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7-1-1994

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Stephen J. Blank Dr.  
*American Foreign Policy Council*

Earl H. Tilford Dr.

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### Recommended Citation

Stephen J. Blank Dr. and Earl H. Tilford Dr., *Does Russian Democracy Have a Future?* (US Army War College Press, 1994),  
<https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/262>

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**DOES RUSSIAN DEMOCRACY HAVE A FUTURE?**

Stephen J. Blank  
Earl H. Tilford, Jr.  
Editors

1994

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## FOREWORD

In 1854, on the eve of the Crimea campaign, Antoine Henri Jomini wrote, "The Russian Army is a wall which, however far it may retreat, you will always find in front of you." The political unrest and economic disarray that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Communist Empire have altered, but not crippled, the formidable strength of the Russian military. While the forces of democracy and reform survived the elections of December 1993, the very strong support generated by ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy reminds us that the future of Russia is far from determined.

In late January 1994, the Strategic Studies Institute, with the cooperation of the U.S. Army Center of Military History, hosted a Washington roundtable which addressed the impact of the December 1993 elections. Scholars from the Army, academia, and the strategic community met for a day of frank and sometimes spirited discussion. Each scholar was asked to provide a formal paper presenting his or her perspective on this subject. These proceedings are offered because the Strategic Studies Institute believes that Jomini's observations are as valid today as they were 160 years ago.

JOHN W. MOUNTCASTLE  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Stephen J. Blank

Russia's elections in December 1993 produced shock and consternation at home and abroad. The rejection of reformers, the high turnout for the Nazi-like Liberal Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and the low overall turnout reinforced latent fears of a turn away from democracy and towards confrontation with Russia's neighbors and international partners. Further developments since then: a growing tendency to concentrate power in the office of the President and/or the Prime Minister, the projected economic merger with Belarus, the aggressive foreign policy moves in 1993-94, increased possibilities for ethnic war in Kazakhstan and Crimea, the slowing of reform, and the exodus of reformers from the government only further heightened Western apprehension about Russia's future course.

Bearing these anxieties in mind, the U.S. Army War College and its Strategic Studies Institute convened a roundtable discussion in Washington, DC at the Center for Military History on January 31, 1994. The rapporteurs at the roundtable presented papers on the impact of the elections on the chances for democracy at home, relations with the United States (particularly military-to-military relationships), the stability of the Russian Federation, civil-military relationships, and the countries of Russia's "near abroad."

The roundtable organizers and speakers did not recommend specific policy options or speak on behalf of any policy or institution. Rather, their (and our) intention was to stimulate a lively debate from which an assessment of future trends could be derived and then presented to policymakers, scholars, and colleagues throughout the defense and academic communities. In this regard, the roundtable was quite successful. It more than accomplished its objectives, even going beyond them in the discussions that followed each paper. Those discussions grappled with the problems of devising an appropriate strategy of engagement with Russia and, to a lesser degree, its neighbors.

Stephen Blank of SSI assessed the impact of the elections on Russian democracy. He argued that the outcome, where reformers were dumped and 12 of 13 parties called for slowing if not ending reform and for more aggressive policies abroad, indicated that U.S. policy towards Russia had been greatly misconceived. Dr. Blank also called attention to the fact that absent stable, legitimate, and legally bound institutions, it is premature to claim that Russia is both democratic and a status quo power.

He found the reformers guilty of the same "sin" as their Bolshevik predecessors, namely the effort to revolutionize

Russian society from above in the service of an idea grossly at variance with the realities of politics and socio-economic life, namely neo-liberal economics. Although he clearly accepted the need for massive reform in 1992, he found a lack of attention to the problems of creating sound governmental institutions, without which no reform, not to mention a revolution, could succeed. As a result the reformers failed to create viable state agencies and instead reopened the historic gap between the Russian state and society. In effect, the bureaucracy has had to step in and try to rule Russia in its own name and interest, giving rise to a formation he labelled "Presidentialism."

