Adaptation in the Gorbachev Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 108–27.
27. For several excellent essays explaining the tangled politics of Central Asia, see Michael Mandelbaum (ed.), *Central Asia and the World* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994).
28. See Rajan Menon, 'In the Shadow of the Bear: Security in Post-Soviet Central Asia', *International Security* 20, no. 1 (Summer 1995), pp. 149–81.
29. Nazarbaev's biography and ideas are found in Nursultan Nazarbaev, *Bez Pravykh i Levykh* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1991).

6 Moscow and the Middle East since the Collapse of the Soviet Union: A Preliminary Analysis

Robert O. Freedman

Other than continental Europe perhaps no area on the globe saw a greater transformation of Soviet foreign policy in the Gorbachev era than the Middle East. In an effort to provide the background for an analysis of continuity and change in the policy of Russia, the chief successor state of the USSR, towards the Middle East, this essay will begin with an analysis of Soviet Middle East policy under Gorbachev. Next the chapter will examine the evolution of Russian policy towards the Arab–Israeli conflict under Russia's new President, Boris Yeltsin, and it will then evaluate Russian policy towards Iran and Turkey. Finally, an analysis will be made of Russian policy towards the continuing conflict between the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, and its Gulf Arab neighbours, principally Kuwait, which had been invaded by Iraq in 1990. The essay will conclude with an analysis of the areas of continuity and those of change between Yeltsin's policies towards the Middle East and those of his predecessor, Mikhail Gorbachev, concentrating on the December 1991–January 1996 period when Andrei Kozyrev served as foreign minister of Russia.

THE GORBACHEV LEGACY

When Mikhail Gorbachev took power in the Soviet Union in March 1985, the Middle East was clearly an area of superpower competition. Moscow backed the Arab rejectionists such as Syria, the PLO, Iraq, Algeria and Libya in their confrontation with Israel; Egypt, an ally of the United States, was viewed by Moscow as an enemy. The USSR had no diplomatic relations with Israel, had reduced Jewish emigration from the USSR to less than 1000 per year (as opposed to a high of 51 000 in 1979), and continued to

champion the anti-Israeli 'Zionism is Racism' resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. In the Iran–Iraq conflict, the USSR had alternately tilted first to Iran and then to Iraq, as it sought to keep maximum influence in both countries while at the same time trying to prevent the United States from becoming the sole outside guarantor for the Arabs against Iran.[1]

By the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union there had been a massive transformation in most Soviet policies towards the Middle East, a transformation that was accelerated by the failure of the August 1991 abortive coup which enabled Gorbachev to eliminate many of his most hard-line opponents.[2] The most significant area of change was in Moscow's relations with Israel. Not only did Gorbachev restore full diplomatic relations with Israel (an action taken in October 1991) and join with the United States in co-sponsoring a UN resolution reversing the 'Zionism is Racism' resolution, he also allowed hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel – much to the discomfiture of the Arab rejectionists like Syria and Iraq who saw the immigrants, many of whom had advanced degrees, as adding to the military and scientific power of Israel. Despite extensive Arab criticism, Gorbachev allowed the flow of emigrants to continue, primarily to win the favour of the United States, although he justified his action on human rights grounds.[3] Moscow also joined the United States in co-sponsoring the Madrid Arab–Israeli peace conference, one more sign of the growing superpower cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union, although the US clearly played the dominant role at the conference. Gorbachev also cultivated Egypt, making it the centrepiece of Soviet policy in the Arab world, as Soviet–Egyptian relations went from enmity to close cooperation; at the same time, Syrian–Russian relations deteriorated as Gorbachev refused to give Syria the weapons it needed for military parity with Israel.

In the Gulf, the degree of change was considerably smaller. After initially continuing the Brezhnev policy of alternately tilting between Iraq and Iran, Gorbachev had by July 1987 clearly tilted to Iran. However, following the end of the Iran–Iraq war in 1988, Moscow again sought to improve relations with Iraq. The major challenge to Moscow's Gulf policy, however, came with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Seeking to retain influence in Iraq while at the same time trying not to alienate either the US or the oil-rich Arab states of the Gulf Cooperation Council which held out the promise of economic assistance for the USSR's increasingly hard-pressed economy, Gorbachev adopted what might be termed a 'minimax' strat-

egy. That is, he sought to maintain the maximum amount of influence in Iraq while doing just enough to maintain cooperation with the United States and the Arab members of the anti-Iraqi coalition. In the end, the policy proved to be of limited success as the US-led coalition decisively defeated Iraq, while Moscow remained on the sidelines, supporting the coalition in the United Nations but not even supplying a hospital ship to the coalition war effort and unsuccessfully seeking to save Iraq from a ground invasion in February 1991. When the war ended, the United States emerged as the dominant foreign power in the Middle East and the military guarantor of the wealthy Arab oil states of the GCC, while the USSR was marginalized in the region except for its continuing ties to Iran and some residual influence in Iraq.[4] As the Soviet Union's collapse accelerated following the August 1991 abortive coup d'état, Soviet policy towards the Middle East appeared to split into two separate lines, Gorbachev's and that of his Middle East adviser Evgenyi Primakov. Gorbachev, seeking to bolster his weakening position at home, sought maximum cooperation with the United States, even if this meant playing 'second fiddle' to the US, something that was very apparent at the Madrid Middle East peace conference. On the other hand, Primakov, who set out on a major Middle East trip in September 1991, to give the leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Iran and Turkey Gorbachev's personal thanks for their support during the abortive coup, and to seek their economic assistance for the USSR's faltering economy, had another agenda as well. In evaluating his trip, Primakov stated that all of the countries he visited 'clearly did not want the disintegration of the USSR' and saw the need to preserve its united economic and strategic area. He also asserted 'the leaders I have met want a USSR presence in the Near and Middle East because this would preserve the balance of power. Nobody wants some power to maintain a monopoly position there.'[5] Interestingly enough, while Yeltsin at the start of his period of rule in late 1991 was to adhere closely to the Gorbachev line, two years later, under heavy pressure from conservative forces in Russia, he was to sound more like Primakov.

YELTSIN AND THE ARAB–ISRAELI CONFLICT

Following his accession to power as leader of an independent Russia, Boris Yeltsin initially showed very little interest in Middle

Eastern questions as he devoted his time and energy just to consolidating his power and then to gaining approval in the West – and particularly in the United States – for Russia to be the primary inheritor of the Soviet Union's international responsibilities, including its veto power in the United Nations Security Council. Yeltsin's priorities were shown when he failed to attend the multilateral Arab–Israeli peace talks that took place in Moscow in late January 1992 (hosting such a conference had been the goal of Soviet leaders since the 1970s); he chose instead to rally support among the Russian sailors on the Black Sea. When Middle East questions did arise, Yeltsin tended to follow the US lead on virtually all issues. The Russian President appeared anxious to curry favour in the West, and at first based his foreign policy on going along with American foreign policy initiatives. Thus, on questions related to the Arab–Israeli conflict, Iraq, and Libya, Yeltsin fully supported US policies. Indeed, the Russian embassy in Libya was attacked because of Moscow's support for the US sanctions initiative, and Russia supplied two warships to help enforce the UN blockade of Iraq.[6]

The only exception to this pattern of Russian support of US Middle East policy was in the area of arms sales to Iran, an enemy of the United States with which Moscow was seeking close cooperation (see below for a discussion of Russian–Iranian relations). Moscow did not seem to work out its policy towards the Middle East – an area of less than central concern to the Russians who were preoccupied with the 'near abroad' (the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union) and relations with the United States and Europe – until November 1992 when Viktor Posuvaliuk, director of the Foreign Ministry's Africa and Middle East Department, formally described the new Russian policy as:

1. effectively using the Arab countries' potential in order to solve the problems that face Russia on its way to [economic] recovery
2. ensuring Russian national security
3. preventing the development of military and political conflagrations
4. actively supporting the Middle East peace process and opposing destructive recurrences of phenomena such as the Iran–Iraq war and the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait
5. fulfilling the agreements it had signed in regard to arms supplies – albeit in doses in order not to harm third countries

6.. shifting to mutually advantageous economic and trade relations with Arab countries

Posuvaliuk added, possibly with Syria in mind, that he hoped 'debtor countries would take the measures necessary to pay their debts'.[7]

In terms of Russian–Israeli relations, the strong *rapprochement* that had occurred in the last few years of the Soviet Union continued under Yeltsin as Moscow sought both economic benefits and political dividends from its growing ties to the Jewish state. Thus, when the multilateral phase of the Arab–Israeli peace talks began in Moscow (the subjects were water, arms control, economic cooperation, environmental concerns and refugees), Russia backed Israeli demands that the PLO be excluded, much as it had been at Madrid.[8] *Izvestiia* published an interview with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy after the conference in which he gave a laudatory evaluation, not only to what had been accomplished at the conference, but also to the future of Russian–Israeli relations after his talks with Russia's Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, who was the leading Russian advocate of close ties with the United States and Israel.[9] While in Moscow, Levy also attended Sabbath services at the Central Synagogue where he urged Russian Jews to emigrate to Israel.[10]

Following the Madrid Conference, Russian–Israeli relations on a bilateral basis continued to improve. The Russian UN ambassador asked Israel to co-sponsor the entry of former Soviet Republics into the United Nations; Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust Memorial, was permitted to photocopy materials from the communist party archives dealing with Jewish issues; the President of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences proposed the establishment of a foreign branch of the Academy in Israel; and Natan (Anatoly) Sharansky, the most famous of the former Refuseniks now living in Israel, was declared innocent of charges that he had spied for the United States. Interestingly enough, even before the Madrid Conference had taken place, in a major ironic twist to history, a Russian delegation had come to Israel in early January 1992 to study the problem of immigrant absorption. Given the unstable conditions outside Russia and the growing anti-Russian feelings there, particularly in new Moslem states of the former Soviet Union like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the Russian authorities suddenly faced a major refugee problem as ethnic Russians sought to return home

in large numbers. As might be expected, Israel's Jewish Agency, which hoped to provide a home for many Jews still living in Russia (the emigration rate, however, had dropped sharply because of Israeli problems in housing and employment), was only too willing to assist the Russian delegation.[11]

The rapidly improving Russian–Israeli relationship was, however, soon to be challenged. After the initial shock of the collapse of the Soviet Union had worn off, criticism of Yeltsin's foreign and domestic policies, especially his willingness to follow the lead of the United States on most foreign policy issues, and his efforts rapidly to privatize the Russian economy began to mount. Despite his critics, in 1992 Yeltsin was able to pursue his major foreign policy initiatives without severe opposition and included among these policies was the rapid development of ties with Israel. Evidence of the rapid development came in late April 1992 when Russian Vice-President, Aleksander Rutskoi, then still an ally of Yeltsin, visited Israel. After noting in an airport statement, 'We consider Israel a very important place because of the many Russians who now live here. They form a bridge between us that can enable us to broaden our relations', he gave a toast to Israel on the first day of his visit, stating: 'Israel and Russia have a great opportunity for the development of mutual cooperation and a blossoming relationship.'[12] Bilateral relations between Russia and Israel improved as a result of the Rutskoi visit. A memorandum of understanding on cooperation in agriculture was signed which Rutskoi said 'opens vast prospects for Russo-Israeli business in (the) agrarian sphere.'[13]

Following Rutskoi's visit came the Israeli election, which was won by Labour party leader Yitzhak Rabin who quickly put together a coalition government that appeared to spur on the peace process, particularly since Rabin made a number of gestures to the Palestinians including the release of 800 prisoners and the freezing of new Israeli housing construction in most of the occupied territories. These actions were followed by US Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Israel, and it soon appeared that a reinvigoration of the Middle East peace process had taken place. A Moscow Radio Arabic language broadcast on 17 July praised Rabin's action, noting that 'a very favourable condition for achieving realistic results' in a Middle East peace settlement had been created.[14]

In an effort to be even-handed, however, the Russian Foreign Ministry invited PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud Abbas to Moscow in mid-July for talks, and promised to continue

Russian–Palestinian interaction on a wide range of issues.[15] One week later the Russian Foreign Ministry, in a briefing on 24 July, again warmly praised Rabin, and noted that just as Baker had set out to tour the Middle East to spur on the peace process, so too had the Russian Foreign Ministry, whose director of the Middle East and Africa department, Viktor Posuvaliuk, had set out for the Middle East for discussions in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia.[16] Upon his return, Posuvaliuk stated, in a briefing on 14 August, that the stabilization of the military and political situation, and establishment of lasting peace in the Middle East met Russia's national interests and that it would conduct an active policy in the region. He also emphasized the role of the multilateral talks, saying that they are called upon 'to create a positive atmosphere for the bilateral talks and help form the basis for regional cooperation.'[17] Posuvaliuk also emphasized the Russian role in the peace process and noted that Israel's new Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, would soon be meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev.

Shortly after Posuvaliuk's announcement, Peres began a four-day state visit to Russia, which took place on the eve of the renewal of the bilateral peace talks in Washington. After meeting with Kozyrev, Rutskoi, and Russian Prime Minister Igor Gaidar, Peres took a side trip to the town of Vishenovo in Belarus where he had been born. Peres also went to Sabbath services at the Central Synagogue in Moscow and, just as his predecessor David Levy had done in January, urged the Jews of Russia to emigrate to Israel.[18] For his part Kozyrev utilized the Peres visit to emphasize once again Russia's importance in the Middle East peace process, noting 'We want peace in the Middle East and are playing the role of honest brokers, trying to help the sides bring their positions together.'[19] Kozyrev promised to explain the Israeli position to the Syrian Foreign Minister who was due to visit Moscow in early September. Peres said that he hoped the Russian government would continue to play a stabilizing role in the Middle East, and praised Russia for its efforts to curb anti-semitism although he did voice concerns about Russia's arms sales to Arab countries.[20] Peres also stressed that with its close ties to the Arab world, Russia could help to bridge the gaps between Israel and its neighbours, and even contribute to peace by fostering joint economic efforts such as a desalinization project. Less than a month later, Peres and Kozyrev signed a major memorandum in New York, which called for the

greater development of Israeli–Russian relations, including increased cooperation between the two countries in the political, legal, economic and cultural spheres. Peres and Kozyrev also stated their intention to develop political contacts at all levels between Israel and Russia, including the parliaments of both nations. The agreement also called for the strengthening 'in every possible way' of commercial, economic, scientific and technological links between the two states with an eye to encouraging joint investment projects and cooperation between Israeli and Russian business concerns. Finally, the joint memorandum stated that the two Foreign Ministers would give priority attention to the ongoing peace talks and that Russia, as a co-sponsor of the peace process, would continue to actively promote a *rapprochement* between all parties engaged in the peace talks.

Even when the Middle East peace process ran into obstacles because of an upsurge of fighting in Israel's security zone in Lebanon in November 1992, and the expulsion by Israel in December of more than 400 HAMAS activists whom it accused of inciting the increasing number of attacks on Israelis in the Gaza Strip and in Israel proper, Russian policy did not turn in an anti-Israeli direction, but remained very even-handed. A Russian Foreign Ministry statement after the November fighting in Lebanon noted Russia's 'serious concern' and called on all conflicting sides in Southern Lebanon to show 'maximum restraint'.[21] Similarly, a Russian Foreign Ministry communiqué issued after the expulsion of the HAMAS activists (which both Russia and the US condemned in the UN Security Council) noted: 'the Russian side is counting on the sides to show maximum restraint in their actions and hopes that the problem with the deportation of hundreds of Palestinians will be humanely settled very soon, taking into account the genuine interests of both the Israelis and Palestinians.'[22]

Even with the clear rightward turn in the Russian government, as reflected in the December 1992 Congress of People's Deputies which compelled Yeltsin to replace Prime Minister Igor Gaidar with Viktor Chernomyrdin, Israel's ambassador to Russia, Chaim Bar-Lev, continued to be optimistic about Russo–Israeli relations. In an interview published on New Year's day 1993, Bar-Lev asserted that 'Israel is altogether popular here' (in Russia); that the change in prime ministers was unlikely to have a bearing on Russo–Israeli relations, and that he hoped Russia would make the Arabs understand – given Russia's connections with the Arab world – that

the Arabs, and especially the Palestinians, would also have to make concessions for there to be a peace settlement.[23]

Despite Yeltsin's temporary turn away from the United States in the early months of 1993, it appeared as if Bar Lev's optimism might be borne out. In January 1993, in an apparent effort to gain support from his critics in Parliament, Yeltsin distanced himself from his pro-American foreign minister Kozyrev and announced a 'balanced' policy for Russia as a 'Eurasian state'. He also condemned the renewed US bombing of Iraq and asserted that US pressure would not prevent Russia from signing a rocket technology agreement with India.[24] While US–Russian relations chilled, Russian–Israeli relations continued to improve. Ruslan Khasbulatov, now an outspoken opponent of Yeltsin, visited Israel in early January 1993 as part of a trip to the Middle East. He met with Rabin and announced his support of the development of 'businesslike cooperation' between Russia and Israel in the 'economic, scientific, cultural and other spheres'.[25] Khasbulatov also downplayed the impact of the deportation of HAMAS activists, stating that this incident should not disrupt the peace talks because Israel was 'seriously intent on the success of the dialogue with the Arabs'.[26]

Russian–Israeli relations continued strong through the early spring as Russia supported the US–Israeli agreement to bring back the HAMAS deportees within one year, thereby enabling Israel to avoid further UN condemnation. Russia also joined the United States in calling for a new round of Arab–Israeli talks (they had been interrupted by the HAMAS expulsions) and praised the decision to resume them in late April. Meanwhile, as diplomatic ties remained firm, Russia and Israel continued to develop their economic and cultural relations. In February, the Russian government approved a draft agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with Israel, although a formal trade agreement had yet to be negotiated.[27] In March came the announcement that Russian nuclear experts were discussing the construction of floating nuclear plants in Israel to help solve the problem of desalinizing sea water,[28] and in April Israeli Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban visited Anatoly Sobchak, the mayor of St Petersburg, to discuss expanding Israel's cultural ties with St Petersburg from where many thousands of Jews had emigrated to Israel.[29]

As Israeli–Russian relations deepened, the conflict between Yeltsin and his opponents in Parliament worsened and Russia's ties with Israel became part of the confrontation. *Pravda*, previously the

spokesman for Soviet conservatives and now a major organ of Russia's right-wing, on 13 March 1993 condemned the Russian government for following the American lead on the Arab–Israeli conflict, noting 'since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the opinion of the Russian delegate at the UN concerning the Middle East situation has never diverged from the opinion of the US delegate however absurd it has been at times'.[30] Then, as the date for the climactic popular referendum on Yeltsin's future approached, *Pravda* denounced Israel for its 'extensive' influence in Russia and for its support of Yeltsin.[31]

Yeltsin's victory and Parliament's defeat in the referendum did not slow the parliamentary attacks on Yeltsin and, ominously for Israel, a number of the Parliamentarians including Khasbulatov, and his ally Vice-President Rutskoi (whom Yeltsin was to fire in early September 1993), began to make common cause with the anti-semitic and anti-Israeli 'Red-Browns' on the right-wing of the Russian political spectrum during the spring and summer of 1993.