This formation is essentially authoritarian. It is not bound by law, but it is penetrated from top to bottom by criminality and corruption, and also is inclined towards chauvinistic and even imperial tendencies in its conception of Russian state power. While calling itself democratic, it is actually reviving older Tsarist and Soviet patterns of state building and institutional development that impart a distinctly Russian meaning to this term. Following Max Weber's description of late Tsarism as a pseudo-constitutional regime, Dr. Blank contended that real power is increasingly concentrated in the office of the President or of the Prime Minister. These offices have subordinated major state agencies directly to themselves, exempting them from any legal or parliamentary accountability, a trend that can only have profoundly negative implications for a democratic outcome. Trends since then have shown that this system tends to duplicate itself inasmuch as Prime Minister Viktor S. Chernomyrdin has developed his own parallel apparatus or bloc in the government and Yeltsin's policies increasingly appear to be incoherent or at least uncoordinated.

Accordingly, a profound rethinking of the nature of Russia's evolution, requirements in reform, and policies is warranted. This rethinking not only applies to aid for reform and political support for Yeltsin and a Russo-centric foreign policy; it also involves reevaluating such issues as the stability of the federation, the nature of civilian control over the military, the future of U.S.-Russian military ties in a military heavily influenced by Zhirinovskiy's message, and Russian foreign policies in the so-called "near abroad." Subsequent papers took up those challenges.

Jacob Kipp's paper set forth the ideological message and program of Zhirinovskiy and the sources of his appeal to the Russian people. That message is one of glorified statism and racism; a kind of combination of Nazism and the worst excesses of the Russian imperial tradition. But it is couched in terms of a shared appeal to Russians based on Zhirinovskiy's quite remarkable ability to make himself the exemplar or embodiment of the suffering of the Russian people at this time. Zhirinovskiy glorifies the Russian state tradition and identifies empire and nationality with the state, making his message a lineal descendant of earlier traditions in Russian political thought,

e.g., Nicholas I's Official Nationality, which dominated political discourse for much of the 19th century.

At the same time, he makes that appeal in particularly strong terms to the military whom he characterizes as the personification of Russia's state tradition and as one of the most, if not the most, aggrieved sector of Russian society. The military and the common people, including Russians abroad, threatened by a loss of empire and the accelerating anomie of a society characterized by what Russians call *Bespredel*'--no limits--are thus joined together with his person as the embodiments of Russia. Essentially this appeal to what Dostoyevsky called "the insulted and the injured" and "the egotism of suffering" plays on the sense of victimization and desire for revenge that now pervades much of the country; where the humiliations of the last several years at the hands of foreigners, intellectuals, or Jews (i.e., whoever can be so characterized for purposes of political defamation and stigmatization) have gone without redress until now.

More practically, Zhirinovsky has organized extensively among the military; his ideology is especially pervasive among younger officers and males who feel particularly aggrieved at the loss of order in current Russian society. Accordingly, there is good reason to believe that he enjoys widespread and *organized* political support within the armed forces, a factor that makes their loyalty to Yeltsin suspect. Both Kipp and Thomas Nichols gave substantial evidence that the claim that one-third of the armed forces voted for Zhirinovsky was a deliberate underestimate of his strength among that group where he is busy both covertly and overtly organizing for what can only be characterized as an impending coup.

Zhirinovsky told David Frost in an April 1994 interview that he won over 50 percent of the vote in December and the election was "stolen" from him. Furthermore, he has had his party make him "Fuehrer" for 10 years, reinforcing its organizational similarities to the Nazi party. He has talked openly of a coup and of his intention to force presidential elections earlier than 1996, as now scheduled. And he influenced the legislature to grant amnesty to the coup plotters of 1991 and 1993, a move that fundamentally delegitimized the state and government and exposed Yeltsin's weakness to the world. At a time when military support for Yeltsin is questionable to say the least, Zhirinovsky poses the greatest threat to Russian democracy.

Should he come to power, his election would seriously imperil if not undo the delicate web of bilateral U.S.-Russian military contacts, lead to a militarization of issues stemming from Russians' rights outside of Russia, and could provoke military conflicts all along Russia's peripheries, if not civil war in Russia itself. His ascension to power, or attempt to do so, could therefore undermine all the fundamental principles upon which U.S. Russian policy is based. Should that happen, we might

enter a realm in which purely political and economic tools by which we have sought to assist and manage Russia's democratic transition may no longer suffice or apply to Russia's conditions. We would then have to consider seriously military responses to the threats Zhirinovskiy would pose to Russia itself and its neighbors. That process would remilitarize the bilateral relationship with unforeseeable and incalculable consequences.

Thomas Nichols' paper focused on civil-military relations. He produced substantial evidence indicating how tenuous military support for Yeltsin is and how well Zhirinovskiy has capitalized upon the military's disenchantment with reform. Nichols brought together press reports and election evidence, as well as personal interviews demonstrating that large sections of the officer corps (which now comprises almost 50 percent of the military) still show loyalty to a concept of the Russian state which is both imperial and in some sense Soviet. This is not to say that they are loyal to the Soviet military-political command system, but rather to the territorial empire that was formed under Soviet leadership and which that leadership identified with the state. In other words, they seek a renewed imperial state, which, as Russian tradition suggests, is the only way many of these people and the right wing's supporters can conceive of the Russian state and of Russia. This makes them receptive to Zhirinovskiy's appeal, which combines statism, imperialism, and the draconian social morality of the earlier Soviet period. It is not a loyalty to the Soviet order, especially after Brezhnev, but rather to a sense of past glory and statehood, or political identity amid present frustration and even degradation.

Therefore, it would appear that the loyalty of the military to the government is deeply in doubt, a factor that makes any prognosis for democracy and renunciation of imperial temptations still more doubtful. In her paper on the stability of the Russian Federation itself, Jessica Stern underscored the ways in which Moscow has failed to decentralize its role as the center of a vast imperium and create genuine, durable, and legally institutionalized networks for the deconcentration of power. By refusing to delegate powers, although it cannot provide basic governmental services, stable economy, or law and order, Moscow has provoked local organizations to take power. This trend is reminiscent of 1917 when local organs of power, many of which were Soviets, had no choice but to take power to maintain any social order in their bailiwicks. The absence of binding laws and the lack of popular support for the new constitution, itself a blueprint for an authoritarian regime that is incapable of making the government work, raise the danger of both local secession or of coups at the center to make that power effective from the top down. Either way, Russia's internal stability cannot be relied upon; rather it is illusory. Stern's statistical findings suggest that 39 of 89 provinces voted against the constitution, and, in any case, as the amnesty crisis alluded to above shows, neither the legislature nor the executive is concerned to rule by law. Inasmuch as the state cannot provide basic economic services,



local authorities have often entered into cooperation with local armed forces to take over responsibility for provisioning them. That process is leading to the formation of local civil-military ties, or even potential warlordism. Civil-military control from Moscow could break down in some of these areas and lead to political secession of provinces, especially those with large non-Russian populations. This secession could also lead to military localism and secession from the chain of command, an event which would almost certainly plunge the region in question, if not all of Russia, into the vortex of military conflict.

But it is not just the internal stability of the federation which is open to question. There are about 25 million Russians in the states around Russia, the so called "near abroad." As Ilya Prizel observes, the election returns intensified those states' fear that these populations could be mobilized as a fifth column or as a pretext for aggression against them as in Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia in 1938 and Poland in 1939. The use of these minorities as pawns in the Russian power struggle at a time when the gravest fears of Russia's development are pervasive only further reinforces the general sense of insecurity that characterizes the near abroad.