The split between the opposition and Yeltsin grew during the summer, as Yeltsin, strengthened by his victory in the referendum, shifted back to a pro-American stance. Thus, Kozyrev supported the US June attack on Iraq's intelligence headquarters in Baghdad in response to the Iraqi assassination attempt against former American President George Bush, and Yeltsin acceded to American wishes and agreed to withhold rocket technology from India – moves that were severely condemned by Yeltsin's opponents. As far as the Arab–Israeli conflict was concerned, one of Yeltsin's leading right-wing opponents, Colonel Viktor Alksnis, evidently fearing Yeltsin would acquiesce in the deployment of US troops on the Golan Heights, warned the United States against sending American troops to the Golan as part of any peace arrangement between Israel and Syria, asserting: 'the deployment of American troops on the Golan Heights will undermine Russian strategic interests. This must be seen as an American springboard close to the Persian Gulf.'[32]

Following the escalation of fighting in Southern Lebanon in late July 1993 between Israeli and Hezbollah forces, Israeli and PLO leaders astounded the world by coming to an agreement on a Declaration of Principles for peace. The agreement was formally signed on the White House lawn in Washington on 13 September 1993[33] in the presence of Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, to whom US Secretary of State Warren Christopher was

careful to give equal billing although Russia had, in fact, done little to bring the agreement about. Nonetheless, perhaps to demonstrate to Yeltsin's political opponents, as well as to the rest of the world, that Russia was still a major player in the Middle East, Kozyrev, in commenting on the agreement, noted:

> We said to our partners in the West and to the Israelis too that the PLO in recent years has gone through a considerable evaluation and that Arafat himself has become a mature leader who has adopted a number of very important political decisions... We have worked with Arafat earlier, too and supported him. Today, since the conclusion of that agreement, he has been recognized in the West as well... It should not be forgotten that, in the Arab world, relations with the United States have not always been positive and it is important for Moscow to also lend support to (the) new initiatives.[34]

As if to underline Moscow's continued role in the Middle East, Russia's first deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin toured the Middle East in mid-September, visiting Israel on 19 September. He met with Rabin and Israeli President Ezer Weizman and expressed Russia's readiness to give 'all-around support to enable an effective implementation of the Israeli–Palestinian declaration of principles and expansion of the area of concord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization'. Adamishin also emphasized, as had Kozyrev, the need to make progress in Israel's relations with Syria and Lebanon.[35]

Two days after Adamishin's visit to Israel, Russian attention shifted from the Middle East back to Yeltsin's confrontation with his enemies in Parliament as on 21 September, frustrated by Parliament's constant sabotaging of his domestic programmes, Yeltsin issued a decree dissolving it, and announced that elections for a new Parliament would take place on 12 December 1993. Parliament responded by deposing Yeltsin and declaring Vice-President Aleksander Rutskoi, once an ally of Yeltsin but now his enemy, President. Yeltsin then sealed the Parliament, whose leader, Ruslan Khasbulatov, called for public support. After a failed effort at mediation by the Russian Patriarch, conflict erupted when supporters of the parliamentary side, prominent among which were militants of the Fascist Aleksander Barkashov's Russian National Union, broke through the police barricades around Parliament, seized the Moscow Mayor's office (Rutskoi was urging them on),

and then marched on the Ostankino TV centre. Led by General Makashov who had been denouncing the 'imperialist-Zionist conspiracy' and other National Salvation Front leaders, the predominantly right-wing supporters of Parliament launched an attack on the TV centre, but, at the turning point of the crisis, the loyalist troops inside the TV centre held off the mob and Yeltsin succeeded in mobilizing sufficient force to seize the Parliament building itself, and captured the leaders of the parliamentary forces, including Rutskoi and Khasbulatov.

Fortunately for both Israel and Russia's Jewish community, Yeltsin succeeded in defeating the fascist-supported forces of Parliament, and both Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, as well as a number of their right-wing supporters, were imprisoned, if only temporarily. Yeltsin then introduced his own constitution, under which he was given greatly enhanced presidential power[36] (on the model of the constitution which Charles de Gaulle introduced to France at a time of major crisis in the late 1950s). He also called for the constitution to be voted up or down at the same time that the parliamentary elections were to take place on 12 December. A number of political parties began organizing for the parliamentary elections, not only those supporting Yeltsin, but also those supporting the communists and fascists including the head of the Liberal Democratic party Vladimir Zhirinovskii who had been careful to avoid giving overt support to Yeltsin's parliamentary opponents during the October confrontation. Much to Yeltsin's surprise, and to the discomfort of the reform movement in Russia, both the communists and Zhirinovskii's anti-semitic and anti-Israel Liberal Democratic party did surprisingly well in the elections, with Zhirinovskii's party actually outpolling the pro-Yeltsin Russia's Choice Party of Igor Gaidar,[37] although a number of observers saw the support for Zhirinovskii more as a protest vote against the deteriorating Russian economy and the collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower, than as a vote in support of fascism or anti-semitism.[38] Ironically, it was revealed after the election that Zhirinovskii, whose father was apparently Jewish, reportedly requested an invitation to emigrate to Israel in 1983.[39]

Despite the Zhirinovskii victory, Yeltsin also had some success in the December elections as his constitution was approved. Nonetheless, it appeared that the new Parliament might challenge Yeltsin almost as much as the old one had, and, in one of its first acts, the lower house of Parliament, the Duma, which was controlled by a

coalition of communists and right-wing nationalists, pardoned not only the participants in the October 1993 uprising against Yeltsin, but also those in the August 1991 abortive coup d'état against Gorbachev.

Unlike the confrontational pattern of his relations with the old Parliament, however, Yeltsin sought to work out a *modus vivendi* with the new Parliament. Thus, he removed from his government the controversial Igor Gaidar, and began to adopt a line in foreign policy more independent of the US, in part to meet the criticism of his parliamentary opponents on the centre and right. Thus he became far more assertive in protecting Russian interests in the 'near abroad', using military and economic pressure to try to bring such recalcitrant states as Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan into line. In addition he openly confronted the United States in Bosnia and succeeded in checking (although with British and French help) President Clinton's plans to take punitive military action against the Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian regime of Slobodan Milosevic. Unlike cold war confrontations, however, the Soviet intervention in Bosnian diplomacy had a positive result (if only a temporary one) as it helped convince the Bosnian Serbs to lift their siege of Sarajevo.

The Middle East was also to see a unilateral intervention by Yeltsin, although, as in the case of Bosnia, it seemed more aimed at satisfying Yeltsin's domestic opposition than at really challenging the US-led Arab–Israeli peace process. Thus following the 25 February 1994 incident in Hebron where a crazed Israeli settler, possibly intent on sabotaging the Arab–Israeli peace process, killed 29 Arabs praying in the disputed Cave of the Patriarchs,[40] Yeltsin, without coordinating with the United States, urged a return to Madrid to save the peace talks and the introduction of international observers to protect the Palestinians (a position supported by the PLO but rejected by Israel). He also dispatched a series of envoys to Tunis and Jerusalem for talks with the PLO and Israeli leaderships, including Foreign Minister Kozyrev. Finally, he invited both Arafat and Rabin to Moscow on official visits as Russia sought to demonstrate its centrality as the co-sponsor of the Arab–Israeli peace talks. The Yeltsin strategy seemed to be as follows: Arafat, who had signed the 13 September 1993 agreement with Rabin, had little choice but to return to the talks to get an implementing agreement; if Russia became very active in the diplomacy surrounding the effort to restart the talks and then, as expected, Arafat agreed to return to the peace talks (as he was to do), then Russia could reap its share of the diplomatic credit for Arafat's return. Such a demonstration of Russia's centrality in a major world

trouble spot would not only bolster Yeltsin's prestige but might, as in Bosnia, help to satisfy his hard-line critics in Parliament. Indeed *Pravda*, long a bitter opponent of Yeltsin and a spokesman of Russia's right-wing politicians, noted approvingly on 15 March: 'Russia's current activity in the Near East has been greeted with approval in the Arab world, if not always in essence then at least in form... and not just the Near East, but also other areas on our planet have been waiting for this for a long time.'[41]

While this flurry of diplomacy may have strengthened Yeltsin domestically, it did not lead to lasting damage in his ties with either the United States or Israel. First, Moscow quickly abandoned the 'Madrid 2' plan. Second, the PLO and Israel returned to the peace talks after a token international presence was temporarily positioned in Hebron, and an agreement was reached between them on 4 May. Third, during his trip to Moscow, Rabin was warmly welcomed by Yeltsin and Defence Minister Grachev,[42] and the Israeli Prime Minister, a former general and chief of staff, was invited to deliver a lecture at the General Staff Academy in Moscow. Yeltsin also promised Rabin that only defensive arms and spare parts would be sold to Syria[43] (a Russian–Syrian military agreement was signed on April 27, 1994).[44] While relations between Russia and Syria remained strained, in part because of Syria's $10 billion debt to the former Soviet Union which Russia wants repaid, the Russian leaders also promised Rabin to use their influence with Syria to help acquire information about Israeli soldiers who had been missing following the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Yeltsin's efforts to strengthen Moscow's position as co-sponsor of the Madrid peace process to demonstrate Russia's importance in world affairs continued throughout the rest of 1994 and into the early autumn of 1995, and Russian–Israeli relations also markedly improved during this period. Russia strongly backed the October 1994 Israeli–Jordanian agreement,[45] as well as the Oslo II agreement between Israel and the PLO in September 1995. At the same time Russian–Israeli trade boomed, reaching almost a quarter of a billion dollars in 1994, and in the summer of 1995 Russia and Israel established a diplomatic working committee on the Middle East.[46] To show some balance, in late August Russia announced that it planned to open a mission to the Palestinian authority.[47]

In sum, while becoming more assertive in the Middle East (and elsewhere in the world) following the 12 December 1993 Russian election, Yeltsin continued to maintain close ties with Israel and to

cooperate with the United States in the Middle East peace process, although both Russian–Israeli and Russian–American relations were to cool after Evgenyii Primakov became Russian foreign minister in January 1996.

RUSSIAN POLICY TOWARDS THE 'NORTHERN TIER': TURKEY AND IRAN

When the Soviet Union collapsed, a power vacuum appeared to open up in Transcaucasia (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), while in the Northern Caucasus region of Russia proper, and especially in Moslem regions like Chechnya, there were strong separatist movements that by late 1994 would lead to confrontation and war. Indeed, some observers felt that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, 'the Middle East had moved north'. In the initial period following the Soviet Union's demise, concerns were raised in Moscow that outside powers could now move in to exploit the new power vacuum in Moscow's 'near abroad'. Thus *Pravda*, in commenting on a visit by US Secretary of State Baker to Central Asia in February 1992, complained that Baker was doing more than the entire Russian Foreign Ministry, and that the US was drawing the Islamic states of the former Soviet Union into both the orbit of US policy and the US view of the world, and away from Russia, 'their closest neighbour and natural ally'.[48] US actions were linked by the Russian right to America's NATO ally, Turkey, which, because of its Turkic cultural and linguistic ties to Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, was seen as seeking to create a Turkic alliance on the southern periphery of Russia using such devices as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone, which it created, and the Economic Cooperation Organization in which it shared leadership with Iran.[49] This Russian concern was not baseless; the late Turkish President Turgut Ozal had noted in March 1993: 'Whatever the shape of things to come, we will be the real elements and most important pieces of the status quo and new order to be established in the region from the Balkans to Central Asia. In this region there cannot be a status quo or political order that will exclude us.'[50]

While some in Moscow feared Turkish political expansion in the Caucasus and Central Asia, others were concerned by the threat of

'fundamentalist' Islam emanating from Iran that could infect not only the Moslem states of the former Soviet Union but also the 19 million Moslems who live in Russia. For this reason they saw the secular Islamic model of Turkey as a useful counterweight to Iranian fundamentalism.[51]

Nonetheless despite these concerns in Moscow, neither Turkey nor Iran has, so far, been able to project dominant influence into the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union and by the fourth year (1995) of Yeltsin's rule, Moscow had re-emerged as the dominant force in both Transcaucasia and Central Asia. In the process, it had succeeded in checking both Turkey and Iran (although it continues to be challenged by Turkey) while at the same time maintaining a profitable trade – including arms sales – with both states. The reasons for this lie as much in the economic weakness of Iran and Turkey (as well as Azerbaijan and the Central Asian states) as in the growing Russian assertiveness in the 'near abroad' that became evident in 1993 and 1994.

In the case of Turkey, Ozal's initial optimism led him to pledge more than $1 billion in credits for the newly independent Central Asian states in such areas as banking, education and transportation. In addition, Turkey established direct air communications with the region; Turkish television now beams programmes to the Turkish-speaking countries of the former Soviet Union, and Turkish businessmen have established numerous joint ventures in these new countries. Yet while this assistance was welcomed by Central Asian leaders (and Azerbaijan), it did not lead to the rapid expansion of Turkish influence. In the first place, having just rid themselves of one 'big brother', the Central Asians had no desire to replace it with another[52] and sought to maximize their ties with a number of states to avoid dependence on any one. Second, the economic problems of these states (with the exception of Turkmenistan) were so great (rapid inflation, overpopulation, underemployment, water shortages, severe ecological damage, and so on) that Turkey simply did not have the economic capacity to meet their needs, especially as its own economy was reeling from a 70 per cent annual inflation rate. Third, with the resurgence of the Kurdish uprising, Turkish attention was diverted from Central Asia to more pressing needs at home. Similarly, the fighting in the former Yugoslavia pitting Bosnian Moslems, supported by Turkey, against Serbs and, initially, Croats; the continuing conflict with Greece over Cyprus and, above all, the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan also diverted the

attention of Turkish policy-makers. Finally, the death of President Ozal, ironically just after he had completed a tour of Central Asia in March 1993, also seemed to weaken Turkish efforts to gain influence in the region.[53]

Meanwhile, in neighbouring Transcaucasia, Turkish influence also declined. The ousting of pro-Turkish Azeri President Abulfaz Elchibey in June 1993 and his replacement by former Soviet Politburo member Gaidar Aliev who, while not a pawn of Moscow, was far more pro-Russian and less pro-Turkish than Elchibey had been (Aliev has so far resisted the placement of Russian troops on Azerbaijan's border with Iran, although he did agree to Azerbaijan's re-entry into the Commonwealth of Independent States), also contributed to the fall of Turkish influence as the Turks not only proved unable to halt the advance of Armenian forces into Azerbaijan but also could not protect their protégé, Elchibey, there.

A final problem for Turkey lay in Moscow's use of economic warfare to gain political obedience from the states on its southern periphery. Specifically, by closing pipelines to Kazakh exports of oil and natural gas, and pressuring Azerbaijan to reroute the oil it would get from its Caspian offshore oil fields (which were to be developed by a consortium of Western oil companies) through Russia, rather than through Turkey, Moscow further limited Turkish influence.[54] While Turkey has responded to this pressure by limiting Russian oil tanker shipments through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, it is clear that, at the time of writing at least (October 1995), Turkey appears to be losing the influence-competition with Russia both in Azerbaijan and Central Asia.

Nonetheless, Turkey is waging an active competition for influence with Russia in these regions, a competition that picked up in intensity in 1995. The central issue revolves around the Caspian Sea oil fields, and after extending credits to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia during the summer of 1995, Turkey won their support for a pipeline from the Caspian Sea region through Georgia to Turkey. From their point of view, these states had an interest in the pipeline as well, since this would lessen their dependence on Russia. For its part, the United States, which had opposed Kazakhstan's desire to export its raw materials through Iran (see below), also endorsed the Georgian route. The end result was that on 9 October 1995 the Caspian Sea consortium endorsed routes through both Turkey and Russia. Should the pipeline through Turkey be constructed as planned, Turkey's position in

both Central Asia and the Transcaucasus would be strengthened, as would the independence of new states of the region *vis-à-vis* Russia, and Russia's position in these critical regions of its 'near abroad' would be correspondingly weakened.[55]

On the purely bilateral level, Turkish–Russian relations have been mixed in the 1992–95 period. Both countries now share a desire to lift sanctions against Iraq.[56] In addition, the Russians, long interested in gaining markets for their weaponry, have signed arms sales agreements with Turkey, providing it with helicopters and combat vehicles in partial repayment of the debt of the former Soviet Union to Turkey which Moscow inherited.[57] Ironically, at a time when Turkey is under fire from its NATO allies for its repressive acts against the Kurds, Russia thus became an important, if only partial, substitute arms supplier. Moscow, however, is not above using the Kurdish issue to pressure Turkey, as in February 1994 it hosted a conference on 'The History of Kurdistan' which was co-sponsored by an organization affiliated with the PKK – an action protested by the Turkey Foreign Ministry.[58] Yet another area of conflict between Ankara and Moscow has been the Russian effort to gain an upward revision of the number of heavy weapons it can station in the Northern Caucasus under the CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe) treaty – claiming instability in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – something Turkey strongly opposes,[59] while for its part Russia has complained about Turkish aid to the Chechen rebels.

In sum, despite initial concerns in Moscow that Turkey would create a pro-Ankara bloc of Moslem/Turkic states of the former Soviet Union, that development has not come to pass as Russia, exploiting the economic weaknesses of the Central Asian states, the ongoing conflicts in Georgia and Azerbaijan, and the economic and foreign policy problems facing Turkey, has succeeded in partially rebuilding its influence on its southern periphery at the expense of Turkey, although Turkey continues to compete actively with Russia both in Central Asia and in the Transcaucasus.

RUSSIA AND IRAN

While arms sales to Turkey were a relatively small part of the Russian–Turkish relationship, they were central to Russian–Iranian relations. Confronted by American power in the Gulf following the end of the Gulf war, American-armed GCC states like Saudi Arabia,

a temporarily defeated Iraq which had fought an eight-year war against Iran from 1980–88 and whose leader Saddam Hussein continued to harbour hostile intentions towards Iran; and Turkey with whom relations were, at best, mixed, Iran clearly had need of modern armaments. Its only source of such advanced weaponry as MIG-29 fighters and SU-24 bombers was first the Soviet Union, and then Russia. Because of Iran's need for Russian arms, the pragmatic Iranian leader Hashemi Rafsanjani was careful not to alienate either the Soviet Union, or Russia. Thus when Azerbaijan declared its independence of the Soviet Union in November 1991, Iran, unlike Turkey, did not recognize its independence until after the USSR collapsed. In addition, Iran restrained its criticism of Russian actions against the Moslem Chechens and of Russian support for the Bosnian Serbs against the Bosnian Moslems. Similarly, despite occasional rhetoric from Iranian officials,[60] Rafsanjani ensured that Iran kept a relatively low profile in Azerbaijan and Central Asia emphasizing cultural and economic ties rather than Islam as the centrepiece of their relations. In part, of course, this was due to the fact that after more than 70 years of Soviet rule, Islam was in a weak state in the countries of the former Soviet Union; the leaders of the Moslem successor states were all secular Moslems, and the chances for an Iranian-style Islamic revolution were very low.[61] Indeed, some sceptics argued that Iran was simply waiting for mosques to be built and Islam to mature before trying to bring about Islamic revolutions.[62] Nonetheless, the Russian leadership basically saw Iran as acting very responsibly in Central Asia and this was one of the factors that encouraged it to continue supplying Iran with modern weaponry, including, in 1992 and 1993, submarines, as well as promising to supply a nuclear reactor despite strong protests from the United States.[63] Other reasons for Moscow to seek a good relationship with Iran included the hard currency which it received from the arms and reactor sales – a very scarce commodity which was badly needed by the hard-pressed Russian economy; a hope that Iran could help to get Russian POWs out of captivity in Afghanistan; and the fact that, given the hostility between the United States and Iran, Iran provided a country in the critical Gulf region where Russia could exercise influence.

To be sure, there were areas of tension between Russia and Iran. As Armenia, tacitly backed by Russia, mounted an offensive against Azerbaijan in the late summer of 1993, thousands of Azeris fled towards the Iranian border, leading Iran to mobilize on its border –

an action that elicited a limited warning from the Russian Foreign Ministry.[64] A far more serious problem in Russian–Iranian relations was the situation in Tajikistan, a country which, unlike the rest of Central Asia, had a Persian rather than a Turkic language and culture, and which was seen by some Russians as vulnerable to Iranian style Islamic fundamentalism. While space does not permit a detailed description of the Tajik crisis, given its importance in Russian policy both towards Central Asia and towards Iran, a brief analysis is necessary.[65] Essentially, the communist era leadership of Tajikistan was drawn from the Tajik provinces of Khojand (Leninabad) in the north and Kulyab in the south. Once the Soviet Union collapsed, however, the Tajik leader, Rakhman Nabiev, was challenged by a group of democrats and moderate Islamists primarily from the eastern provinces of Garm and Pamir. This loose alliance succeeded in overthrowing Nabiev in autumn 1992, but this in turn alarmed the authoritarian leader of neighbouring Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, who feared the infection of the model of a democrat-Islamic alliance into Uzbekistan where he was being challenged by similar kinds of democrats and moderate Islamists. It should be noted that Uzbekistan also has a significant Tajik minority concentrated in Bukhara and Samarkand. Karimov, claiming that the moderate Islamists led by Qadi (Judge) Akbar Turajanzode were in fact 'fundamentalists', intervened militarily with the help of Moscow to restore the old-line communists, now led by Emomali Rakhmonov, to power. Much of the Islamic opposition, however, fled across the border to Afghanistan, where they became radicalized by Afghan *mujahiddin* and then mounted attacks back across the border into Tajikistan. In the process they killed a number of Russian soldiers guarding the Tajik border and drew Moscow into the heart of the fighting. This posed a serious problem for the Russian leaders. On the one hand they had no desire to get too deeply involved in another Afghanistan-type war as Deputy Defence Minister Boris Gromov noted. On the other hand, Gromov warned against the withdrawal of Russian border guards from the Afghan–Tajik border saying it would lead to 'a lack of stability in Central Asia' that would spread to Russia, opening 'channels for the flows of narcotics and weapons'.[66] Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin, who served as a diplomatic troubleshooter for Yeltsin, warned on his return from Tajikistan in early November 1993, that if Russia left Central Asia 'it will turn into a continually bubbling cauldron that will boil right next to our own borders, next

to the Volga, if you wish'.[67] The Russian ambassador to Uzbekistan, interviewed in early October 1993, also warned of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism from Tajikistan into Russia.[68]

As Russian casualties rose in 1993, Russian diplomacy sought a political settlement to the war. The Russia government took several steps. In addition to mobilizing the support of the Central Asian states to help defend the Tajik border (although, at best, they were to send only token forces), Russian diplomats sought a dialogue between the Tajik rebels and their government opponents. Since Turajanzode was in exile in Iran, such a move necessarily meant bringing Iran into the diplomatic process. Indeed, on his visit to Tehran in late March 1993, Foreign Minister Kozyrev discussed the Tajik situation 'in detail' with his Iranian hosts,[69] and Kozyrev noted that Russia was seeking to use Tehran's influence to persuade the Tajik opposition to enter negotiations with the Tajik government, although Kozyrev also pointedly noted 'Since Iran is not a member of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), Russia does not recognize Tehran's right, the right Moscow has, to play a direct role in Tajik affairs.'[70] While in Tehran, Kozyrev signed a Russian–Iranian agreement under which the two countries pledged 'not to use force or the threat of force against each other, not to let their territories be used in launching aggressions, subversive or separatist actions against the other side, or against states friendly to it'[71] – the later statement a clear reference to Tajikistan.