However, these states are themselves vulnerable because of their failure, outside the Baltic, to reform economically and provide sustainable bases for governing without prospective ethnic crises of this sort. Therefore, there is no current security alternative to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that is viable for these states except for their isolation amid increasingly deteriorating circumstances, both domestic and foreign. The Ukraine's current travails over the looming Crimean secession, and the provocation of military incidents by Russian sailors in the Black Sea Fleet, demonstrate the dangers to which Prizel referred. In Ukraine, any further loss of civilian control over the military combined with the playing of the ethnic card of Russians abroad, either by Zhirinovskiy or by those who seek to coopt his message and support, could easily ignite a conflagration between forces having nuclear weapons on their soil. But even if there is no such conflict and the rivalry between Moscow and Kiev remains purely economic-political, Ukraine remains in the front line of the danger and is isolated in Europe. This is because it failed to reform and overcome the potential for ethnic and economic polarization in its domestic politics, and because it has mishandled its security policies.

Despite the agreement of January 1994 to denuclearize, Ukraine has yet to forge either workable political institutions that can coexist with each other, a meaningful economic reform plan, or a viable security concept that prevents it from being a Russian client or satellite. Inasmuch as Ukraine is the true key state in the region that determines whether a new Russian empire will come about or not, its own internal instability at a time when Russian appetites are growing and Russia's own crisis is by no means overcome can only leave one with a sense of ever present

danger there, and, more generally, in the near abroad.

These conclusions are offered, not in a spirit of partisanship, but rather, as we stated above, as the fruit of disinterested analysis and sober reflection. They all point to the need to rethink U.S. strategy and devise more comprehensive and coherent forms of engagement with all the states in the "post-Soviet space" before it is too late. And one should not think that there is much time left to do so, especially given the omnipresent threat of a coup against Yeltsin which could succeed. In regard to Russia, the hour is late and the institutions involved are naturally loath to change their *modus operandi*, but the work is essential, the imperative is urgent, and history won't wait.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE IMPACT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ON RUSSIAN DEMOCRACY

Stephen J. Blank

In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.

James Madison

#### **Introduction.**

Russia's December 1993 elections produced shock, consternation, and surprise at home and abroad. The results highlight reformers' failure to create coherent or stable governmental institutions as specified by Madison, a failure having profound consequences. This analysis of the election's impact upon democratization focuses on his criteria: control of the government, control of the society. To grasp that impact we must also dispel myths that impair our understanding of Russian realities, address ourselves to those realities, and place them in the context of Russia's ongoing political and institutional history.

The first myth to be banished is that Russia's intelligentsia and political elite, our main source of opinion on Russia, are democrats as we understand the term. Far from being thoroughly committed democrats, they reacted to the returns with predictable hysteria, fear, disdain, and elitist contempt for the masses who had spurned the elite's noble self-sacrifice for them in taking power and creating mass poverty in a single stroke. The election returns reconfirmed for them the masses' basically uncivilized nature.<sup>1</sup> Far too many 'liberals' and reformers are ready now to throw out separation of powers and the rule of law to save reform.<sup>2</sup> After the election many 'democrats' urged Yeltsin to form an authoritarian government of corporate or bureaucratic elites (following in Von Papen's example in 1932 Germany). That regime could only end as a bureaucratic despotism because only leading office holders and their clients would support it.<sup>3</sup> This reaction displays the intelligentsia's persistent undemocratic self-image as an elite called upon by history to save the masses from their ignorance and savagery.