By the spring of 1994, with the aid of Iran, Russia managed to get talks started between the opposing Tajik sides although Russia also continued to suffer casualties in the continued fighting along the Tajik–Afghan border. Whether these peace talks will prove successful, however, remains to be seen.

While Russian–Iranian cooperation appeared evident in Tajikistan (although some Russians continued to complain that Iranian elements, perhaps not under Rafsanjani's control, continued to aid the Tajik opposition)[72] there were also problems affecting the Russian–Iranian relationship. In the first place, as Russia sought to reassert control over Azerbaijan, the prospect of Russian troops returning to the Iranian border could not have been welcomed by Tehran although such a prospect had the advantage of curbing Azeri irredentist pressure on Iran's Azerbaijan population. Second, as Russia moved to consolidate its defence relationship with Kuwait in November 1993 (see below) Iran took umbrage, with Tehran Radio warning Kuwait against concluding military pacts with

states located outside the Near East, because such agreements amounted to 'interference in Kuwait's internal affairs and could cause conflict in neighbouring countries'.[73] Two weeks later a Moscow Russian-language radio broadcast warned Tehran that the favourable prospects for the development of Russian–Iranian relations could be greatly harmed 'if Iran proposes political conditions, for example, concerning Tajikistan or Russia's military-technical cooperation with the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf'.[74]

Another area of Russian–Iranian tension lies in Tehran's offer to the Central Asian countries of alternative routes for the export of oil, gas and other natural resources. Since Russia, particularly since 1993, has been using its control of oil and natural gas pipelines to bring pressure on the Central Asian states – a policy which has been aided by US President Bill Clinton who urged Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev not to export Kazakh oil through Iran – the offers of economic cooperation in the form of transportation routes made by Rafsanjani to the Central Asian states during his visit to the region in October 1993 and subsequent offers to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states could not have been too welcome. Nonetheless, since it will take large capital inputs to build such pipelines, and Iran currently has many of the same severe economic problems as confront Turkey,[75] this appears to be more of a problem for the future than for the present.

In sum, so long as Iran does not 'meddle' in Transcaucasia or Central Asia in a major way, and so long as it continues to be able to pay for its purchases of Russian weapons and for the nuclear reactor with hard currency, Russian–Iranian relations can be expected to continue to progress in a proper, if not a particularly close manner,[76] given the very strong ideological differences between the two countries. Nonetheless, given the growing instability in Iran, and the growing challenge to its pragmatic leader Hashemi Rafsanjani by Islamic radicals, as well as the continuing political instability in Russia, the future of Russian–Iranian relations is difficult to predict.

MOSCOW, IRAQ, AND THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

As in the case of Israel, the issue of Russian–Iraqi relations was not only an issue of Russian foreign policy, it was also an issue of

Russian domestic politics with hard-line critics of Yeltsin, led by Vladimir Zhirinovskii, demanding that not only should Russia stop supporting US policy on Iraq, but that Yeltsin should unilaterally break the embargo against Iraq and restore the Russian–Iraqi alliance to what it had been in Soviet times. A second group of advocates of Iraq argued that for economic reasons Russia should lift the embargo, because in this way it could receive the $5–7 billion in debt owed to Russia by Iraq – money badly needed by the hard-pressed Russian economy. On the other side of the issue were those who asserted that not only would a unilateral lifting of the embargo seriously damage US–Russian relations (and jeopardize billions of dollars of aid from NATO states), but it would also alienate the oil-rich states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which Moscow, since the days of Gorbachev, had sought to cultivate both as sources of economic aid and as markets for Russian weapons. In addition, they argued, by aiding the GCC states and avoiding any *rapprochement* with Iraq, Moscow could offer an alternative to the GCC states who otherwise would be totally dependent on the protection of the US and other NATO states.

During 1992, Russian policy was clearly tilted against Iraq. Moscow supported US policy against Iraq and even sent two warships to help in the blockade to enforce sanctions. Foreign Minister Kozyrev made a visit to the GCC states at the end of April 1992 in an effort to get financial support from the oil-rich kingdoms. He succeeded in getting a promise from Oman of $500 million for the development of Russia's oil and gas industry and another $100 million for the modernization of its oil fields.[77] While fending off criticism of Russians arms sales to Iran, Kozyrev sought to promote Russian arms sales to the GCC states, something that was also to be the goal of Defence Minister Pavel Grachev who visited the United Arab Emirates in January 1993 and headed a Russian delegation to the International Weapons Fair in Abu Dhabi in February. Meanwhile in January 1993, at least in part under pressure from the opposition in Parliament to demonstrate Russia's independence of the US, Yeltsin criticized the renewed US bombing of Iraq.[78] Such criticism did not satisfy his parliamentary opponents, who stepped up their criticism not only of Yeltsin but also of Russian policy towards Iraq, and Zhirinovskii dispatched ten volunteers from his 'Liberal-Democratic' party to aid Iraq after the bombing. Possibly to meet this criticism, in February 1993 Yeltsin sent Igor Melichov, the deputy director of the Middle East Department of the Russian

Foreign Ministry, to Iraq. While Melichov reportedly said that the goal of his visit was to 'strengthen and promote Russian–Iraqi ties', his superior in the Foreign Ministry, Viktor Posuvaliuk, claimed that Melichov's comments were taken out of context and were falsely interpreted by foreign journalists.[79] Posuvaliuk also repeated Russia's support for UN sanctions against Iraq but also stated that Russia could not ignore 'the potential for Russian–Iraqi cooperation'. While the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* condemned the Melichov visit as stupid because it worked against Russia's goal of the stabilization of the moderate Arab states in the Gulf,[80] Yeltsin was to persist in his policy of maintaining low-level contact with Iraq and in some ways replicated the old minimax policy of Gorbachev during the Gulf war of seeking to maintain the maximum influence in Iraq, while not alienating either the GCC states or the US. These low-level contacts were, however, insufficient for Yeltsin's opponents and in April the former deputy Defence Minister of the USSR, General Achalov, who was now a conservative Supreme Soviet deputy and Khasbulatov's chief of staff, journeyed to Iraq (with a group of right-wing Parliamentarians) where he said that the Russian people and the former USSR had never betrayed Iraq, but that the Soviet and Russian leaderships had.[81] *Izvestiia* (8 April 1993), in responding to Achalov's visit, stated that Iraq would continue to be a place of pilgrimage for the Russian opposition as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power.[82]

Following the abortive Iraqi attempt to assassinate former US President George Bush, who was visiting Kuwait, the US again bombed Iraq in June. Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev supported the US attack (of which Washington had told Moscow in advance) noting: 'We cannot consider hunting presidents, even former ones, to be normal. Tolerating this would be tantamount to endorsing a policy of state terrorism.'[83]

Yeltsin's Parliamentary opponents denounced the attack, and the Supreme Soviet lodged an official protest. Rutskoi seized the opportunity to condemn Kozyrev for his approval of the US attack, asserting that such support meant 'ignoring Russia's own national interests'.[84] Despite (or because of) this criticism Yeltsin continued to maintain diplomatic contact with Iraq, dispatching an economic delegation headed by Oleg Davydov, the deputy Minister of the Ministry for External Economic Relations, to Baghdad in August.[85]

When the crisis between Parliament and Yeltsin escalated into a full-scale confrontation in late September, there were rumours in

Moscow that Saddam Hussein was bankrolling Yeltsin's opponents.[86] Nonetheless, Yeltsin's victory meant the temporary defeat of his pro-Iraqi opponents now led by Khasbulatov. This may have accelerated negotiations between Moscow and Kuwait on a defence cooperation agreement, which was signed during a visit by Kuwait Defence Minister Ali Sabah al-Salim al Sabah to Moscow in late November. According to *Kommersant*, the treaty called for Russia's aid to Kuwait in the 'elimination of the threat to sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and repelling aggression'.[87] The treaty was a clear rebuff to Iraq which still refused to recognize Kuwait's independence and the newly demarcated Iraqi–Kuwaiti border, and to its supporters in Moscow, as were the joint naval manoeuvres conducted by Kuwait and Russia in the Gulf in late December. Indeed, *Pravda* noted angrily on 11 January 1994 that because of the naval manoeuvres 'the door to cooperation with Iraq – a rich and influential state with which we used to be linked by very close ties – has thereby essentially been slammed shut'.[88] Reinforcing what appeared to be this thrust of building up ties to the GCC states was a visit by Vice Premier Aleksander Shokhin to the United Arab Emirates in late November 1993. In the UAE, he stated that his visit was taking place within the context of the Russian foreign policy aimed at creating prerequisites for boosting Russian exports.[89] He also noted that Russian foreign policy was becoming more pragmatic. 'While ensuring the country's political goals, its main orientation is the solution of Russia's economic problems. Such a policy is more reliable and serves both economic and political purposes.'[90]

Having both concluded its treaty with Kuwait, and emphasized the importance of economic goals in Russian foreign policy (thus satisfying the GCC states), Yeltsin once again made a gesture towards Iraq, thereby continuing his neo-minimax policy. By the spring of 1994 Russian diplomats began to emphasize that since Saddam Hussein had begun to comply with UN demands on surveillance of its nuclear weapons capability, some gestures acknowledging his changed behaviour should be made. One such Russian gesture was an invitation to Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz to visit Moscow in July 1994. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Kolokov, in an *Izvestiia* interview, stated that Aziz was told by Moscow that Russia opposed lifting sanctions until Baghdad recognized Kuwait's independence, agreed to the demarcation of their mutual border, and did something to ascertain the

fate of missing Kuwaiti soldiers and civilians. If Iraq did these things, Kolokov indicated, Moscow would vote to lift the sanctions; if they were lifted Moscow would even resume arms sales to Iraq, because if Russia did not do so, Western states would and gain the economic benefit at Russia's expense.[91] Any such supply of arms to Iraq, of course, would damage Russian–GCC relations because the GCC states would now see Russia arming their two major enemies Iran *and* Iraq.[92] Needless to say, any such action by Russia would also severely harm Russian–American relations.

In October 1994, however, Russian policy towards Iraq suffered a major embarrassment. At that time, Saddam Hussein again moved his army towards Kuwait, an action that precipitated a massive US reaction as President Clinton moved US troops to Kuwait and warned Saddam not to invade. Yeltsin sought to exploit the situation by sending Kozyrev to Baghdad where he claimed to have obtained Saddam Hussein's promise to pull back his troops and recognize Kuwait's border and sovereignty – in return for a gradual lifting of sanctions. Not only was this deal rebuffed by the US and Britain, but Iraq's parliament did not meet to recognize Kuwait and the Iraqi–Kuwait border. The end result of the crisis was a further strengthening of relations between the United States and the GCC states, and a major embarrassment for Russia which was not alleviated to any major degree when Kozyrev returned to Iraq in November and belatedly extracted the desired promises from the Iraqi parliament.

Despite this embarrassment, Moscow continued to pursue its policy of improving relations with Iraq. At the end of January 1995, an Iraqi parliamentary delegation visited Russia and was received by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. Deputy Foreign Minister Posuvaliuk warned in February that unless the UN Security Council responded to Iraq's positive steps, the situation in the region would further deteriorate,[93] and in August 1995 the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, who was also the country's highest ranking Middle East specialist, asserted that Russia was 'doing more work than others to normalize Kuwait's relations with Iraq' (Kozyrev visited Kuwait on 2 August, the fifth anniversary of the Iraqi invasion, to offer Kuwait reassurance). He also noted that Iraq's 'disarmament file is close to being closed and work on the biological file is proceeding in the same direction'.[94] Much to Russia's discomfort, however, the defection of Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, Hussein Kemal, led to a disclosure of hidden weapons

information. Nonetheless, perhaps seeking to make the best of the situation, a Russian foreign ministry spokesman noted, 'It is unimportant what facts Iraq took into consideration in deciding to lift the previous veil of secrecy on military programmes. In the end, not motives but the result plays a more important role.' The spokesman went on to say that Moscow hoped that the reaction of Washington and of other Russian partners in the UN Security Council 'will be adequate to Baghdad's new demonstration of readiness to fulfil the UN resolutions'.[95]

In sum, in its policy towards Iraq and the GCC, Moscow seems to have returned to the old strategy of trying to maximize influence with all sides. The fact that this policy proved unsuccessful in the Gulf war has apparently not deterred Moscow, which hopes to use the lifting of sanctions against Iraq, to gain payment of Iraq's billions of dollars of debts. How successful this policy will turn out to be remains to be seen. For the time being however, Russia's policy towards Iraq seems to have alienated all of the GCC states with the possible exception of Kuwait which continues to seek a close tie with Russia as a means of balancing Russian–Iraqi relations.

CONCLUSIONS

In looking at the course of Russian policy towards the Middle East since the collapse of the Soviet Union, several preliminary conclusions can be drawn. First, it appears clear that there is far more continuity than change, when one compares Russian policy under Yeltsin to Soviet policy during the last years of the Gorbachev era. This is particularly clear in viewing Russian policy towards the Arab–Israeli conflict. Here Yeltsin has worked to improve the Russian–Israeli relationship (despite criticism from right-wing elements in Russia's parliament) and has strongly supported US efforts to bring about an Arab–Israeli peace agreement. In the one instance where Moscow sought to exercise some independent diplomacy, after the Hebron massacre, the reason appeared to be based more on Yeltsin's desire to appease his domestic opponents by showing Russia could act independently than in any real effort to torpedo the American-led peace effort. Indeed, Moscow was to quickly drop its independent plan and support the 4 May Israeli–Palestinian agreement that was mediated by the United States, as

well as the Israeli–Jordanian Treaty of October 1994 and the Israeli–Palestinian Agreement of September 1995.

Another area of continuity lay in Russian policy towards Iran. As in the late Soviet period, Iran continued to be supplied with sophisticated military equipment for which it paid in hard currency (or its equivalent in oil). Relatively cordial relations prevailed, but these seemed predicated, from the Russian perspective, on Iran neither trying to infect the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union (FSU) with its brand of Islamic 'fundamentalism', nor seeking to extend Iranian influence, in a major way, into the region. Given the undeveloped state of Islam in the FSU, and the weakness of the Iranian economy, the pragmatic Iranian leader Hashemi Rafsanjani sought to keep a relatively low political profile for Iran in these regions and is even helping to mediate the civil war in Tajikistan. Nonetheless, by offering alternative transit routes for Central Asian raw materials, above all oil and natural gas, Iran runs the risk of coming into conflict with Russia which is seeking to use the economic vulnerability of these new states to bring them back into the Russian sphere of influence.

A third area of continuity lies in Moscow's policy towards the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Iraq. As in the case of the late Gorbachev era, Moscow is trying to maintain influence in Iraq while at the same time cultivating the GCC states. Thus Moscow signed a defence cooperation treaty and carried on naval manoeuvres with Kuwait, and pursued arms sales to Kuwait and other GCC states while also seeking investment funds from them. At the same time, partly in response to domestic pressure, Yeltsin also maintained ties with Iraq, the avowed enemy of the GCC states, which was seen by them as an even greater threat than Iran. When, in 1994, Moscow began to call for the conditional lifting of the embargo against Iraq, and then unsuccessfully sought to mediate during the October 1994 Iraqi–Kuwait crisis it appeared that the old minimax policy of Gorbachev during the Gulf war was again being pursued, as Moscow sought to maintain influence with all sides. How successful such a policy will be, however, remains to be seen. Indeed Vladimir Isaev, a leading Russian commentator on the Middle East, described this policy in *Moscow News* (16–23 July 1995) as the desire to 'keep sitting on two chairs'.

Only in the case of Russian–Turkish relations was continuity not in evidence and this was because Turkey's geopolitical position had changed so radically with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the

sudden independence of five Moslem states in the Caucasus and Central Asia with close cultural and linguistic ties to Ankara. Yet Turkey's serious economic problems, the resurgence of the Kurdish revolt, and preoccupation with a myriad of foreign policy problems from Bosnia, to Cyprus, to Azerbaijan prevented it from being able to seriously challenge Moscow, particularly after the death of Turkish President Ozal in April 1993. Despite some progress in trade relations, including Russian arms sales to Turkey, there were a number of clashes between the two countries including Bosnia, the destination of oil pipelines from Azerbaijan and Central Asia, the Russian desire to change the provisions of the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty, and the demands of Zhirinovskii to change Russia's border with Turkey. Nonetheless both Turkey and Russia support the lifting of the embargo against Turkey from which they hoped to gain economically.

Beside the fact that continuity rather than change has dominated Russian policy towards the Middle East for the first three and a half years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there are two additional conclusions to be drawn from this study. First, domestic politics has now become a noticeable, if not yet significant, factor in the making of Russian foreign policy. In both the cases of Russian–Israeli and Russian–Iraqi relations, there were strong lobbies from the right-wing of the Russian political spectrum advocating specific policies which Russia should follow. In the case of Israel, Yeltsin basically rejected their policy advocacy; in the case of Iraq, he made a series of gestures to appease his right-wing critics. Nonetheless, domestic politics has become a factor in Russian foreign policy and it bears watching in the future.

A final conclusion to be drawn is that, with the exception of arms sales to Iran, Moscow has, despite occasional rhetorical outbursts to the contrary, cooperated with key American policies in the Middle East. This is particularly evident in the case of Russian policy towards the Arab–Israeli conflict, but, on balance, it has also been evident in Russian policy towards Iraq. Thus Moscow has supported the US effort to bring about an Arab–Israeli peace settlement, in the main has supported US punitive bombing of Iraq, and has not unilaterally broken the US-led embargo against Iraq. Both areas are high on the American priority list, and Moscow has not chosen to jeopardize the Russian–American relationship over them. Even in the three areas where there have been US–Russian disputes (Bosnia, arms to Iran, and the conditional lifting of the Iraqi

embargo), Moscow has not acted alone but with the support of America's NATO allies (Britain and France in the case of Bosnia, France and Turkey in the case of conditionally lifting the Iraqi embargo, and Britain, France, Germany and Japan in the case of Iran, since all four of these countries sell 'dual use' equipment to Tehran).

In sum, in the December 1991–January 1996 period there was a great deal of continuity in Russian foreign policy towards the Middle East. Nonetheless, the new Russian state is evolving rapidly, political and economic volatility is ever present in Central Asia, and the outcome of the power struggle in Iran between pragmatists and radicals is unclear. Under these circumstances, the patterns of Russian policy towards the Middle East described in this essay may not continue for very much longer.