The U.S. reaction was no less predictable and signified a continuing U.S. misreading of Russian reality. Although the embassy had warned that the antidemocratic forces were gaining on the reformers, those reports were disregarded in favor of pietistic, poetry-laden speeches of how Russia was making

democracy flourish.<sup>4</sup> When one considers that Russian developments like the election returns, the composition of the new cabinet, and Russia's adroit Bosnian initiative in February 1994 all surprised the Administration, the misreading of the election returns can only be seen as part of a pattern of misconceived policy or a second example of mythmaking. Those policies appear to be based as much on wishful thinking as on anything else. A third myth, that such an election is, as current political science tells us, our most reliable indicator that democratic consolidation is taking place, must go, too.<sup>5</sup> Fourth, the reaction abroad attributed the outcome almost wholly to widespread economic distress, a conclusion that initially led to U.S. pressure on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to relax its policies and procedures for Russia, a shift that had devastating consequences.<sup>6</sup> Now the United States wants more reform and more therapy although we cannot fund it and expect Yeltsin to follow policies we or the fiscal institutions we dominate recommend. This paradox reflects U.S. incomprehension that our effort to create a liberal Russia when we lack the resources to do so hurts precisely those who most need access to global capital markets to make the transition.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Russia's Political and Economic Crisis.**

But for sophisticated observers of Russia the results were not surprising. After all, we gave Ross Perot 19 percent of the vote in 1992 and George Wallace 14 percent in 1968 during enormous moral, political, and economic crises in American life and they were in many ways not unlike Zhirinovskiy. Nor can we attribute this vote solely to economic distress due to Russia's botched reforms. That myth merely restates the vulgar notion that political action only reflects narrow economic motives. Rather, the election shows a society in profound political and moral, and economic crisis. The Yeltsin regime's failure to create viable political institutions is as much to blame as are its economic policies whose failures also stem from this mainly political deficiency in state-making.

To grasp the election's impact on democracy, we must also start from basic political, institutional, and economic realities. Reform's fate was sealed when 12 of 13 electoral blocs advocated ending what they called shock therapy and a more aggressive, even imperial national security policy.<sup>8</sup> When Prime Minister Chernomyrdin proclaimed an end to reform and a reliance on social protection and state investment on November 23, 1993, i.e., before the vote, he read the public correctly.<sup>9</sup> Similarly President Yeltsin's observation that the public voted as much for order and strong leadership is not far wrong.<sup>10</sup> Zhirinovskiy's strong showing does not mean the 'end of reform' or signify that reform's course will be slowed down. Had he not existed those would still be the clear results of the election. In view of the elite's limited commitment to democracy and true democratic participation, it is a profound fallacy to believe it will bring

about democracy as understood outside Russia. In practice, Russian democracy today means essentially what it or egalitarian ideologies always meant, a bureaucratic oligarchy led either by a strong bureaucrat--Yeltsin, today--or by a weak "Tsar." While it offers egalitarian or democratic rhetoric and seemingly democratic practices; it preserves the essence of bureaucratic despotism.

Another misreading of Russia is that the entire country is drowning in hardship. While this is true for far too many, it is hardly the whole story. Average wages have outpaced inflation in dollar terms, going from \$8 a month in January 1992 to \$87 in November 1993. Retail sales (adjusted for inflation) climbed 4 percent through October 1993 and for some goods like sugar or cars the rate of increase in consumption is much greater. More people can buy what they want even if too many remain trapped in dead ends.<sup>11</sup> Similarly Russia has an \$8 billion foreign reserve surplus and a \$14.3 billion trade surplus through September 1993. Russian banks hold another \$18 billion in declared foreign currency deposits and Russian firms have at least that much estimated in illegal foreign accounts.<sup>12</sup> This capital flight reflects skepticism about the future and a justified lack of confidence in the government. Indeed, even the government itself does not invest its money at home; it keeps the \$8 billion surplus abroad or in Russian banks.<sup>13</sup> That policy hardly inspires confidence at home or abroad but the figures show a rising potential for capital formation and productive investment.