NOTES

1. For an analysis of the pre-Gorbachev period, see Robert O. Freedman, *Moscow and the Middle East: Soviet Policy since the Invasion of Afghanistan* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
2. The Gorbachev period in the Middle East is discussed in Robert O. Freedman, 'Moscow and the Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait' in Robert O. Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1993), pp. 74–136.
3. On the issue of Soviet Jews, see Robert O. Freedman, 'Soviet Foreign Policy Toward the United States and Israel in the Gorbachev Era' in David H. Goldberg and Paul Marantz (eds), *The Decline of the Soviet Union and the Transformation of the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), pp. 53–95.
4. Gorbachev's policy during the Gulf War is discussed in Freedman, 'Moscow and the Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait'.
5. TASS (September 20, 1991), *FBIS: USSR* (September 23, 1991), p. 11.
6. *Pravda*, on February 15 1992, attacked Yeltsin's policy, claiming that he had forged a relationship with the United States that was not an alliance of equals, but rather 'the relationship of a horse and its rider' (cited in *FBIS: USSR*, February 21 1992, p. 29).
7. *Krasnaia Zvezda* (November 5 1992), cited in *Commonwealth of Independent States and the Middle East* (hereafter *CIS/ME*) (Jerusalem: The Marjorie Mayrock Center for Soviet and East European Research), vol. 17, no. 10 (1992), pp. 22–3.
8. Moscow Radio, January 29 1992, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report: Central Eurasia* (hereafter *FBIS:FSU*) (January 30 1992), p. 30.
9. *Izvestiia* (January 31 1992).
10. See the report in the *Jerusalem Post* on January 28 1992 by Walter Ruby.

11. See the report in the *Jerusalem Post* on January 8 1992 by Herb Keinon. In 1992, only 65 150 Jews were to come to Israel vs. 147 837 in 1991 and 185 227 in 1990 (*Forward*, January 1 1993).
12. Cited in report by Dan Izenburg, *Jerusalem Post*, April 30 1992.
13. ITAR/TASS, May 1 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, May 4 1992, p. 16).
14. Moscow Radio, in Arabic, July 17 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, July 22 1992, p. 3).
15. ITAR/TASS, July 17 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, July 17 1992, p. 18).
16. ITAR/TASS, July 24 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, July 27 1992, p. 10).
17. ITAR/TASS, August 14 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, August 17 1992, p. 9).
18. *Jerusalem Post*, August 23 1992.
19. *Jerusalem Post*, August 21 1992.
20. *Jerusalem Post*, August 23 1992.
21. ITAR/TASS, October 28 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, October 29 1992, p. 11).
22. ITAR/TASS, December 18 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, December 21 1992, p. 22.
23. Cited in interview with Natasha Singer, *Forward*, January 1 1993.
24. Cited in report by Serge Schmermann, *New York Times*, January 26 1993.
25. ITAR/TASS, January 5 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, January 7 1993, p. 28). The term 'other' spheres of cooperation in Soviet parlance had meant military cooperation and beginning in 1990 there had been rumours of possible Israeli purchases of Soviet military aircraft.
26. Ibid.
27. Interfax, February 1 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, February 2 1993, p. 12). The areas of cooperation included power engineering, geology, biotechnology, space research, medicine, environmental protection, construction, electronics, transportation, agriculture, livestock breeding, and the conversion of defence industries. In the area of trade, Israeli conditions in the areas of quotas and tariffs reportedly were holding up the agreement (Interview, Russian Embassy, Tel Aviv, January 12 1994).
28. ITAR/TASS, March 4 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, March 4 1993, p. 14).
29. ITAR/TASS, April 9 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, April 13 1993, p. 14).
30. *Pravda*, March 17 1993 (translated in *CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 3 (March) 1993, p. 32.
31. *Pravda*, April 24 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, April 27 1993, p. 12). The referendum basically offered the Russian people a choice between Yeltsin and his reform programme on the one side and Parliament on the other. It followed a major confrontation between Parliament and Yeltsin. Yeltsin won the referendum.
32. Cited in report by Avigdor Esken, *Jerusalem Post*, June 9 1993.
33. *Izvestiia*, a pro-Yeltsin newspaper, was effusive in its praise of Rabin's speech. See *Izvestiia*, September 15 1993.
34. ITAR/TASS, September 14 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, September 14 1993, p. 6).
35. ITAR/TASS, September 20 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, September 21 1993, p. 14).
36. For a summary of Yeltsin's powers under the new constitution, see the article by John Lloyd, *Financial Times*, December 13 1993.
37. Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party received 22.79 per cent of the party preference vote; Russia's Choice got 15.38 per cent; the Communist Party got 12.35 per cent; the Women of Russia Party got 8.1 per cent; the communist-supported Agrarian Party got 7.9 per cent; the reformist Yavlinskii–Boldyrev–Lukin bloc got 7.83 per cent; the reformist Russian Party of Unity and Accord got 6.75 per cent and the Centrist Democratic Party got 5.5 per cent (*New York Times*, December 29 1993).

38. A Russian public opinion organization which polled the voters in the December 12 election concluded that the bulk of Zhirinovskii's support came from two groups. The first was composed of middle-aged and older men from cities with populations under 100 000 who work in state industries and, with below average education, fear losing their jobs. The second group supporting Zhirinovskii are men mostly under the age of 25, better educated and from the large cities who were 'drawn by Zhirinovsky's television propaganda and the sense of action and force', but who knew little about Zhirinovskii or his party. See the report by Steve Erlanger, *New York Times*, December 30 1993.
39. See the report by David Hoffman, *Washington Post*, December 24 1993. Zhirinovskii was also active in the Jewish group 'Shalom' in the late 1980s, an organization reportedly set up by the KGB to counterbalance the independent Jewish organizations that emerged in the latter years of Gorbachev. Israel's Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, predicted that Zhirinovskii's electoral success would spur more Russian Jews to emigrate (Cf. report by David Makovsky and Batsheva Tsur, *Jerusalem Post*, December 15 1993).
40. For the official Russian reaction to the Hebron massacre, which was balanced in tone and noted that the Israeli leadership had condemned the incident, see Tass/TASS, February 25 1994 (*FBIS:FSU*, February 28 1994, p. 19).
41. *Pravda*, March 15 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, March 16 1994, p. 8).
42. Kol Israel (Voice of Israel), April 26 1994 (*FBIS:FSU*, April 26 1994, p. 12).
43. *Izvestiia*, April 29 1994.
44. ITAR/TASS, April 27 1994 (*FBIS:FSU*, April 28 1994).
45. According to Israeli television, Channel 1, October 26 1994, Kozyrev was originally not scheduled to speak at the Jordanian–Israeli Peace Treaty ceremony, but insisted on speaking so as to try to demonstrate Russia's role in helping to bring about the treaty.
46. ITAR-TASS, July 6 1995 (*FBIS:FSU*, July 7 1995, p. 9).
47. ITAR-TASS, August 25 1995 (*FBIS-FSU*, August 25 1995, p. 17).
48. *Pravda*, February 19 1992 (*FBIS:FSU*, February 20, 1992, p. 42).
49. Vladimir Kulistikov, 'Turks from the Adriatic to the Great Chinese Wall Are a Threat to Russia', *New Times* (Moscow), no. 20, 1992, p. 3.
50. Cited in Stephen J. Blank, 'Turkey's Strategic Engagement in the Former USSR and U.S. Interests', *Turkey's Strategic Position at the Crossroads of World Affairs* (ed. Stephen Blank *et al.*) (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, December 3 1993, p. 56).
51. See Maksim Iusin, 'Tehran Declares "Great Battle" for Influence in Central Asia – Russia, the U.S. and Turkey Seek to Prevent Iran from Winning That Battle', *Izvestiia*, February 7 1992 (translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* [hereafter *CDSP*], vol. 44, no. 6 (1992), p. 18).
52. Interview, Uzbek Foreign Ministry, Tashkent, September 30 1994. See also Islam Karimov, *Building the Future: Uzbekistan Its Own Model for Transition to a Market Economy* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan Publishers, 1993).
53. Turkish Daily News correspondent Semih Idiz called 1993 a year that 'forced Turkish diplomats into a "crisis management mode"' (*Turkish Times*, February 1 1994, p. 1).
54. For a Russian view of the threat that the Turkish pipeline system would pose to Russia, see Vladimir Iuratev and Anatoly Sheshtakov of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, 'Asian Gas Will Flow East: New

alliance infringes on Russian interests', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, May 13 1993 [*CDSP* vol. 45, no. 14 (1993), pp. 16–18]. For a Western view arguing that Moscow is practising economic warfare over the pipeline issue, see Stephen J. Blank, *Energy and Security in Transcaucasia* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, September 7 1994).

55. For analyses of the oil pipeline issue, see Marshall Ingwerson, 'At Your Local Gas Pump Soon: Caspian Sea Oil', *Christian Science Monitor*, October 11 1995, and Robert V. Barylski, 'Russia, the West and the Caspian Energy Hub', *Middle East Journal*, vol. 49, no. 2 (Spring 1995, pp. 217–32).
56. During her visit to Moscow in early September 1993, Turkey's new Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, was quoted as saying 'President Yeltsin has agreed to cooperation between Turkey and Russia to lift the anti-Iraqi embargo' (*Washington Times*, September 10 1993).
57. *Izvestiia*, July 21 1994.
58. See Elizabeth Fuller, 'Turkish–Russian Relations 1992–1994', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report, vol. 3, no. 18 (May 6 1994), p. 9.
59. See the analysis by Semih Idiz, loc. cit., p. 1.
60. See Denis Volkov, 'Whom and How Does Islamic Fundamentalism Threaten?', *New Times* (Moscow) no. 4 (1994), p. 25. See also Dmitry Volsky, 'Iran–Central Asia: Export of Commodities, and Not of Ideological Merchandise', *New Times* no. 44 (1993), p. 24.
61. For a solid analysis of the situation in Central Asia, see Anthony Hyman, 'Political Change in Post-Soviet Central Asia' (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, April 1994).
62. *Islamic Affairs Analyst*, November 1992, p. 3.
63. See Aleksei Bausin, 'A Submarine Isn't a Needle. You Can't Hide One in the Persian Gulf – Why the West doesn't want Russia to sell arms to Iran,' *Rossiskaia Gazeta*, January 19 1993 (*CDSP* vol. 45, no. 3 (1993), pp. 15–16). For a study of Russian arms sales to the Middle East, see Andrei Volpin, *Russian Arms Sales Policy toward the Middle East* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Research Memorandum No. 23, October 1993). The supply of the VVER-1000 Nuclear Reactor to Iran became a major issue in Russian–American relations in 1995, and while US pressure did not succeed in preventing the sale of the reactor, Russia did promise to get all spent nuclear fuel returned to Russia, and not provide Iran with a gas centrifuge.
64. ITAR/TASS, September 1 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, September 2 1993, p. 8) and Moscow Radio, in Persian, to Iran, September 8 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, September 10 1993, p. 13).
65. Olivier Ray, *The Civil War in Tajikistan: Causes and Implications* (Washington, DC; United States Institute of Peace, December 1993) and Barnett R. Rubin, 'The Fragmentation of Tajikistan', *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 4 (Winter 1993–94), pp. 71–91.
66. Interfax, November 19 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, November 22 1993, p. 8).
67. *Kommersant*, November 4 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, November 5 1993, p. 10).
68. Interview, Russian Embassy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, September 29 1993. Other reasons for Russian interest in Tajikistan include a desire to prevent Tajik uranium facilities from falling into the hands of Russia's enemies and, on the part of some Russian officers, to refight the Afghan war, this time winning it.

69. ITAR/TASS, March 29 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, March 30 1993, p. 10).
70. Interfax, March 31 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, March 31 1993, p. 8).
71. *Izvestiia*, April 1 1993.
72. Volsky, loc. cit.
73. Cited in *Izvestiia*, December 2 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, December 6 1993, p. 16).
74. Radio Moscow, in Persian, December 15 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, December 16 1993, p. 48).
75. *Financial Times*, May 1 1994. A railroad link with Turkmenistan is already under construction and a natural gas pipeline is being planned.
76. Interview, Russian Embassy, Washington, DC, July 1 1994.
77. *Izvestiia*, May 5 1992 [*CDSP* vol. 44, no. 18 (1992), p. 15].
78. Cited in the report by Serge Schmermann, *New York Times*, January 26 1993. Yeltsin also announced a 'balanced' policy for Russia as a 'Eurasian state'.
79. *Izvestiia*, February 10 1993 as cited in *CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 2 (February) 1993, pp. 17–19.
80. Ibid., p. 19.
81. *CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 4 (April) 1993, p. 39.
82. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, April 16 1993 (*CDSP* vol. 45, no. 15 (1993), p. 22).
83. *Izvestiia*, June 29 1993 (*CDSP* vol. 45, no. 26 (1993), p. 13).
84. Interfax, June 28 1993, cited in *CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 6 (1993), p. 28.
85. *Segodnia*, August 13 1993 (*CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 8 (1993), p. 3).
86. *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, October 26 1993 (*CIS/ME* vol. 18, no. 10 (1993), p. 31).
87. *Kommersant*, December 1 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, December 2 1993, p. 11).
88. *Pravda*, January 11 1994 (*FBIS:FSU*, January 12 1994, p. 25). In this context it is interesting to note that the strong showing of Zhirinovskii's party in the December 12 1993 election did not inhibit Russia from carrying out its naval manoeuvres with Kuwait.
89. ITAR/TASS, November 28 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, November 29 1993, p. 17).
90. ITAR/TASS, November 29 1993 (*FBIS:FSU*, November 29 1993, p. 18).
91. *Izvestiia*, August 9 1994 (*CDSP* vol. 46, no. 32 (1994), p. 18).
92. See 'Uneasy Eyes on Iraq and Iran', *The Middle East* (London), January 1994, p. 17. In the late summer of 1994, Kuwait and Russia were to sign another arms deal in which Kuwait reportedly purchased 27 Smerch rockets, rocket launchers and 60 BMP-3 infantry combat vehicles (*Jane's Defence Weekly*, reprinted in *Washington Times*, September 21 1994).
93. Interfax, February 2 1995, cited in *CIS/ME*, vol. 20, no. 2–3, 1995, p. 37.
94. *Krasnaia Zvezda*, August 3 1995 (*FBIS:FSU*, August 4 1995, p. 9).
95. Interfax, August 24 1995 (*FBIS:FSU*, August 25 1995, p. 13).

7 The Third World in Russian Foreign Policy

Roger E. Kanet, Alexander V. Kozhemiakin, and Susanne M. Birgerson

By the mid-1970s many Western observers had become increasingly concerned about the unparalleled advances that the Soviet Union had made in the Third World.[1] The emergence of Marxist-oriented regimes – often with the direct military assistance of the Soviet Union – was, indeed, viewed in Moscow as part of the 'changing international correlation of forces' that presaged the ultimate global victory of Soviet-oriented communism. However, less than a decade later, the imperial reach of the USSR had already begun to contract dramatically, and in the early 1990s Russian relations with most of the countries of the developing world virtually disappeared.

During the Cold War the vast majority of the regional conflicts that challenged international security occurred in developing countries.[2] Throughout that period the Soviet Union was increasingly involved in the major regional confrontations, almost invariably allied with local forces in conflict with Western-supported governments or movements. Indeed, from the very beginning of the Cold War the most fundamental factor that motivated Soviet policy throughout the Third World was the global competition for influence with the United States. Immediately after the decision to abandon Stalin's Eurocentric policy orientation in the mid-1950s the Soviets pursued a steady course in attempting to expand their involvement, influence, and power projection capabilities in developing nations, in particular in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.[3] Economic and, especially, military assistance to governments as diverse as those of India and Cuba, Angola and Libya, were an integral part of the expanding international role of the Soviet Union. Thus, when Brezhnev came to power in Moscow in late 1964 the position of the USSR in the international system was significantly stronger than it had been a decade earlier. Still, the USSR remained primarily a regional power. Its interests and, in

some cases, its commitments had expanded beyond the confines of Stalin's empire, but inadequate resources severely limited its ability to affect significantly events in other regions of the world.

And yet, even prior to Khrushchev's overthrow several developments had occurred that would have a major impact on the growth of the role of the Soviet Union in the international system, and in particular in the developing world, in the 1970s. The first was the collapse of the European colonial empires and the 'radicalization' of many of the newly independent states that exacerbated their relations with the Western industrial countries and, thus, opened up opportunities for involvement for Moscow. Just as important was the initiation by the early 1960s – reinforced by the débâcle of the Cuban Missile Crisis – of a Soviet programme of military build-up in both the nuclear and conventional arenas and military expansion into areas that until that time had been outside the range of Soviet military capabilities. By 1970 the USSR, for example, had reached strategic parity with the United States.[4]

These structural developments undeniably helped the Soviet Union to extend its role in the Third World. Thus, while relatively limited in the 1960s (with the exception of the growing involvement of the USSR in Egypt), Soviet influence on the African continent was substantially strengthened in the 1970s, especially in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and other self-proclaimed Marxist states. Similarly, in the late 1960s Moscow was gradually expanding its influence in Central America; although in South America Soviet involvement was never extensive. In 1968, for example, in response to growing Soviet pressures, Cuban leader Fidel Castro adopted a strict official observance of the Soviet foreign policy line and started to reshape his country's party and state institutions in the Soviet image.[5] The Sandinista victory in Nicaragua and the increasing strength of pro-Soviet party leaders in El Salvador and several other Central American countries also helped to reinforce Moscow's position in the region.

It should be emphasized that Soviet support was essential in either bringing to power or consolidating a number of African, South-east Asian and Central American regimes that were friendly towards and dependent upon the USSR. In Angola and Ethiopia, for example, the Soviet Union demonstrated its capability of providing allies with significant military assistance and proved that this assistance could be adequate to change the local balance of power in favour of the recipients of Soviet support. In return, the Soviets acquired access to

naval and air facilities that might prove to be useful in potential conflicts with the West.[6] In South-east Asia the communist government of North Vietnam fully depended on the USSR for economic and military support without which the eventual unification of Vietnam would have been impossible.[7] In Cuba, Soviet assistance was instrumental in keeping the country's economy afloat and in modernizing its armed forces. In exchange for the massive support for Castro's regime, the Soviet Union gained a reliable ally which could act in the area of the world 'where Moscow lack[ed] experience, knowledge, and geographic proximity'.[8]

SOVIET DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE DEVELOPING WORLD

The Soviet successes of the 1970s, however, were not followed by comparable gains in the following decade.[9] For Moscow the 1980s were characterized by a significant decline in relations with countries in the developing world, even with some of its closest Marxist-Leninist allies. Besides the growing concern about the drain on the Soviet economy resulting from the massive extension of Soviet military capabilities and the costly ideologically motivated commitments to Third World clients, the initial triumph of national liberation movements in coming to power was followed by their largely unsuccessful efforts to create and consolidate viable political-economic systems. Rather than representing the ongoing attraction of Soviet-oriented communism, as Soviet leaders and propagandists had claimed, these regimes were a growing drain on Soviet economic and military resources. Numerous studies have shown that Soviet decision-makers in the 1980s were increasingly concerned with the staggering costs of maintaining their 'empire' and providing economic, as well as military, assistance to their weak and unstable allies.[10] It is important to recall that the growing costs of the Soviet overseas empire occurred precisely at the time that the Soviet economy had begun to suffer from declining economic growth rates. One of the major developments in the 'new thinking' on foreign policy that characterized the Gorbachev years was the reassessment of both the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of Soviet policy objectives in the developing world, as well as their impact on the effort to ameliorate relations with the West, viewed as the only source of the technology and investment capital required for Soviet

economic rejuvenation.[11] The result was an increasing Soviet disengagement from the Third World that, by late 1991, had resulted in a virtual renunciation of earlier Soviet commitments to radical client states and movements – as in Afghanistan, Cuba, and Cambodia – and a substantial reduction in overall Soviet involvement in the developing world that was not immediately and overtly beneficial to Soviet economic interests.[12]

Thus, during the last years of Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership, as the Soviet Union was plagued by a rapidly deepening economic crisis and the Cold War was coming to an end, the developing countries were increasingly perceived by the Soviet political elite as regions of peripheral importance. Many established ties were curtailed or even eliminated, as the costly ideological foundation of Soviet relations with client-states was replaced by pragmatic cost-benefit calculations. For example, during the last three years of the Soviet Union's existence, the volume of Soviet–Cuban trade, which was conducted on a highly distorted basis and was in fact used as a major avenue for Soviet aid, fell by 94 per cent. At the same time, Moscow discontinued its military aid to Nicaragua and significantly cut its deliveries of cheap oil. The Soviet disengagement from the Sandinistas' armed struggle can also be explained by Gorbachev's pragmatic desire to improve his country's relations with the United States.[13]

Similarly, in the words of one Russian specialist on Africa, Mikhail Gorbachev, with his emphasis on 'new thinking', presided over the 'collapse' of the USSR's African policy.[14] In fact, the Soviet Union played an important behind-the-scenes role in negotiating the settlements of the civil wars in Namibia and Angola and withdrew its unconditional support for the Marxist regime in Ethiopia when the latter refused to work out a negotiated settlement with its opponents; simultaneously, the Soviet Union was central to the negotiations that brought the UN-brokered peace settlement to Cambodia.[15] The Soviet exodus from Angola began in early 1991, and by summer the number of remaining Soviet military personnel was negligible. By the time of the August coup attempt, 'Angola had virtually disappeared from the list of Soviet foreign policy concerns'.[16] At the same time, after helping to convince the government of Haile Mengistu to step down in May 1991, 'Moscow seemed to abandon even the appearance of serious diplomatic involvement in Ethiopia.... [and] left the task of ensuring "peace and stability" in the post-Mengistu era to the US.'[17]

In a departure from the policies of his predecessors, Gorbachev placed the security of the Soviet Far East and the Pacific region on a par with that in Europe as a priority of future Soviet foreign policy. A solid Soviet commitment to the security of the Asian Pacific region was motivated, in part at least, by the expansion of US military commitments involving South Korea and Japan. Gorbachev declared that the Soviet Union, an Asian Pacific country by virtue of geography, would henceforth play a more active role in the affairs of the region. He called for a reduction in tensions among the powers of the region in the momentous Vladivostok speech and implied that the Soviet Union would relinquish its base facilities at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang if the United States were to make similar moves in the Philippines.[18] The new foreign policy imperatives were not limited to mere words. On 24 June 1986 Gorbachev was a guest at the annual conference of ASEAN foreign ministers. Of all ASEAN countries the Philippines, which shared the Soviet opposition to creating ASEAN military structures, were the most receptive to furthering relations with the Soviet Union.[19]

Overall Soviet relations with ASEAN did not change significantly under Gorbachev, although his overtures to ASEAN and the political initiatives in Cambodia, Afghanistan, and in Sino-Soviet relations did have a positive impact on bilateral relations with the six member countries. The eventual withdrawal of the Vietnamese occupying forces from Cambodia definitely aided the improvement of Soviet–ASEAN relations. For the ASEAN states, with the exception of the Philippines, the Cambodian issue was viewed as a major hindrance to significant improvement in relations with the Soviet Union.[20]

The new Asian Pacific foreign policy imperative had a major impact on Soviet relations with the communist countries of Indochina. Three policies directly affected Soviet–Indochinese relations. The first was the Soviet–ASEAN *rapprochement* in the late 1980s. The second included Gorbachev's determination to improve Sino-Soviet relations. The third was his desire to reduce Soviet military expenditures by reducing military and other aid commitments in Indochina.

Improvement in Soviet–ASEAN relations necessitated a Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia and a cessation of Vietnamese hostility towards ASEAN. Influenced by pressures from Moscow, Vietnam indeed pulled out of Cambodia, even though the Vietnamese-backed government of Hun Sen remained in power. Still,

Gorbachev's determination to resolve the Cambodian crisis through the auspices of the United Nations contributed to a significant lessening of tensions in South-east Asia, particularly between Vietnam and ASEAN.[21]

Since a mutual distrust of China constituted a significant element in Soviet–Vietnamese relations, Gorbachev's determination to improve Sino-Soviet relations also had a direct impact on Soviet ties with Vietnam. It may in the future call into question the strategic importance of Soviet bases at Cam Ranh and Da Nang, which in 1995 remain Hanoi's main bargaining chips. In addition, it forced Hanoi to begin its own *rapprochement* with its northern neighbour. Gorbachev's overtures to China were initially met with scepticism in Beijing. The Chinese leadership outlined the three obstacles to improvement in Sino-Soviet relations – the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan, the stationing of Soviet border troops and military hardware in Mongolia and all along the Sino-Soviet border, and the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. In fact, before he left office Gorbachev had removed all three obstacles. He also made political concessions to China at the expense of Hun Sen in the negotiations on Cambodia by agreeing to drop references to 'genocide' in describing the Khmer Rouge.[22] This concession to China was significant, because it undercut the bargaining leverage of the pro-Vietnamese regime in Phnom Penh.

Gorbachev clearly intended to reduce Soviet commitments to its Indochinese allies. Past trade imbalances, debt, and frustration over waste contributed to the process of cost reduction sparked by *perestroika*. In 1988 Vietnam exported $1 billion worth of goods to the Soviet Union but imported almost $3 billion from the Soviet Union.[23] In anticipation of aid reductions, Vietnam, Laos, and the Cambodian government of Hun Sen were all forced to begin their own internal economic reforms and to look elsewhere for foreign investment.

Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of the revolutionary shift in Soviet policy towards its erstwhile allies and dependencies in the Third World occurred during the Gulf Crisis and War of 1990–91. Although a fundamental improvement in US–Soviet relations had occurred over the course of the preceding three years, or so, the crisis represented a real challenge to these new relations. They required that Russia abandon a long-standing ally, Iraq. Even though Russia committed no troops to the Desert Storm operation

against Iraq and did attempt initially to push for a more conciliatory policy towards Saddam Hussein, its general support of the invasion and its political support in the United Nations were crucial to the success in driving Iraqi troops out of occupied Kuwait.[24]

RUSSIA'S CONTINUING DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE DEVELOPING WORLD

When the Russian Federation launched its independent foreign policy at the beginning of 1992, it inherited a reduced set of ongoing commitments and involvements in the developing world. As part of its objective of cooperation with the world community in facilitating conflict resolution, the Russians continued Soviet backing for various United Nations peacekeeping operations. Most significant has been the ongoing support for United Nations operations in Iraq. Russian technicians have been included among the UN weapons inspectors engaged in finding and destroying Iraqi weapons of mass destruction in accord with the terms of the ceasefire agreement. Moreover, two Russian warships were sent to the Persian Gulf in the autumn of 1992 as part of the UN effort to pressure the Iraqi government into observing human rights and fulfilling the terms of the UN resolutions.[25]

However, the policy of disengagement from bilateral commitments to the developing world continued after the Soviet Union's disintegration in December 1991. This development was not surprising, since most of the same economic and political factors that forced communists to relinquish their external empire persisted and intensified in the democratizing Russian Federation. Indeed, numerous vehement debates about how to extricate the Russian Federation from the ongoing economic crisis revealed a striking similarity between otherwise irreconcilable positions – almost all experts agreed that Russia's domestic economic misfortunes had been greatly exacerbated, if not caused, by Moscow's extremely costly ties with the Third World.[26]

Thus, for example, based on virtual consensus among his advisors, Russian President Boris Yeltsin's initial reaction to relations with Africa did nothing to stop the continuation of the massive Soviet retreat from the continent. Two months after Foreign Minister Kozyrev's tour of Africa in February 1992, Moscow closed embassies in nine African countries – Burkina Faso, Equatorial

Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, Niger, São-Tomé and Principe, Togo, Somalia, and Sierra Leone. Shortly afterwards, consulates in Mozambique, Angola, Madagascar, and the Congo were also closed.[27]

It is important to note that, unlike such countries as France and Britain that possess a wide network of diversified cultural and economic contacts with African nations, the Russian Federation could not close down its official missions there without significant political costs. As emphasized by Grigori Kerasin, Chief of the Africa Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, besides the remaining embassies and some trade missions, the Russian Federation currently does not have in Africa 'any additional receptors to perceive the processes taking place there, to say nothing of having a foothold for the establishment of a new structure of cooperation'.[28]

Moreover, it was not only political and military cooperation between Russia and African states that was drastically curtailed; many economic ties were also cut. Thus, while in 1992 the amount of Russian trade with Africa exceeded $1 billion (less than two per cent of Russian foreign trade turnover; down from seven per cent in 1985), in 1993 it declined to $760 million. Furthermore, according to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, the pattern of Russian trade with the continent has been severely distorted, with 83 per cent of Russian–African commercial flows confined to the few countries of Northern Africa.[29]

Worried about the process of shrinking cooperation, four African ambassadors accredited to Moscow (from Senegal, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar) made a deliberate effort to seek assurances from the Moscow authorities that Russia was not 'turning away from Africa'.[30] However, despite such calls for more active engagement, Russian foreign policy towards Africa in the years immediately after the Soviet Union's collapse was characterized by a massive retreat in the political, military, and economic realms. In fact, in the monetary area Russia undermined its standing in Africa by cutting off all economic assistance to African recipients and demanding the immediate repayment of outstanding debts by African states.[31]

A similar, yet not so dramatic, process of rapid disengagement also characterized Russia's relations with Central America. Although Moscow did not go as far as to close its embassies in the region, the continuing deterioration of ties with Cuba, and the Sandinistas' electoral defeat in Nicaragua, dramatically minimized

Russia's influence in Central America. The de-ideologization of Russian relations with Cuba was particularly noteworthy, and the curtailment of Soviet/Russian aid intensified an economic and political crisis in Castro's Cuba that left many Cuban officials with a sense of betrayal.[32]

Moscow's relations with other Latin American countries also suffered. Thus, for example, while in the early 1980s the total annual volume of Argentina's exports to the USSR amounted to $3 billion, in 1993 Argentina's exports to Russia did not exceed $100 million.[33] Similarly, the volume of Moscow's trade with Peru decreased from almost $200 million in 1989 to approximately $14 million in 1992.[34] In general, the Russian Federation seemed initially to have inherited the Soviet view of Latin America as the 'periphery of the civilized world'.

Russian policy in South-east Asia was also disrupted after the 1991 August coup attempt which resulted in the collapse of the Soviet state. The cessation of assistance to allies in Indochina created significant problems for them and spurred each to implement its own economic reforms. Vietnam and Cambodia were hit hardest by Soviet aid cutbacks, since Soviet assistance accounted for more than 75 per cent of Phnom Penh's budget and 80 per cent of Hanoi's.[35] Because of the US embargo, neither was in a good position to attract foreign investors; moreover, Cambodia suffered the additional burden of attracting foreign investors while the country was in the midst of a war between the government in Phnom Penh and three guerrilla groups. Thus far, Cambodia's principal investor has been Thailand.[36] In addition to searching for foreign investment, Vietnam and Laos have taken steps towards greater economic integration with ASEAN. Both attended the forums of the 26th annual meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers as observers.[37] Furthermore, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma expressed their desire to join ASEAN which would turn '... a sub-regional grouping into a regional bloc'. In a complete turnabout, Vietnam, formerly hostile to ASEAN, has since been invited to participate in regional meetings which examine the future of South-east Asia.[38]

RUSSIA RETURNS TO THE THIRD WORLD?

In the past several years Russian policy towards the countries of the Third World has undergone a gradual process of reorientation.

Reassessing the prospects for cooperation with developing countries and realizing the far-reaching strategic losses associated with the policy of complete disengagement from the Third World, Russian decision-makers have begun to voice discontent with the abrupt deterioration of ties with the countries of Asia, Latin America and South-east Asia. It has been repeatedly argued that, in contrast with the previous era of unilateral assistance which was driven by ideological concerns and the dynamics of the superpower rivalry, new Russian relations with developing countries should be mutually beneficial and based on pragmatic economic interests. Shortly before the 1996 Russian presidential elections, Boris Yeltsin reiterated this direction in foreign policy in the text of his political platform which outlined both his domestic and foreign policy imperatives. With regard to Third World foreign policy, it stressed the 'development of multifaceted and mutually advantageous relations with Russia's neighbors in Asia – China, India, Japan, the countries of the Near and Middle East, and the ASEAN countries....'[39] The remainder of this chapter examines the prospects for and the problems of developing such relations with Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Latin America, and South-east Asia.

Russia Returns to Sub-Saharan Africa

Among the most important events that accelerated the shift in Russian perceptions of Africa was a conference of Russian ambassadors to African countries held in Moscow in summer 1994. Addressing the conference, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin emphasized the fact that the prolonged pause in relations with Africa had an adverse impact on Russia's interests. Being remarkably explicit about Moscow's pragmatic goals on the African continent, in particular in the area of arms trade, he noted that 'the resulting vacuum is being actively filled by other countries, including those that make Russian weapons under licence and of a quality nowhere near that offered by our producers'.[40] Expressing essentially the same concern, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev was more cautious. Thus, in his speech at the conference, Kozyrev spoke of the need to 'combine organically' the expansion of Russian arms sales with the enhancement of international security on the African continent.[41]

Although military cooperation between Moscow and Africa has deteriorated substantially over the last decade (from a point in the

early 1980s when the USSR was the major source of weaponry for the countries of the continent)[42] and the Russian Federation has to start virtually from scratch, a large number of factors facilitate the sale of Russian arms in Africa – and elsewhere in the Third World. Most importantly, about 60 per cent, and in some cases almost 90 per cent, of military equipment currently used by African armies was manufactured in Russia.[43] According to Chernomyrdin, there existed an imperative to 'step up activity and efficiency' in moving Russian weaponry into the African market without forgetting, however, about the actual needs of the clients and their ability to pay.[44] However, efforts to re-establish Russian arms exports have faced several severe problems – including the reduced capacity of African states to pay for weapons imports and the expanded competition with both Western and CIS weapons exporters.[45] The most promising market for Russian military exports is South Africa, which has been interested in purchasing MiG 19 engines. In fact, the defence ministers of the two countries signed an agreement in mid-July 1995 on closer military cooperation. The ties will include exchanges of military delegations, joint exercises, training, and a joint project to develop the Russian engines for South Africa's French-built Mirage fighters.[46]

In reality, the poor financial status of many African nations may substantially impede Russia's plans for expanding economic involvement in the region even beyond the area of military sales. The problem is complicated by the existing indebtedness of African countries to Russia – in 1993 sub-Saharan nations alone owed Moscow about $19 billion – virtually all of which derived from the period prior to the mid-1980s when financial aid largesse was integral to Moscow's efforts to expand its presence and influence throughout the continent.[47] It is clear that the majority of African nations will not be able to repay their debts to the Russian Federation. And yet, Russia remains persistent in trying to convert Africa's debt into direct investments or to use it to cover the costs of Russian official missions on the continent.

Confronted with serious debt repayment problems among its clients, Moscow is focusing its attention primarily on the most economically capable countries of the region that either extract oil (for example, Nigeria) or supply important raw resources (for example, Zimbabwe). According to Russian decision-makers, however, their most important economic partner on the continent is South Africa. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in February 1992, Russia has repeatedly

expressed its interest in cooperating with the South African Republic, which possesses the largest economic and commercial potential in the region. The prospects for cooperation between the two countries are indeed bright. For example, it has been noted many times that, if Russia and South Africa coordinate their policies, they will be in a position to shape world prices on diamonds and, to a substantial degree, on gold.[48] Moreover, Russian leaders have seen South Africa as an alternative source of food and feed grains. In 1994 Russian President Boris Yeltsin revoked all restrictions on cooperation with South Africa which had been imposed some time ago following a UN Security Council resolution. Moreover, in his decree Yeltsin specifically encouraged the formation of all state, public, and private ties with the South African Republic on mutually advantageous bases.[49]

Despite the plans for more active economic cooperation with African nations, Russia has been quite reluctant to involve itself politically and militarily in settling the ongoing conflicts in the region. Although President Yeltsin has announced on a number of occasions that, 'as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and an active participant in the international community, the Russian Federation supports democratic transformations in Africa and turning it into a zone of peace, calm and stable economic development', so far Russia, facing political, economic, and security problems of its own, has refrained from making any specific commitments to preserving peace and stability on the African continent.[50] In the words of one Russian expert, 'they [Africans] should understand that Russia has to bear practically alone the burden of peacekeeping in the Commonwealth of Independent States'.[51]

Indeed, Russian efforts to limit the scope of military conflicts in Africa have been confined to such token gestures as setting up a small mobile unit in Tanzania to deliver aid to Rwandan refugees.[52] Moscow decision-makers prefer to see African nations solve their problems by themselves. According to Russian chief delegate to the United Nations Yuliy Vorontsov, the Russian Federation is interested in 'looking for ways of settling military conflicts and crisis situations on the African continent within the framework of African efforts'.[53]

Russia and North Africa

Because of the peculiar political, cultural, and geographical characteristics of the countries of North Africa, Russia's policy towards

that region deserves a separate assessment. For almost 20 years, beginning in the mid-1950s, Egypt was central to the Soviet Union's initial efforts to extend its presence and influence into the Middle East and Africa.[54] Egypt received large amounts of economic and military assistance from the USSR, with the balance shifting dramatically to the military side after the June War of 1967 with Israel. By the beginning of the 1970s, for example, Egypt had become a virtual client of the USSR – dependent on the latter for both its military and economic security. The death of Gamal Abdul Nasser in 1970 brought about a rapid and abrupt change in this relationship. President Anwar Sadat's opposition to the USSR and his decision to opt for closer ties with the United States as Egypt's major approach to achieving foreign policy and security interests resulted in a virtual collapse of Soviet relations with Egypt. Moscow immediately began looking elsewhere in the region for friends and became the major external partner of Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's Libya, whose expanding military forces were almost entirely dependent on the USSR for their increasingly sophisticated weaponry.[55] It is important to note that Libya's military purchases – as were those of Iraq and Syria – were paid for in hard currency that came from the increase in world oil prices generated by OPEC's taking over control of petroleum production.[56] Throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s the Soviet–Libyan relationship evolved across a number of areas of mutual interest, including the development of a strong Libyan military capacity, challenges to the leadership role of Egypt throughout the Arab world, and joint support for anti-Western terrorist groups from across the world. There were many in the West who saw Libya as a mere conduit for Soviet – and Cuban – training and support for anti-Western groups as diverse as the IRA, the Red Army factions, and various Palestinian groups committed to the downfall of Israel.[57]

Since the shift in Soviet policy towards the developing world associated with the Gorbachev reforms and, even more, since the collapse of the Soviet state in late 1991, Russia's relations with the countries of North Africa have been both similar to and different from those with the rest of the continent. The main similarity stems from Moscow's commitment to rebuild its ties with Africa on a mutually beneficial basis, with the special emphasis on economic cooperation. Russia's relations with Egypt are a notable example of this pragmatic policy. Thus, after signing an agreement on trade and cooperation with Egypt, the Russian Chamber of Commerce

and Industry Deputy Chairman Bidunov has noted that Egypt is Russia's most important trading partner in the Middle East and that his government is eager to take all the necessary measures to enhance trade exchange with Cairo which dropped from $1 billion in previous years to $250 million.[58] In the same vein, discussing the plans to expand cooperation with Egypt, Oleg Davydov, Russian Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, has stressed that it is the job of the Russian government to create an atmosphere conducive to trade growth.[59] Indeed, besides the aforementioned agreement on trade and cooperation, Russia and Egypt have also signed an agreement on the settlement of mutual debts and a memorandum of understanding that lays the foundation for cooperation in the field of electricity and energy.[60]

Similarly, Russia has concluded two major agreements with Morocco, with which the Soviet Union had maintained stable economic relations in the past. Under the first accord a joint intergovernmental commission has been established to explore the ways in which bilateral cooperation in the economic, scientific, and financial spheres can be further deepened and expanded. The second accord has, in turn, set new procedures governing trade exchanges between the two nations for the purpose of strengthening their commercial ties.[61]

Moreover, as in the rest of the continent and throughout the entire developing world, Russia moves steadily in northern Africa to recover its position as a major arms supplier. Thus, for example, in September 1994 Russia agreed to sell 47 MI-8 helicopters equipped for combat operations to Algeria. These helicopters had been built as cargo transports, but none of the traditional Russian buyers was prepared to pay for them.[62] According to some accounts, Russia is also ready to resume arms deliveries to Libya, as soon as the UN sanctions are lifted. As noted by a spokesperson of the Russian state arms company *Rosvooruzhenie*, the company experts estimate that, since the time the sanctions were imposed on Iraq and Libya, Russia has lost up to $16 billion.[63] This explains various Russian efforts to have UN sanctions on both of these former client-states reduced or even eliminated as rapidly as possible, as well as the agreement signed in July 1995 to restore economic ties with Libya.[64]

The similarity between Russia's relations with North African nations and its policy towards sub-Saharan Africa also stems from numerous difficulties and complications confronted by Moscow in

trying to recover some of the Soviet debts. Russia's relations with Libya are very telling in this regard. In the autumn of 1993, the Libyan government promised to pay Russia $1.8 billion in return for Moscow's using its veto power when the United Nations Security Council would vote on the issue of toughening the international sanctions against Libya.[65] Plans called for imposing new sanctions in connection with Tripoli's continuing protection of individuals who had been accused of causing two plane crashes, including that of the Pan American flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. Russia was quite interested in this *quid pro quo* arrangement, since the new sanctions, if adopted, would have frozen Libyan deposits in foreign banks, thus preventing Russia from recovering its debt. However, the deal failed because the Russian Federation wanted the money paid before it used the veto. Libya suspected that Russia would take the money and, considering it as a partial repayment for Libya's debts, would not veto the sanctions. As a result, after transferring just $65 million, Tripoli decided to renege on the deal.[66]

Despite the similarities in Russia's relations with Sub-Saharan and North Africa, there are also substantial differences in relations with the two parts of the continent. The major source of these differences results from the fact that North Africa is part of the Arab world. By implication, not only does the region play an important role in the Middle Eastern peace process with its unique political dynamics, but also the international behaviour of North African nations is shaped to a large degree by Islamic beliefs and by the sense of solidarity with the rest of the Islamic community.