This is not to say all is well; that is not the case. But the roof has not fallen in and need not do so. Indeed, it is as likely as not that an entrepreneurial and professional middle class will develop that in some sense will support capitalist reform, even if only because it and the state are tied by corruption. Corruption in Russia is hardly news, even if the violent crime that accompanies it is. Those phenomena reflect the demoralization and anomie that naturally stem from a breakdown of socio-political control. In fact, the explosion of visible corruption reflects democratization, for under Communism the state drove out criminals and entrepreneurs, and incorporated crime into itself.<sup>14</sup> Similar phenomena took place in the early New Economic Policy period and foreign observers believed then that the end of communism was imminent. Moreover, opinion polls and voting analysis confirm that generational, geographical, and economic cleavages that reflect the support of new industries and entrepreneurs for reform are real factors affecting Russian politics.<sup>15</sup> While there are far too many have nots; there are also many haves.

Nevertheless the election returns show the government and reformers to be in an impasse of their own making. Where shock therapy or the big bang (i.e., massive economic reforms all taken at once in accordance with Western prescriptions) has taken place with uninterrupted reforms, economic restructuring has accelerated and growth becomes possible. But where reform has

been disrupted, suspended, or slowed, as in Russia, the socio-economic and therefore political crises are deeper, last longer, and resist progress more.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, where reform has cut deeper, the political opposition to its costs has led to the return of Communist or socialist governments as in Lithuania, Poland, and, in 1994, very likely Hungary. Thus, further reform to impose monetary stability, cut subsidies to value-subtracting industrial dinosaurs, and terminate inflation risks mass unemployment and a political explosion. The payoff only comes later. On the other hand, a brake on reform will not alleviate suffering and will make it worse when reform must be faced. In addition, a brake upon reform perpetuates all the social disjunctions that give rise to Zhirinovskiy-type phenomena. Ukraine, which followed in the steps of Yeltsin's opponents, exemplifies this catastrophe. Ultimately, reform is inescapable since the costs of temporizing are unbearable. But its costs are equally risky. And if one looks at economic prospects for Eastern Europe; profound, intractable, and long-term problems remain ahead.<sup>17</sup>

But rather than say shock therapy is the villain in the play, it is more accurate to torpedo another myth, i.e., that Russia, like Poland, went through shock therapy. While price controls are ending and privatization has done well, essential monetary stabilization has not taken place. Nor could it be because of the political realities that the reformers so rashly disdained. While ex-Finance Minister Fyodorov did his best to restrain inflation, the state still subsidizes losers and reinforces failure. Nor does it control the banking system. Russia has experienced a series of alternating shocks in a half-baked effort to impose shock therapy that has pushed recovery further into the future and will increase the level of suffering and dislocation from reform. Clearly the neoclassical economists who made up the government and advised it from the outside believed their professional dogma that *homo economicus* is the same in La Paz as in Moscow and that by some miracle of the market the state and politics could be eliminated from Russia.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, Russia now pays for a political failure to control monetary and industrial policy. This misreading of Russian politics and the disdain for it by the reformers and outside advisors like Jeffrey Sachs (who then washed his hands of Russia saying that nothing could be done and now blames the IMF at every opportunity)<sup>19</sup> have been the main intellectual obstacles to a viable government and a recovering economy. Shock therapy, once tried, was abandoned, proving itself to be a disastrous failure in Russia.

The main, seemingly economic, reason that price decontrol and privatization have not contributed further to faster recovery but have accelerated political unrest is the lack of monetary control expressed in continuing subsidies to uncompetitive producers. Ex-Deputy Prime Minister Egor T. Gaidar recently acknowledged that these subsidies, e.g., to uncompetitive agrarian producers, still continue.<sup>20</sup> Despite two years of

supposed shock therapy, the largest item of state spending is still the 9-10 percent of GDP to subsidize the dinosaurs that costs more than education and defense combined, and demonstrates that the government still cannot control the economy.<sup>21</sup> Nor is the *Voennaia Ekonomika*, the military economy, undergoing the conversion that it needs and that would decisively democratize and demilitarize Russia.<sup>22</sup> Instead this sector still rightly counts on bailouts and subsidies and eludes effective market, not to say, state control. For instance, Mikhail Malei, a leading lobbyist for this group, celebrated the new constitution because the Security Council's 10 committees can substitute for the ministries and bypass coalition debates.<sup>23</sup> Subsidies and bailouts are policy decisions that display reformers' inability to sustain their ideology or see the need for coherent state institutions and politics in Russia.