While in the past the former Soviet Union and Russia were not perceived by Muslims as cultural foes, Moscow's current support for Serbian actions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and its direct involvement in the bloody conflict in the predominantly Muslim, secessionist republic of Chechnya may alter the way the Islamic world views the Russians. Indeed, the fighting in Chechnya has already had a strong resonance in North Africa. For example, the brother of Libya's leader warned the Russian ambassador in Tripoli that the invasion and killing of Muslims in Chechnya might lead to the collapse of the relationship between Russia and the Islamic world – a relationship that he wanted to see preserved. Referring to Islam and Orthodox Christianity, Qaddafi described them as 'two religions closer to each other than to other religions'.[67]

Russia's stance as a protector of Christian Orthodox Serbia in its war against Muslim Bosnia has not escaped criticism in North Africa

either. For instance, Egyptian newspapers have denounced the Russian position in the Bosnian conflict and, in particular, Moscow's opposition to air attacks against Serbia.[68] While the relations between Egyptian President Mubarak and Russia have been quite cordial, it is the oppositional Islamic forces in Egypt that have attacked Moscow's policy in the Balkans. It is important to note, however, that the Islamic opposition in Egypt is quite strong. A senior European diplomat, for example, has recently confessed that 'the Egyptians tell us that if they hold free elections the Islamic militants will win'.[69] According to the Islamic press, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, virulent ethnic sentiments were unleashed in Moscow, thus influencing the Russian decision to side with the Serbs.

Besides Muslim apprehensions about Moscow's military involvement in Chechnya and its position in the Balkans, Russia's interests in North Africa and elsewhere in the Muslim world have also been seriously affected by the religious violence that has recently intensified in the region, especially in Algeria. Thus, for example, as part of numerous attacks on people of European origin, five Russian specialists working in Algeria were killed in July 1994.[70] Concerned about such continuous terrorist acts against Russian citizens in Algeria, Andrei Kozyrev declared that the 'volume of cooperation with Algeria must be cut back'.[71] Nevertheless, despite such unequivocal official announcements, Russia continues to value Algeria as a potential buyer of Russian armaments, as demonstrated by Moscow's decision to sell military helicopters to the Algerian government in September 1994.

Russia and Latin America

Despite numerous differences, Russia and Latin America share at least two important political and economic characteristics that could potentially be highly conducive to the development of cooperative relations between them. First, many Latin American countries, as well as the Russian Federation, are currently undergoing the complex process of post-authoritarian transition and are, therefore, confronted with similar domestic challenges. Second, both Russia and Latin America have demonstrated their willingness to rely on free market mechanisms in the economic sphere and to integrate their societies into the global economy.

The development of new political and economic contacts between the Russian Federation and Latin America was the objec-

tive of the visit in May–June 1994 by a Russian parliamentary delegation led by Viktor Shumeiko to Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Throughout the visit Shumeiko repeatedly stated that 'our task is to maintain and increase as far as we are able our presence in the region and continue mutually advantageous relations with the countries of Latin America, on the basis of a realistic vision of our common interests and capacities and rejecting ideology-based approaches and stereotypes'.[72] It is interesting to note that, in his address to Venezuela's parliament, Shumeiko explicitly accepted the dominant position of the United States in Latin America, when he emphasized that Russia completely supported the existing balance of power in the Western hemisphere.[73]

Although it is clear that Latin America is not a priority region in Russian foreign policy, recent developments indicate that, as in Africa, Russia is gradually restoring and strengthening its ties with the region. For example, in 1993 for the first time in the history of their bilateral relations Russia signed a comprehensive trade agreement with Paraguay. Similar agreements were signed with Chile and Argentina. In 1994 Moscow also concluded an agreement on economic and technological cooperation with Cuba, and a trade protocol with Brazil. Moreover, in 1993 the Russian Federation became the first post-communist state to gain observer status in Latin America's largest regional economic organization, the Latin American Integration Association, which unites 11 countries.[74] By late 1994, mutual investment and cooperative business ventures with Latin American partners were reportedly growing, with dozens of joint ventures operating in both Russia and Latin America. In spring 1995 the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a meeting of political and business leaders, diplomats, and journalists to explore ways of improving relations with the countries of Latin America. As occurred in the similar meeting concerning Russian relations with Africa, a broad range of concrete proposals were made to strengthen Russian economic and political involvement in the region.[75]

Undoubtedly, Latin American nations, especially Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, provide many more opportunities for international economic cooperation than do their impoverished African counterparts. Indeed, with the total GNP of Latin American countries exceeding $900 billion and the ameliorating political climate, the region presents an attractive target for Russian entrepreneurs. Thus, for example, several Russian banks have expressed their

interest in establishing their presence in Latin America. The Russian military is also interested in supplying arms and military equipment to a number of Latin American governments. Military-technical cooperation with Latin America, in particular with Brazil, expanded in 1994.[76]

Despite Cuba's persisting economic problems, the prospects for Russian–Cuban cooperation in the economic sphere are also high. The Russian Federation has several significant advantages in Cuba. First of all, Cuban industry and agriculture are to a large degree equipped by Soviet-made machinery and, therefore, remain an important market for Russia's technological products. Second, two generations of Cuban technocrats were trained in the Soviet Union. It is important to note that many of them are still loyal to Russia. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the continuing US trade embargo against Cuba spares Russian products the dangers of large-scale international competition. These three reasons combined with the general trend towards the 'economization' of Russian foreign policy are likely to result in the re-emergence of strong economic ties between Russia and Cuba. This time, however, these ties will be based on pragmatic interests, rather than on some ideological imperative.

The Russians, for example, are committed to completing the construction of a nuclear power plant in Cuba which was started by the Soviet Union. Announcing in August 1995 that Russia had already begun to ship assembly parts to Cuba, Chief of the Public Relations Department of the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry Georgiy Kaiurov noted that Russia was prepared to cooperate in the construction of this nuclear plant with the United States. In Kaiurov's words, 'the U.S. participation would enable it to exercise control over Florida located close to Cuban shores and whose security had recently aroused the U.S. concern'.[77] Kaiurov's statement came as an apparent response to the decision by the US Congress to slash by $15 million the $595 million aid package destined for Russia and several other post-Soviet republics as a reaction against Russian support for Cuba's efforts to resume the construction of the nuclear power plant. American legislators have repeatedly argued that, if the plant is built in Cuba, America will find itself with 'its own Chernobyl' off its coast, which will be a threat to all the countries in the Caribbean basin and the United States.[78]

The construction of the nuclear power plant is only one of many projects in which Russia plans to be involved in Cuba. Another

large-scale project which Russia is currently studying is aimed at the modernization of Cuba's oil industry. Thus, according to Petr Nidzelskiy, Russia's deputy Minister of Fuel and Energy, his Ministry is seriously examining the possibility of resuming work by Russian companies to finish the construction of Cuban oil facilities, such as refineries and pipelines, which had been begun in the Soviet era.[79] In October 1995, for example, an agreement was reached to exchange 10.5 million tons of Russian oil for 4 million tons of Cuban sugar over the next three years. However, as of May 1996, the effective implementation of the oil-for-sugar barter agreement had yet to be achieved.[80]

Andrei Kozyrev's successor, Russian Foreign Minister Evgenyi Primakov, promised to widen Russian involvement in Latin America, an area previously neglected by both Soviet and Russian governments. In May 1996 Primakov backed this pronouncement with an official visit to Mexico, Cuba, and Venezuela. His visits came after Moscow's failure to condemn Havana for the downing of two US civilian planes in March. Primakov apparently hopes to widen support for Moscow among strategic Latin American countries in the event of future confrontations with the United States over Cuba.[81] Although the signing of various agreements with each country was largely symbolic, Primakov's overtures marked the first time that Russia has attempted to draw the support of other regional states in the US–Cuban dispute.

And yet, some of the difficult problems that impede the prospects for Russian–African economic cooperation also plague Russia's commercial ties with Latin America. The biggest problem, of course, is that of the debt which several Latin American nations owed to the Soviet Union and which they now owe to the Russian Federation. For instance, the combined debt of Peru, Nicaragua, and Cuba to Russia exceeds $20 billion.[82] As in the case of Africa's debt, Russian diplomats currently attempt to devise various ingenious means to resolve the problem of Latin American indebtedness.

Restored Relations with Vietnam

After the initial disruption of relations, the Russian leadership of President Boris Yeltsin re-established policies which had begun under Gorbachev. Unlike the situation facing Gorbachev, the efforts of the Yelstin government were not constrained by political events in Cambodia, nor by Cold War rivalry. First, commitments to

Vietnam were renewed at modest levels, as Russia sought to retain a presence in South-east Asia. Russian–Vietnamese bilateral relations were re-established on a more equal footing than in the past, as Vietnam is no longer dependent exclusively on Russia for assistance. However, Russia is constrained by its own internal problems and a limited budget. Second, the expansion of Russian relations with the countries of ASEAN have continued under Yeltsin with more success than they had under Gorbachev.

Already in January 1992 the Russian government decided to restore Russian relations with Vietnam. Despite the end of the Cold War, the collapse of communism, and most of all, the improvement of Sino-Soviet relations, it was in Russia's best interest to mend relations with Vietnam, according to the Ministry. Through Vietnam the Soviet Union had managed to establish a lasting presence in South-east Asia, and it was in Russia's best interest to maintain that presence. Russia's continued presence in the region will serve Russian economic interests, a belief based on the hope that three-way projects among Russia, Vietnam, and a third party would boost Russian trade among ASEAN member states.[83]

Although Russia intends to continue the old Soviet policies regarding the maintenance of close relations with Vietnam, the basis of Russian–Vietnamese relations promises to be significantly different from that of Soviet–Vietnamese relations. As previously noted, Soviet–Vietnamese relations were founded on a mutual distrust of China and maintained by massive Soviet assistance to Vietnam. This relationship resulted in some recriminations on both sides; the Soviets grew dissatisfied with the slow pace of Vietnamese economic development and Hanoi's obstinacy towards other states in the region, while the Vietnamese came to resent the overwhelming dependency on Moscow and the subsequent leverage exercised by the Soviets over Vietnam's foreign policy. Both the Russians and the Vietnamese sought to transform the nature of bilateral relations from a patron–client arrangement to a mutually advantageous partnership between two states with equal standing. In working to achieve this end, both countries are striving to resolve three outstanding issues: repayment of the Vietnamese debt, adjustment of policies surrounding the use of military bases at Cam Ranh and Da Nang, and issues pertaining to the Vietnamese population living in Russia.

The Vietnamese debt to Russia had resulted from the former having imported from the Soviet Union far more than they had exported. The first effort to equalize trade occurred in a series of

talks between Vietnam and Russia after which a protocol was signed in Moscow allowing $800 million worth of bilateral trade for 1992, each partner to provide $400 million.[84] In 1993, trade levels were far below that figure, totalling approximately $300 million. However trade was balanced relatively equally between the two without the rigid quotas of the past, and both parties instead drew up and coordinated lists of goods in which they were interested.[85]

Significantly, Vietnam expressed a willingness to pay back the past debt. In July 1993, the first meeting of an intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, and Technical Co-operation was hosted by the Vietnamese delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Tran Duc Luong and attended by a Russian delegation. During the session an agreement was reached '... regarding the renewal of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in various spheres on a qualitatively new basis and agreed to volumes of Vietnamese supplies against debts that Vietnam owes to the Russian Federation'.[86] Vietnam is one of the few former Soviet client-states which is working to pay off old debts. Since the agreement, Vietnam has been consistent in its delivery of goods in repayment and has even offered to increase shipments.[87] Though trade has not been without difficulties, that is, the general inefficiency of barter trade, these difficulties are a direct result of the process of the economic transformation of command economies to market economies. In fact this shared predicament has arguably fostered closer cooperation, and trade can be expected to increase if the proposed Vietnamese–Russian cooperation in the area of oil exploration goes forward. In May 1996 negotiations in Moscow led to an agreement to expand cooperation in oil prospecting with the participation of Russian petroleum companies. The agreement marks the continuation of Vietnamese–Russian cooperation in this field that began with the founding of Vietsovpetro in 1981.[88]

The status of the military base facilities at Cam Ranh Bay is another issue being negotiated by both sides. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union and the collapse of COMECON, Hanoi reportedly requested rent totalling $350–400 million from the Soviets using Cam Ranh, which the Russian navy could not afford. It has been suggested that Russia could write off some of Vietnam's debt in exchange for Russia's continued use of the base.[89] The Russians, for their part, do not want to leave Cam Ranh, nor have they been pressed to do so by ASEAN and Vietnam. In fact, Foreign Minister Kozyrev proposed that Cam Ranh be expanded and developed into

an international commercial port.[90] In a move to formalize Russian–Vietnamese relations, a new interstate, bilateral treaty is being negotiated to replace the 1978 treaty, the provisions of which are outdated since they refer to the Soviet Union. The status of Cam Ranh Bay is among the issues to be resolved. Russia is currently using the facilities on the basis of the 1981 agreement signed by Vietnam and the former Soviet Union, although most of its forces have been withdrawn. According to Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet, the status of Cam Ranh Bay needs to be renegotiated in light of the regime change in Moscow which foreshadowed the transformation of the nature of bilateral relations.[91] Although the status of Cam Ranh is still under negotiation, it is clear that the Russians intend to maintain at least a minimal presence in Vietnam. What is significant is that neither Vietnam nor ASEAN member states are demanding their total withdrawal.

The third issue on the agenda concerns the Vietnamese population living in Russia. During the 1980s, Vietnamese workers signed contracts with Russian businesses, agreeing to work for them for a specified time period. A portion of the wages of Vietnamese workers was usually set aside for debt repayment. These work-contract arrangements helped to alleviate the labour problems of both countries – Vietnam's labour surplus and the Soviet Union's labour shortage. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the restructuring of the Russian economy, the unemployment rate among Russians has skyrocketed creating pressures to send the Vietnamese workers back home. The problem has been made worse by the fact that many Vietnamese are either unwilling or unable to return to Vietnam. Russian plants refuse to pay for plane tickets and Vietnamese workers cannot in many cases afford to buy them.[92] Those who stay on at the end of their contracts frequently work illegally or are engaged in illegal trade such as smuggling. Incidence of illegal trade and smuggling involving some of the approximately 30,000 Vietnamese expatriates living in Russia create resentment among Russians.[93]

Gestures have been made on both sides towards the resolution of this problem. The Russian government has urged plants laying off Vietnamese workers before the end of their contracts to pay the workers at least three months' salary in indemnity.[94] Hanoi for its part has urged its expatriates to respect Russian laws. Though the expatriate problem needs to be resolved, its resolution does not appear to be a priority in bilateral relations. Any serious effort to return Vietnamese workers home will require improved implemen-

tation of Russian immigration laws and assistance to those who cannot afford a one-way plane ticket to Hanoi.

Expanding Russian Relations with ASEAN

Russia's attempts to expand relations with ASEAN are driven by a developmental imperative. Russia seeks to expand trade with the 'mini-dragons' of South-east Asia whose economies are among the most dynamic in the world. By expanding economic relations with ASEAN states Russia hopes to attract investment in the Russian Far East. Russia's pursuit of expanded relations with ASEAN faces both opportunities and constraints. The opportunities are largely the result of a Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia which removed Vietnam as a potential security threat, and the attitude of many ASEAN members towards China. ASEAN member states welcome Russian economic and political participation in the region because they view the Russian presence in South-east Asia as a counterweight to China. The restrictions facing Russia are largely domestic and psychological. Domestic economic restructuring and persistent inflation have limited the budget of the central government, while apprehension over the purchase of Russian assets by foreign investors persists even among those in the highest levels of government.[95]

Russian political and economic gains in ASEAN have been more symbolic than tangible. Still they are significant in that Russia has been recognized as a full partner in the dialogue among ASEAN member states, a status which is also held by ASEAN's most important trading partners including Canada, the European Union, Japan, and the United States. Most importantly, contacts among ASEAN participants have been established which are valuable in the development of bilateral trade.

Russian participation in ASEAN affairs began with the attendance of Andrei Kozyrev at the 26th meeting of foreign ministers of the ASEAN in July 1993. Kozyrev outlined Russian strategic objectives in the Asian-Pacific Region: 1) to secure Russia's role in the system of international relations, 2) to develop balanced, bilateral relations with all Asian-Pacific region states, and 3) to use leverage for the purpose of pressuring Pyongyang to halt the production of nuclear weapons. In addition, Kozyrev declared that Russia was interested in economic expansion into ASEAN, something which would not happen until Russia's status was upgraded from 'invited' to a 'full partner in the dialogue'.[96]

At the July 1994 annual conference of ASEAN held in Bangkok, Russia was offered an agreement on full partnership which carries with it closer relations with ASEAN. At the conference the ASEAN states showed interest in Russian weaponry.[97] On 9 June 1994 the Russian Federation had signed a contract with Malaysia for the delivery of 18 MiG-29s. The signed contract was the result of nearly two years of negotiations involving the resolution of issues such as method of payment and various modifications of the MiG-29s for their integration into the Royal Malaysian Air Force.[98] According to Kozyrev, the conclusion of the Malaysian deal would probably lead to weapons' agreements with other states such as Australia and Thailand.[99] Russian arms-makers gained a foothold in one of the fastest growing arms markets in the world, and after the deal was signed with Malaysia, such countries as Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines began their own assessments of Russian weaponry.[100]

The dialogue with ASEAN has been instrumental in the development of Russian bilateral relations with individual member states. In addition to the interest shown in Russian weaponry, Thailand sold Russia 700 000 tons of rice under a special two-year credit term. Krung Thai Bank extended credit to rice exporters for the sale to Russia of rice.[101] Although there have been subsequent difficulties over the repayment for the rice, Russia has begun its repayment to Thailand, and a Russian–Thai Joint Commission has been formed which will meet annually to discuss bilateral co-operation in various fields and any outstanding differences.[102] In all, Russian–Thai bilateral trade reached $325 million. Thailand imported $147 million worth of Russian iron and steel goods, gold, fertilizer, and oil, while Russia imported about $263 million worth of mostly agricultural goods, especially rice.[103] Total trade between Russia and ASEAN tripled from $1.6 to $4 billion between 1994 and 1995. Although this amount was small compared with the overall foreign trade of the ASEAN countries, which reached $500 billion in 1995, the increase was dramatic when compared with trade levels during the Soviet period and the first years of independent Russia.[104]

Although there has been progress in the development of Russian bilateral trade with countries in South-east Asia, there has not been similar progress in attracting ASEAN investment in the Russian Far East. The lack of substantial progress in this area results mainly from the domestic political situation in Russia. First, political wran-

gling between the Russian president and the Russian parliament acts as a brake on the economic reform process. Second, the relationship between Moscow and the Russian *oblasts* in the east has been characterized by confrontation. Moscow's control over the Russian Far East has been weakened due to the separatist mood among regional leaders. In fact, when talk of the creation of a 'Far East Republic' first began, several joint projects with ASEAN were frozen.[105] Both conditions make for an unstable political climate, especially in the Russian Far East.

It is clear that Russia has the potential to play an important role in South-east Asia. Previous obstacles resulting from the international political climate of the Cold War are no longer a factor in the development of foreign relations. With the region no longer divided by communism and the mechanisms of the Cold War, the countries of Indochina and those of ASEAN welcome Russian participation in the region. For its part, ASEAN has always endeavoured to strike a balance between Russia and China, unwilling to see either assert a dominant position in the affairs of South-east Asia. And as Russia's role in the region has historically been negligible, China has usually been regarded as the bigger threat. Russia's main obstacles in the expansion of bilateral trade with ASEAN stem from the domestic situation within Russia itself.