The current inflation not only reflected state policy's internal incoherence, it led to the fall of the government in 1992. The new government remained divided throughout 1993. Ministers fought publicly with each other either to subsidize their constituencies or against inflation and subsidies, in all cases with no control over the State Bank. As Steven Erlanger reported for *The New York Times*,

His [Yeltsin's] decision to keep Yegor T. Gaidar, a current First Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the reformers, means the probable continuation of a government so divided that it has been unable to pursue a consistent economic strategy. After two years of on-again, off-again policy that can scarcely be called coherent, many Russian voters rebelled against this instability of an uncharted transition to a market economy.<sup>24</sup>

As if to confirm that assessment, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin repeatedly ruled out shock therapy while Yeltsin said Gaidar stays, a sure recipe for gridlock. Not surprisingly, the first post-election cabinet meeting broke up because of profound division over a new privatization program.<sup>25</sup> Even now, in April 1994, no new reforms have been undertaken although Chernomyrdin, to his credit, has heretofore resisted the pressure for further massive subsidies. Chernomyrdin unwittingly reflected the reality. He stated, quite wrongly, that the government worked harmoniously, and then noted,

But we have no particular contradictions. My job is to take account of all opinions, weigh everything and make the decisions. And this is what is important--the government program has been adopted, and not one of my colleagues had objections in principle. This is essentially a model of coalition government as it were: Its members adhere to different political positions but work harmoniously.<sup>26</sup>

That explains why they all campaigned against each other in the elections.

Here, on November 23, three weeks before the election, Chernomyrdin rejected further "shocks," or mass unemployment and showed that he had no understanding of modern bankruptcy or the need to stop subsidizing the dinosaurs. Yet press reports claimed the government intends a planned and consistent reduction in the money supply, production subsidies, and the deficit to 5 percent of GNP in 1994.<sup>27</sup> These incompatible policies ultimately can only be reconciled by the departure of Fyodorov and Gaidar and bailouts for dinosaurs.

The current state of privatization reflects the paralysis of state policy. While Deputy Prime Minister Chubais, its architect, promotes the program's success, an essential aspect of success, ending subsidies and allowing uncompetitive firms to go bankrupt, languishes. One thousand firms are estimated to be insolvent, but nothing has happened to them or their workers because they still live off borrowed money and state credits. Since there is no social or manpower policy to redirect labor to productive enterprise, these firms continue to suck money out of the economy and promote inflation. Moreover, a new government decree on bankruptcies reserves for the State Property Committee most of the decision-making for insolvent firms. Banks and other financial institutions that are their creditors or have a direct stake in their survival or restructuring, will have little say in these matters. Thus, the lack of foresight about institutional reform has rebureaucratized the economy and will allow firms to use political connections to avert their inevitable demise.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, in his interview Chernomyrdin also admitted that "strictly speaking, there was no real social policy in the past year."<sup>29</sup> He conceded that the reform program amounted to privatization, decontrolling most but by no means all prices, and otherwise, nothing. He thus confirmed the implications of the decree on bankruptcy. Not surprisingly the voters repudiated the regime.

### **The Institutional Roots of Russia's Crises.**

Hence the government's failure, despite its victory over Parliament in October 1993 must be seen as preeminently a political one, i.e., failure to build viable coherent state institutions, laws, and policies, not shock therapy as such. The failure there was to propound a theory that cannot be implemented even where optimum conditions for it exist. This theory cannot be implemented because it cannot substitute the state for society as it intends to do, and do so in a technocratic, "scientific" manner. The result is the further weakening of social structures and the recourse to a new bureaucracy and presidentialism to make up for the lack of viable social supports for any policy. Consequently, the current political crisis will intensify unless



state institutions become coherent, legitimate, and viable. Otherwise no policy is possible from this legislature. Should that happen the sole alternatives would be either a perpetual political and economic crisis whose dimensions and outcome cannot be predicted or the turn towards presidential authoritarianism described below.