THE FUTURE OF RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE DEVELOPING WORLD

The recent shift in the policy of the Russian Federation towards the developing world can be seen as part of a global reorientation of Russian policy towards the outside world – a policy that is much more assertive than that pursued immediately after the collapse of the Soviet state and one that is firmly committed to asserting Russia's interests and to re-establishing Russia's place as a major world power or even superpower.[106] Evidence of this shift can be seen in the 'near abroad', where the Russians are apparently committed to reasserting dominance over the other Soviet successor states. The shift is evident, as well, in bilateral relations with the West in which the Russians have become much more demanding and assertive. Even those Russian leaders viewed as strongly pro-Western and pro-democratic in 1992 now speak of NATO's Partnership for Peace as a means to undermine Russia's standing as a

major world power and refer to the proposed expansion of NATO membership eastwards as a threat to European, even global, stability and peace.[107]

It is within this broader reorientation of Russian foreign policy that efforts to re-establish relationships with African countries – with a few old clients, but more importantly with new potential partners – should be understood. However, Moscow no longer sees the developing world as an arena for ideological competition. Instead, Russia has expressed its willingness to expand its economic influence in Africa, Latin America and South-east Asia to restore, as well as to strengthen, those commercial ties which were recklessly severed over the past decade. With its explicit rejection of the ideology-driven foreign policy, Russia is ready to build its relations with developing nations on a new, more pragmatic, foundation. Such a trend will certainly continue to cause feelings of discontent among Moscow's former Marxist-Leninist allies who are accustomed to easy credits and loans. And yet, the ability to break with ideological rigidities of the past also creates the opportunity for Russia to establish mutually beneficial contacts with more financially secure, market-oriented African (for example, South Africa) and Latin American economies.

Political involvement of the Russian Federation in the developing world is likely to remain limited, however, because of the mismatch between the expanding objectives of the Russian leadership in the foreign policy realm and the restricted resource base from which it is operating. Preoccupied with numerous security problems in the 'near abroad' and socio-economic misfortunes at home, Russia, at least in the near future, will not be able to claim the role of the major player in African, Asian and Latin American politics. Nevertheless, if successful, Russia's increasing economic activities on both continents, in particular in the area of the arms trade, will eventually form a basis on which Moscow can potentially reassert its political power.

NOTES

1. The authors are well aware of the inadequacy of the terms 'Third World', 'developing world', and 'developing countries' to categorize the very different states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. However, in the absence of better

terms, they will use them interchangeably to refer to these countries. Since Chapters 5 and 6 above have dealt with Soviet/Russian policy in the Middle East and South Asia, we will focus here on Russian policy towards Africa, Latin America, and South-east Asia. Portions of the present chapter draw upon Alexander V. Kozhemiakin and Roger E. Kanet, 'Rußland und Afrika', in Klaus Fritsche (ed), *Rußland blickt nach Süden* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsanstalt, forthcoming), and are reprinted here with permission.

2. Despite the explosion of ethnically based conflict in former communist countries since 1989, the list of countries in which ethnic or religious conflict is a serious problem is still dominated by countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For example, of 48 countries experiencing internal armed conflict included in a 1993 listing, all but eight were in the developing world. See David Binder, with Barbara Crossette, 'As Ethnic Wars Multiply, U.S. Strives for a Policy', *The New York Times*, 7 February 1993, p. 12.
3. See, for example, Roger E. Kanet, 'Security Issues in Soviet African Policy: The Imperatives of Soviet Security Policy in Soviet–African Relations', *Crossroads: An International Socio-Political Journal*, no. 10 (1983), pp. 81–120. For a perceptive analysis of Soviet policy towards Latin America, see Robert S. Leiken, *Soviet Strategy in Latin America* (New York: Praeger, 1982). For a comprehensive overview of the status of Soviet relations with the developing world at the beginning of the Gorbachev era, see Joseph G. Whelan and Michael J. Dixon, *The Soviet Union in the Third World: Threat to World Peace?* (Washington/London: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986).
4. For a discussion of these points, see Carl G. Jacobsen, *Soviet Strategic Initiatives: Challenge and Response* (New York: Praeger, 1979), pp. 1–8.
5. See Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1975). See also Timothy Ashby, *The Bear in the Back Yard* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1987).
6. For a discussion of the importance of basing rights in Soviet Third World Policy, see Robert E. Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy* (New York: Pergamon, 1982), especially pp. 173–204, 233–9.
7. See Daniel S. Papp, *Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Peking, Washington* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1981).
8. Mark Falcoff, 'Bishop's Cuba, Castro's Grenada: Notes toward an Inner History', in Jiri Valenta and Herbert J. Ellison (eds), *Grenada and Soviet/Cuban Policy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), p. 72.
9. See Roger E. Kanet, 'The Evolution of Soviet Policy toward the Developing World from Stalin to Brezhnev', in Edward A. Kolodziej and Roger E. Kanet (eds), *The Limits of Soviet Power in the Developing World: Thermidor in the Revolutionary Struggle* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), pp. 36–60.
10. See, for example, Daniel R. Kempton and Roger E. Kanet, 'Soviet Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects and Problems for Model and Ally Strategies', in Jane Shapiro Zacek (ed), *The Gorbachev Generation: Issues in Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York: Paragon Press, 1988), pp. 179–224. A group of US analysts estimated that the costs of Soviet empire (including subsidies to African allies) had reached somewhere between $35 billion and $46 billion annually by 1980. See Charles Wolf, *et al.*, *The Costs of the Soviet Empire* (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, no. R-3073/1-NA, September 1983), p. 19.

Russian analyst Igor Belikov notes the discrepancy in estimates concerning the actual size of Soviet subsidies to its clients. For example, O. Abegunrin estimated that Soviet aid to Angola amounted to $2 billion; Belikov agrees that the much lower estimates of about $200 million given by Quentin Bach are more likely to be correct. See Igor Belikov, 'Soviet–Angolan Relations: Venture into Southern Africa', in Margot Light (ed.), *Troubled Friendships: Moscow's Third World Ventures* (London–New York: British Academic Press; London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1993), p. 59; O. Abegunrin, 'Angola and the Soviet Union since 1975', *Journal of African Studies*, XIV (1987), p. 28; and Quentin Bach, *Soviet Economic Assistance to the Less Developed Countries: A Statistical Analysis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 23.

11. Francis Fukuyama, 'Gorbachev and the Third World', *Foreign Affairs*, LXIV (1986), pp. 715–31.
12. For an overview of Soviet policy towards the developing world in this period see Kanet, 'Reassessing Soviet Doctrine: New Priorities and Perspectives', in Kolodziej and Kanet (eds), *The Limits of Soviet Power in the Developing World* pp. 397–425; and Roger E. Kanet, with Garth T. Katner, 'From New Thinking to the Fragmentation of Consensus in Soviet Foreign Policy: The USSR and the Developing World', in Roger E. Kanet, Deborah Nutter Miner and Tamara J. Resler (eds), *Soviet Foreign Policy in Transition.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 121–44.
13. Jose Luis Rodriguez, 'Kuba-SSSR/SNG: ekonomicheskie otnosheniia v 1990–1992 g.', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 12 (1993), p. 34. See, also, Jan S. Adams, *A Foreign Policy in Transition: Moscow's Retreat from Central America and the Caribbean, 1985–1992* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992).
14. A. Kiva, 'Afrika i zdes zanovo?', *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, no. 21 (29 May 1991). Cited in Robert G. Patman, 'Russia's New Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa', in Peter Shearman (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy since 1990* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1995), p. 285. Olga Alexandrova, 'Auf der Suche nach au inpolitischen Alternativen: Die "Dritte Welt" in den Mussichen Vorsellungen', *Berichte des Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien* (hereafter BBOIS), no. 31 (1996).
15. See, for example, the discussions of Soviet policy towards both Ethiopia and Angola in the final years of the Gorbachev period in Belikov, 'Soviet–Angolan Relations', and Robert G. Patman, 'Soviet–Ethiopian Relations: The Horn of Dilemma', in Light (ed.), *Troubled Friendships*, pp. 52–81 and 110–39. See, also, George W. Breslauer (ed.), *Soviet Policy in Africa: From the Old to the New Thinking* (Berkeley, CA: Berkeley-Stanford Program in Soviet Studies and Center for Slavic and East European Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1992). 'Rogachev on "Misgivings" on Cambodian Issue', *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Soviet Union* (hereafter *FBIS-SOV*), 23 October 1991, p. 7.
16. Belikov, 'Soviet–Angolan Relations', p. 78.
17. Patman, 'Soviet–Ethiopian Relations', p. 132.
18. 'Rech' Tovarishcha Gorbacheva M.S.', *Pravda*, 25 July 1986, p. 5. That suggestion became an explicit offer in Gorbachev's 1988 Krasnoyarsk speech. See 'Gorbachev's Speech to Workers', *FBIS-SOV*, 19 September 1988, pp. 43–60.
19. Thelma L. Beltran, 'The Evolution of Philippine–Soviet Diplomatic and Trade Relations', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 10, no. 2, September 1988, p. 152.

20. L. Kuznetsov, 'Soveshchaiutsia Ministry', *Pravda*, 25 June 1986, p. 5.
21. 'Premier Vows Closer ASEAN Ties, Cooperation', *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, East Asia* (hereafter *FBIS-EAS*), 23 October 1991, p. 62; 'Signing ASEAN Cooperation Treaty Supported', *FBIS-EAS*, 25 October 1991, p. 42.
22. 'On the Offensive', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 June 1990, p. 30.
23. Murray Hiebert, 'Hammer Blow for Hanoi', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5 July 1990, p. 45.
24. See Graham E. Fuller, 'Moscow and the Gulf War', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 70, no. 3 (1991), pp. 55–76.
25. See *New Times*, no. 37 (1992), p. 5. Although Russian policy within the United Nations has supported efforts to deal with regional conflict in the developing world, one aspect of overall policy – the resumption of arms exports – has been received in Washington with significant concern. This is particularly the case because these exports have been motivated almost exclusively by a desire to generate hard currency income and not by any concern about the policies of the purchaser or the uses to which the armaments might be put. The United States has been especially concerned about the export of submarines to Iran and rocket fuel to Libya. See *RFE/RL News Briefs*, II, no. 20 (1993), p. 3; Michael R. Gordon, 'U.S. Warns Moscow on Sale of Key Rocket Fuel to Libya', *The New York Times*, 23 June 1993, pp. A1, A5.
26. See Grigori Karassin, 'Russia and Africa', *International Affairs*, no. 1 (January 1993), pp. 52–60.
27. Patman, 'Russia's New Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa', p. 292.
28. Karassin, 'Russia and Africa', p. 59.
29. Cited in Vladimir Abarimov, 'Novii afrikanskii kurs: vzyskat' nedoimku i razvernut' eksport oruzhiia', *Segodnia* (22 July 1994). See, also, ITAR-TASS (17 August 1992) SWB, SU/W0244 A/3–4 (21 August 1992).
30. *Izvestiia* (10 November 1992).
31. *Moscow Radio World Service* (24 January 1993); cited in Patman, 'Russia's New Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa', p. 292; *Izvestiia* (7 March 1992).
32. Santiago Perez, 'Kariby i Tsentralnaia Amerika posle raspada SSSR', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 10 (1993), pp. 25–33. See, also, G.E. Mamedov, 'Na printsipakh vzaimovygodnosti uvazheniia interesov', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 8 (1994), pp. 91–2, and Jan S. Adams, 'Rußland und Lateinamerika', in Fritsche (ed.), *Rußland und die Dritte Welt.*
33. Marcello Gershenfeld, 'Potentsial dvustoronnikh otnoshenii ogromen', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 6 (1994), p. 68.
34. V. A. Tkachenko, 'Opyt i nekotorye itogi sotrudnichestva', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 5 (1994), p. 55.
35. Ibid.
36. Murray Hiebert, 'Baht Imperialism', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 June 1992, pp. 46–7.
37. 'Russia, China Attend "as Guests"', *FBIS-SOV*, 26 July 1993, p. 2.
38. Michael Vatikiotis, 'Brave New World', *Far Eastern Economic Review*. 23 January 1992, p. 19.
39. 'Russia: Text of Yeltsin Election Program', *FBIS-SOV*, 13 June 1996, pp. 52–3.
40. ITAR-TASS (12 July 1994). Boris Kuzyk, President Yeltsin's aide for military-technical cooperation with foreign countries, has argued that Russia must regain its place in the world arms market. The major factor driving efforts

to increase Russian arms sales has been the need to earn hard currency. Russian armaments trade has dropped precipitously since independence, as had Soviet trade in the preceding year. Arms exports had been a major item in Soviet exports, generating an estimated two-thirds of all hard currency earnings by the early 1980s. In constant 1990 prices Soviet arms sales (not all for hard currency) were estimated at $17.75 billion, or 38.7 per cent of total world armaments exports. Four years later Russia, which had inherited more than half of the USSR's arms producing industries, had arms exports of $1.7 billion (and an estimated $2.5 billion in 1995). See *Interfax*, 20 January 1993; cited in Stephen Foye, 'Russian Arms Exports after the Cold War', *RFE/RL Research Report*, II, 13 (1993), p. 61; *Krasnaia zvezda*, 29 July 1995, p. e; translated in *FBIS-SOV*, 4 August 1995, pp. 26–7; Thomas Sachse, 'Russische Rüstungsexportpolitik 1992: Umfang, Organisationsstrukturen, Perspektiven', BBOIS, no. 4 (1993); and 'Russian Arms Exports Rise', *OMRI Daily Digest*, no. 230, 28 November 1995.

41. Abarinov, 'Novii afrikanskii kurs'.
42. See Roger E. Kanet, 'L'Union Soviétique et les pays en voie de développement: rôle de l'aide militaire et des transferts d'armes', in Francis Conte and Jean-Louis Martres, *L'Union Soviétique dans les Relations Internationales* (Paris: Economica, 1982), pp. 415–64. See, also, Joachim Krause, *Die Sowjetische Militärhilfepolitik gegenüber Entwicklungsländern* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsanstalt, 1985).
43. Vyacheslav Elagin, 'Nam ne stoit teriat' Afriku', *Krasnaia Zvezda* (8 August 1994).
44. ITAR-TASS (12 July 1994).
45. *Interfax* (11 August 1992); translated in *FBIS- SOV*-92-158.
46. *Krasnaia Zvezda* (15 December 1993). South Africa's minister, Joe Modise, the former commander of the military forces of the African National Congress, received military training in the Soviet Union in 1964. See Doug Clark, 'Closer Military Ties with South Africa', *OMRI Daily Digest*, no. 137, Part I (17 July 1995).
47. Elagin, 'Nam ne stoit teriat' Afriku'.
48. Maxim Iusin, 'Rossiiskaia diplomatiia otkryvaet dlia sebia Iuzhnuiu Afriku', *Izvestiia* (4 March 1992). In 1992 the De Beers company opened an office in Moscow; although problems of Russian–South African competition in the area of diamond and gold exports were reported, by early 1994 an agreement was successfully concluded. See 'Moscow Visit Alerts Diamond World', *Africa Analysis* (4 September 1992), p. 11; ITAR-TASS (26 April 1993). See, also, 'Russia and South Africa Sign Accords', *OMRI Daily Digest*, no. 230, 28 November 1995. For a broad discussion of this issue see Daniel R. Kempton with Richard M. Levine, 'Soviet and Russian Relations with Foreign Corporations: The Case of Gold and Diamonds', *Slavic Review*, vol. 54, no. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 80–110.
49. Radio Russia (12 July 1994); Russia established a centre for Russian studies in Capetown in 1994. See Zurab Nalbandian, 'Moskva s vidom na Antarktiku', *Rossiiskaia Gazeta* (1 September 1994). For a general assessment of past relations between the two countries see Vladimir Shubin, *Reflections on Relations between the Soviet Union/Russian Federation and South Africa in the 1980s and 1990s*. Southern African Perspectives. A Working Paper Series, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa (September 1994).
50. ITAR-TASS (12 July 1994).

51. Elagin, 'Nam ne stoit teriat' Afriku'.
52. See Marina Ryklina, 'Russian Convoy on African Soil', *Izvestiia* (21 May 1994), p. 2.
53. ITAR-TASS (11 August 1993).
54. See Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet–Egyptian Influence Relationship since the June War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Galia Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East from World War II to Gorbachev* (Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
55. See Krause, *Sowjetische Militärhilfepolitik gegenüber Entwicklungsländern*, esp. pp. 269–79.
56. On the importance of hard currency exports of Soviet weaponry, see Roger E. Kanet, 'Soviet and East European Arms Transfers to the Third World: Strategic, Political and Economic Factors', in NATO – Economics Directorate (ed.), *External Economic Relations of CMEA Countries: Their Significance and Impact in a Global Perspective.* NATO Colloquium, Brussels 1983 (Brussels: NATO Economics and Information Directorates, 1984), pp. 184–5.
57. On the Soviet–Libyan terrorist link see, for example, Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), pp. 258–71. See, also, Roberta Goren, *The Soviet Union and Terrorism* (London–Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1984).
58. *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Near East and South Asia* [hereafter *FBIS-NESA*] (19 December 1994), p. 21.
59. *FBIS-NESA* (18 November 1994), p. 13.
60. See *FBIS-NESA* (15 November 1994), p. 21; *FBIS- NESA* (10 November 1994), p. 13.
61. *FBIS-NESA* (19 April 1994), p. 27.
62. *FBIS-NESA* (26 September 1994), p. 11.
63. *FBIS-NESA* (15 July 1994).
64. The agreement announced in the 29 July 1995 edition of *Izvestiia* calls for the repayment by Libya of its Soviet-era debts to Moscow and the provision to Russian companies of contracts worth $1.5–2.0 billion to construct energy infrastructure.
65. *FBIS-NESA* (7 January 1994), p. 14.
66. *Segodnia* (13 November 1993).
67. *FBIS-NESA* (20 December 1994), p. 16.
68. *FBIS-NESA* (22 February 1994), p. 11.
69. Cited in Chris Hedges, 'Mubarak's Challenge', *The New York Times* (3 April 1995).
70. *FBIS-NESA* (11 July 1994), p. 21.
71. *FBIS-NESA* (13 July 1994), p. 10.
72. ITAR-TASS (1 June 1994).
73. See V.F. Shumeiko, 'Rossii pora "stolbit" uchastki v Latinskoi Amerike', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 10 (1994), pp. 4–6.
74. For the discussion of the growing number of economic contacts between Russia and Latin America, see Y.N. Panev, 'Ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo: vozmozhnosti i slozhnosti', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 8 (1994), pp. 95–103.
75. See Jan Adams, 'Russia and Latin America'. See, also, Boris Kolokolov, 'Latinskaia Amerika – Otdalilas' ili stanovitsia blizhe?' *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*. nos. 4–5 (1995), pp. 90–111.

76. Russia sold Mi-17 helicopters to Brazil valued at $3 million. *Monitor: A Daily Briefing on the Post Soviet States*, vol. 1, no. 114 (11 October 1995).
77. ITAR-TASS (8 August 1995). During his official visit to Cuba in October 1995 First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets announced that Russia had granted Cuba a $30 million credit to ensure the unfinished plant under construction is resumed by an international consortium. *Monitor*, vol. 1, no. 117 (17 October 1995). See also, 'Duma Defends Castro', *Monitor*, vol. 1, no. 6 (October 1995).
78. See *Izvestiia* (29 June 1995).
79. See *Rossiiskaia Gazeta* (14 July 1995).
80. 'Cuba Once Again Becomes a Priority for Moscow', *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 48, no. 21 (1996), p. 26.
81. 'On the Benefit of Routine Professionalism', *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 48, no. 21 (1996), p. 27.
82. V. F. Shumeiko, 'Rossii pora "stolbit" uchastki v Latinskoi Amerike', *Latinskaia Amerika*, no. 10 (1994), p. 6.
83. Quinn-Judge, Sophie, 'Market Forces', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 February 1992, p. 22.
84. 'Vietnam–Russia Talks Fruitful', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 14, January 1993, p. 63.
85. 'Russia, Vietnam Increase Economic Cooperation', *FBIS-SOV*, 15 June 1994, p. 13; 'Russia and Vietnam Step up Economic Cooperation', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 17, July 1994, p. 80.
86. 'Vietnam, Russia Cooperation Meeting, 29–31 July', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 14, January 1993, p. 63.
87. Boris Vinogradov, 'V'etnamskie ananasy dlia Sibiri', *Izvestiia*, 2 April 1994, p. 3.
88. 'Cooperation with Vietnam to Develop Oil Deposits', *FBIS-SOV*, 1 June 1995, p. 18.
89. Sophie Quinn-Judge, 'Cam Ranh Mushrooms', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 January 1992, p. 17.
90. 'Russian Diplomat Reaffirms Cam Ranh Bay Policy', *The Nation*, 15 January 1994, p. 6.
91. 'Cam Ranh Naval Base to Be Resolved on "New Principles", *FBIS-SOV*, 17 June 1994, p. 7.
92. 'Stranded Vietnamese Take up Smuggling in Khabarovsk', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 14, January 1993, p. 65.
93. 'Russia to Repatriate Temporary Vietnamese Workers', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 14, January 1993, p. 65.
94. Ibid.
95. Leonid Velekhov, 'Bol'shoe vpechatlenie ot "Malen'kikh Drakonov,"' *Segodnia*, no. 38, 30 July 1993, p. 3.
96. Sergey Tsekhmistrenko and Viktor Zamyatin, 'Policy Objectives Highlighted', *FBIS-SOV*, 22 July 1993, p. 18.
97. 'Moscow Prepared to Sell Arms to ASEAN Nations', *FBIS-SOV*, 22 July 1994, p. 13.
98. Viktor Litovkin, 'Kontrakt po MiGam gotov no podpyshut ego eshche ne zavtra', *Izvestiia*, 13 May 1994, p. 2.
99. Cited in Mikhail Karpov, 'Glavnyi Itog Foruma Asean – fakt ego provedeniia', *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 27 July 1994, p. 3.

100. Michael Vatikiotis, 'Wings of Change', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 16 June 1994, p. 20.
101. 'Thailand to Sell Russia Rice on 2-year Credit', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 14, January 1993, p. 63.
102. Thailand, Russia to set up joint commission,' *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 16, January 1994, p. 57.
103. 'Thai–Russian relations', *RA Report: Center for Russia in Asia*, no. 16, January 1994, p. 57.
104. 'Russia: ASEAN Members Interested in Russia's Intellectual Potential', *FBIS-SOV*, 7 June 1996, p. 22.
105. Iusin, Maksim, '"Aziatskie Drakony" gotovy sotrudnichat' s Rossiei no opasaiutsia nashei politicheskoi ne stabil'nosti', *Izvestiia*, 27 July, 1993, p. 3.
106. Excellent discussions of this shift can be found in Heinz Timmermann, 'Rußlands Außenpolitik: Die europäische Dimension', *Osteuropa*, vol. 45, no. 6 (1995), pp. 495–508 and Paul A. Goble, 'Moscow's New Politics Built on Sand', *Prism*, Jamestown Foundation, 14 July 1995, part 1.
107. In an interview with *Segodnia* on 14 July 1995, Vladimir Lukin, former ambassador in Washington and currently chairman of the Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee, noted that the Partnership for Peace was cunningly designed to weaken Russian ties with the former Soviet Republics. Cited in *Monitor*, vol. 1, no. 53, 17 July 1995. In announcing Russia's decision to join the Partnership, Foreign Minister Kozyrev announced that Russia would continue to resist NATO's enlargement because it 'conforms neither to Russia's interest nor to those of Europe'. Cited in Michael Mihalka, 'Russia Finally Accepts Partnership', *OMRI Daily Digest*, no. 105, 31 May 1995, part 1.

8 Towards the Future: Emerging Trends in Russian Foreign Policy

William E. Ferry and Roger E. Kanet

The authors of the essays in this volume have attempted to provide readers with a general outline of the ways in which Russian foreign policy has evolved since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. The 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe, coupled with the collapse of the Soviet Union, have profoundly altered the environment in which states interact. The implacable hostilities of a bipolar world that framed so much scholarly analysis of international relations before 1992 have dissolved, thereby forcing scholars to view foreign policy-making through the lens of a multipolar world.

Along with the changes that have occurred at the international level, social, political, and economic transformations in the former Soviet Union have also prompted scholars to reassess domestic influences on foreign policy-making in the Soviet successor states. The contributors to this volume emphasize the dynamic influence of domestic factors on foreign policy initiatives. Towards this end, they have identified and assessed foreign policy trends that have emerged in this new environment.

One way by which to divide the topic of Russian foreign policy into manageable pieces derives from a regional approach. It allows the analyst to assess Russian priority changes region by region. Truly, Russian foreign policy is much more active and multilayered in some regions than in others. For example, in some areas, such as Africa and Latin America, policies seem to be based primarily on economic concerns, while in others (for example, Russian 'near abroad') economic concerns represent but one of many concerns that influence decisions.

Overall, the regional analysis conducted in this volume leads to three general conclusions concerning the direction of Russian foreign policy. First, domestic politics and other internal factors have limited the scope of policy options available to Russian policy-

makers. Efforts to restructure the Russian economy have reduced the resources available to the government to conduct foreign policy. This, in turn, has forced Russian policy-makers to reduce commitments and involvement in certain areas of the world where the Soviet Union was once very actively involved, such as the developing countries. The de-ideologization of Russian foreign policy has acted as an impetus for the ways in which these cutbacks have occurred. In other words, a convincing reason no longer exists for Russia to maintain a relatively active relationship with a substantial number of developing states. Many of these relationships were built and sustained merely for ideological reasons, such as to counter US interests in a particular geographic region.

Second, forced to limit the scope of its foreign policy activities, Russia has adopted a multi-level approach to policy-making. This multi-level approach can be categorized into broad policy domains, each characterized by degree of activity and particular priority structure.[1] One policy domain includes the states that constitute the 'near abroad'. As Peter Shearman, in Chapter 1, and Alexander Kozhemiakin and Roger Kanet, in Chapter 2, explain, the 'near abroad' has become Russia's primary national interest for economic, security, and nationalist reasons. Yet another distinguishable policy domain includes Russian relations with East Central Europe and the West, as well as North-east Asia. This 'moderately active' policy domain includes highly visible hot spots around the world that provide Russia with an opportunity to try to maintain at least the façade that it is a 'great power'. The third, and final, policy domain includes Asia, the Middle East and most of the Third World. Russian foreign policy in these areas is motivated almost entirely by economic concerns. As such, Moscow has effectively abandoned those states that offer Russia no material incentives. Russia has even gone so far as to shut down embassies and consulates in many developing states, leaving Moscow with little or no linkage to these states.

A third identifiable trend, one already alluded to above, is the shift from an ideologically to a pragmatically based foreign policy. Based on this trend, Russian policy is driven less by the desire to spread its ideas to the far corners of the earth than by desires to ensure territorial integrity and economic growth. In short, more decisions are now made according to a cost-benefit analysis that emphasizes concrete benefits to be gained by Russia in pursuing a particular line of policy.

Of course, this shift to a more pragmatically based foreign policy does not necessarily mean that Russian policy is now coherent or stable. It is still vulnerable to nationalist overtures and open to rapid fluctuations based on the different conceptions that various actors involved in the Russian political system have concerning the objectives that Russia should strive for in the future and concerning the means of achieving these objectives.

Hence, as Shearman discusses in Chapter 1, it is vital to understand the political struggles that are taking place among various actors in Moscow, in order to grasp the implications that such struggles have in the realm of foreign policy. Shearman traces the sometimes volatile relationship between the parliament and president since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The fact is that Russia entered a new era in 1991 on shaky ground politically. The de-ideologization of foreign policy decisions left policy-makers with no clear alternative vision. There was no lucid conceptual framework with which to mould a coherent set of foreign policy priorities.

Furthermore, as Shearman explains, one could characterize this early period immediately following the birth of an autonomous Russian state as one of institutional anarchy. Power relationships were not delineated; as a result a power struggle ensued between the parliament and president. Whereas President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Kozyrev maintained a pro-Western foreign policy orientation, many conservatives in parliament opposed this position.

Shearman concludes that, following the dissolution of parliament in the autumn of 1993 and the election of a new bicameral parliament and adoption of a new constitution in December 1993, a more workable relationship has developed between the parliament and presidency. The relationship has shifted from being strictly confrontational to one that includes more compromise and consensus building. As a consequence Foreign Minister Kozyrev has been forced to modify his pro-Western stance. Nationalist and other elements within parliament have pushed him to be less acquiescent towards Western policies and to act more independently and resolutely as befits the foreign policy of a 'great power'. One is able to recognize this shift in policy orientation in several areas. First, formal statements by Foreign Minister Kozyrev have been less cooperative in nature towards the West than was previously the case. Second, Russia has stressed its role as a major actor in the world and that its positions on such issues as the Balkans' conflict

should not be ignored. Finally, there has been a renewed emphasis placed on relations with the 'near abroad'.

The main contributions that Shearman makes in exploring the connection between Russian foreign policy and domestic politics concern his recognition that perceptions are extremely important and that the institutional structure through which foreign policy is formulated can determine which voices are heard and at what level. First, perceptions of the international environment as either hostile or benign, of Russia's national identity, and of the place Russia should rightfully occupy in the world today are all key determinants of a particular foreign policy perspective because perceptions form the foundation of any conceptual framework that undergirds a leader's foreign policy.

Second, the institutional structure is important because it defines power boundaries and, thus, how different perceptions of foreign policy are mediated. For example, the current institutional setting in Russia, as outlined in the new constitution, favours the president. At the same time, however, it does not allow the president to proceed unimpeded with his own conceptions of what direction the country should pursue. The parliament acts as a mitigating force.

In their discussion of emerging Russian policy towards the countries of the 'near abroad', Kozhemiakin and Kanet contend that a lack of political institutionalization combined with the dire socio-economic conditions that have been associated with economic reforms have created a 'fertile environment for nationalist sentiments'. These sentiments have been a major factor in Russia's recent drive to reassert its dominant position and interests regarding the other former republics of the Soviet Union or 'near abroad'. These nationalist sentiments are based on perceptions of national identity and the view that these areas are within Russia's sphere of influence. National identity is an important factor because the Russian Federation in its present state has never existed before. As Russia struggles to define itself, territorial disputes have arisen between itself and some of the Baltic states and with the Ukraine over the Crimea. Also, Moscow has frequently warned former Soviet republics concerning the treatment of the Russian diaspora in these areas or regarding their attempts to become members of NATO.

However, factors other than those derived from nationalist sentiments make further integration of the former Soviet republics an appealing objective in Moscow. For example, it makes sense for

Russia to push for further economic reintegration since the break-up of the Soviet Union severed important linkages. In addition, Russia's security interests call for stable political and security situations in bordering states. Hence, Russia has been active in mediating conflicts and providing border troops in such places as Central Asia. Russians have also been actively involved in some of these conflicts, such as providing assistance to the Abkhazians against the Georgians and its attempt to prop up the regime in Tadjikistan.

What is also apparent, as Kozhemiakin and Kanet have made clear, is that Russia does not approach these former republics in the same manner. It acts as a big brother to the states in Central Asia and Transcaucasia. It has been involved, to some degree, in all the armed disputes in these areas and has acted in ways to ensure that these states remain oriented towards Moscow rather than developing close ties with Iran or Turkey. Russia's relations with Ukraine and Belarus have been based much more on the assumption of sovereign equality, although even here significant elements remain of Great Russian dominance. Finally, Russian interaction with the Baltic countries has been more restrained and cautious, since the international community has given the Baltics a special status.

A second identifiable policy domain is one in which there is a moderate degree of Russian activity. These areas are lower on the priority scale than the 'near abroad' but higher than most Third World states. Shearman, Kozhemiakin and Kanet and Paul Marantz have all argued that since the early part of 1992 Russia has shifted its primary focus from relations with the West to relations with the 'near abroad'. Having noted this point, they agree that the West (for example, the US, Western Europe and Japan) continues to represent a major focus of Russian foreign policy concern.

Marantz, in Chapter 4, argues that the pro-Western stance that Kozyrev and Yeltsin originally took was based on their benign view of Western intentions. The goal was to use foreign policy as an instrument to facilitate domestic objectives. The Yeltsin government believed that large-scale Western economic and technical aid would be forthcoming that would help Russia make the transformation more rapidly and smoothly, thereby keeping social dislocation and pain to a minimum.

Unfortunately, the negative consequences of political and economic reforms – price inflation, unemployment, increased inequalities, the growth of crime and corruption – were exploited by nationalists and used to pressure the Yeltsin government to modify

its domestic and foreign policies. Critics of Yeltsin's policies have portrayed them as placing Russia in a subservient role in its relations with the West. Many nationalists and communists in parliament yearn for the days when the Soviet Union was seen as a great power in world affairs. Now they insist on being treated as a major world actor by the United States and other Western powers. Furthermore, many of these same individuals still perceive the United States as Russia's primary enemy and, hence, that the United States is acting out of malice in trying to expand NATO or when it seems that the West is neglecting the interests and concerns of Russia in world affairs.

Consequently, constant pressures are exerted on the Yeltsin government to demonstrate that Russian foreign policy is independent from Washington's. This has been especially evident about recent Russian policies in several main issue areas: 1) the Bosnian conflict,[2] 2) the question of NATO expansion, and 3) the sale by Russia of arms to former Soviet allies that are considered rogue states by the US (for example, Iran, Libya). Another delicate issue with which the Yeltsin regime must deal concerns the direction of domestic economic reforms. Externally the IMF has pushed neo-liberal policies, while internally many domestic forces are pressuring the government to be more interventionist. Conservative forces within Russia have attributed the pain caused by 'shock therapy' economic policies to IMF conditionality and thus have placed the blame on the West. This has only exacerbated the growing tension between the West and Russia.

The lesson for the West, as Marantz points out, is that the international environment can be a critical factor in the formulation of Russian foreign policy. Western states must be careful to craft policies that are not construed by Russia as potentially threatening to their national security or as snubbing Russia's international status as a major player in world affairs. This could play into the hands of nationalist forces in Russia and drastically alter Russian foreign policy by helping to strengthen the influence that these forces have in the formulation of such policy.

In Chapter 3, Aurel Braun has also stressed the significance of the external environment as a factor that could conceivably undermine the democratic and reformist elements in Russia. Braun is referring here to the foreign policy initiatives put forward by states in East Central Europe. With the experience of Soviet domination still a fresh memory, the majority of these states have driven hard

towards NATO membership and the security guarantees that would accompany it. Braun argues, however, that this type of reaction and position towards Russia could, in the long run, be detrimental to these states by making Russia feel isolated and, thus, more apt to react to this situation in a hostile manner. The Partnership for Peace accord was seen by NATO members as a compromise and one way to include both these states and Russia in some limited agreement without immediate full membership.

The fact is that Russia has not expended as much energy or been as politically active towards East Central Europe as with the 'near abroad' or even the West. As Braun contends, Gorbachev mistakenly interpreted the disintegration of COMECON (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) positively as the lifting of an economic burden off the shoulders of the Great Russian bear. Subsequently, the Soviets, then the Russians, have been surprisingly uninterested in re-establishing economic ties with this area. As for the vast majority of East Central European states, they have been eager to facilitate economic and political ties with Western Europe and have, to a large extent, been successful in shifting their trade orientation to the West.

As for the future, Braun suggests that there needs to be a '... restructuring of the very psychology of the relationship between Russia and the East Central Europe states'. Both sides should work to construct a more stable and sustainable relationship politically and economically. This calls for increased interaction on a mutual level to foster trust between the two sides.

The third policy domain that might be identified is one in which the level of Russian activity could be characterized as confined in scope and concentrated in objective. Since the ideological basis for policy formation has faded away and been replaced by pragmatic, cost-benefit calculations, there has been little reason for Russia to maintain the same level of activity in the developing world. Hence, we have witnessed a massive retreat from these areas by Russia and only recently an attempt to re-establish limited ties within a new framework.

In Asia, as Seth Singleton notes in Chapter 5, Russia has sought to promote stability. In Central Asia, Moscow has been involved directly in the conflict in Tajikistan and in providing border troops along the porous borders it has with Afghanistan. Moscow has showed renewed interest in the region, in order to ensure that states such as Iran and Turkey do not replace Russia as the dominant

political and military-security force in the region. In addition, Russia has pursued an improved relationship with China for economic and security reasons.

One trend that has emerged in Russian foreign policy and is evident in Russian–Korean relations is a reorientation of its ties with former Soviet allies. Driven by its motivation to forge new ties that promise to help boost the Russian economy, Russia has in many cases diverted its attention away from old Soviet allies and has approached states that were once considered enemies. For example, Russia was quick to recognize the potential that relations with South Korea might have. Moscow has initiated closer ties with South Korea while, at the same time, withdrawing its attention and support from its former ally North Korea.

This trend is perceptible in other regions as well, as Kanet, Kozhemiakin and Susanne Birgerson note in Chapter 7. On the one hand, Russia has shut down nine embassies in Africa; while, on the other, it established connections with South Africa, the state with the strongest economy on the continent. Russia has also shown more interest recently in transforming the nature of its relations with many former Third World Soviet allies from 'patron–client arrangements' to 'mutually advantageous partnerships' based primarily on economic cooperation.

However, the focus on economics has meant much less than a partnership for many former Soviet allies. More specifically, for many bilateral relationships Moscow's focus has been on two main issues: debt restructuring and arms sales. In the case of the former, Russia has been negotiating means by which to recover at least a fraction of the resources provided by the Soviet Union to these states.[3] These negotiations have taken place primarily with states in Africa and Latin America. An example would be recent Russian–Nicaraguan debt negotiations that broke down in November of 1995. Managua owes Russia $3.5 billion, most of which accumulated as a result of Russian arms sales to the Sandinista regime during 1979–90. The sides disagree over how much debt should be written off; Russia has offered an 88 per cent write-off, but Managua insists on 95 per cent. This is typical of the problems that Russia continues to face in its attempts to settle over $87 billion worth of debts that former Soviet allies owe, much of which has not been repaid.[4]

The second main issue that has characterized recent relations between Russia and many former Soviet allies revolves around arms sales, which were ironically among the key reasons for much

of the debt discussed above. This issue has become a central part of Russia's renewed relationship with many of these countries, including states such as Iran and Libya which the United States has labelled as rogue states. As Robert Freedman asserts in Chapter 6, this has put Moscow in a delicate situation. On the one hand, it wants to maintain good relations with the United States and other Western industrial countries. On the other hand, it does not want to lose its share of the arms market and the revenue that comes along with it. This has resulted in what Freedman refers to as a minimax policy on the part of the Russians, trying to maximize its influence and gains on all sides. In order to placate the Americans, Russia has been amicable towards US policies in the Middle East and especially concerning the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians, despite the fact that there is constant nationalist pressure domestically for Russia to be more independent and less conformist to the West in making foreign policy decisions.

This pressure brings us back to a main point emphasized in the chapters of this volume, the fact that domestic politics matter in foreign policy formulation. The importance of this issue is especially vivid in the case of Russia, where simultaneous political and economic reforms have created an environment in which policies can and have changed swiftly. We have already witnessed how nationalist pressures have forced the Yeltsin regime to modify its policies. Nationalists have been calling for even greater changes and, if ever given a larger role in formulating foreign policy, would certainly have a different set of priorities based on a different conceptual framework and different perceptions of the international environment. Although the outcome of the December 1995 parliamentary elections seemed to provide nationalists and communists with just such an opportunity to acquire a greater role in policy-making, the re-election of Yeltsin as president in July 1996 promises to limit their influence. Nevertheless, the domestic situation in the Russian Federation remains uncertain, especially with the growing concerns about Yeltsin's health and his ability to complete his term in office.

This is precisely why, as contributors to this volume have suggested, the West must be careful not to provide nationalist forces with additional fuel to fan the flames that they have already started through their rhetoric. This means that the West should be sure to involve Russia in important world affairs. Furthermore, the West and international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), should be flexible in assisting Russia to transform

politically and economically by not setting down rigid terms that could be, and often are, interpreted as infringements on Russia's sovereignty. In sum, although Russia's foreign policy seems to have become much more coherent and somewhat more stable, domestic circumstances in Russia are such that a dramatic and sudden shift in foreign policy orientation should not be discounted as a possibility in the near future.

NOTES

1. Of course, one could also categorize Russian foreign policy activity along a continuous scale instead of emphasizing three somewhat distinct policy domains.
2. For example, Yeltsin has twice in the three months leading up to early November 1995 vetoed bills passed by the bicameral Russian Parliament that called for Russia unilaterally to lift sanctions against the rump Yugoslavia that would have been in violation of UN sanctions. Most recently, the Yeltsin regime has ensured that any Russian troops sent to Bosnia to help enforce a potential peace treaty there would not be under NATO command. See *OMRI Daily Digest*, no. 220 (10 November 1995).
3. Russia took over Soviet debt responsibilities when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.
4. *OMRI Economic Digest* no. 2 (9 November 1995).

Index