Economic reform is as essential as before to rationalize production relations, create rational prices, continue privatization, and most of all achieve monetary stability as a precondition to real growth. However, institutional and structural political reforms are equally necessary to extricate Russia from its miseries. This failure to create a viable political order bespeaks the reformers' failure to 'crown the edifice' (the language of the reformers of the 1860s and chosen deliberately here) of their revolution from above, Russia's traditional form of pathbreaking political reform. Formerly everyone understood the need for a uniquely peaceful revolution to sweep away Communism and let a gale of 'creative destruction' destroy the old order to rebuild a viable democratic order in economics, politics, and security policy. Only now do observers see how crucial is political leadership where there are few or no "prerequisites for democracy."<sup>30</sup>

Political, institutional, and constitutional reform are at least as important as economic reforms and may even need to take precedence over them if the latter are to succeed.<sup>31</sup> Reformers committed to Milton Friedman and Friedrich Hayek were ill-suited to the task because they faced an unresolvable contradiction. The vast economic and political measures that must be undertaken and the total institutional and cultural restructuring that must coincide with them are intrinsically long-term undertakings and are only possible by state action. Yet, if one is going to oust the state and totally renew it all at once, the magnitude of the challenge facing government can be accomplished, if at all, by a revolution from above that is only achievable by the most powerful and antidemocratic states.<sup>32</sup>

In Russia's case this was even more demanding an agenda because there was no Russian state to take over and remodel as in Central Europe. Before 1991-92 there was no Russian state or governing institutions and the state itself had always come second to the party. Consequently, on top of everything else, the reformers had to create a state along with a market and they never understood how crucial that task was to for the success of a market economy. Contrary to classical liberalism, no market can succeed without a functioning and organized government. Equally important, the political reforms to expand democracy will quickly throw up institutions like Parliament and nascent interest groups who try to manipulate outcomes to suit their interests or control them to gain power over the process and distort the "pure theory" to which the government is adhering.<sup>33</sup> As many analysts now realize, political democratization, even when successfully carried out, almost unavoidably wars with economic reform.

Governments at all levels must now account to people who demand quick results and organize into rival interest blocs that bargain and negotiate with other interests and the leaders of the new expanded political arena. Thus,

The bargaining and compromise that are routinely required to achieve policy agreement in pluralist democracies imply a degree of incrementalism that economists have attacked as entirely inadequate and possibly detrimental to the needs of East European economies.<sup>34</sup>

It logically follows, therefore, that Russia and its former satellites require a strong lawful state to implement reform. That state must enjoy a firm basis of popular authority, and a well-trained, capable, honest, depoliticized, and, we may add, law-abiding bureaucracy.<sup>35</sup> The absence of precisely these forces, i.e., of social supports for the regime from below, contributed to the election results and tempts Yeltsin and his colleagues to elbow Parliament aside and govern by decree. Indeed, Yeltsin said as much in justifying a strong presidency, citing, inter alia, the extraordinary weakness of executive and state discipline. His only answer was a strong presidency, not the rule of law and a strong Parliament to which government must be accountable.<sup>36</sup> Until then no government can be legitimate, because essentially there will be rule by decree or caprice. If democratic legitimacy does not come primarily from "shared institutional guarantees for competitiveness," it will not come at all. Reformers will inevitably be tempted to rule undemocratically to impose their reforms.<sup>37</sup>

The elections and the coups that unseated Parliament in September-October 1993 tell us that Russia still remains stuck in its unending and still unconsummated revolutionary crisis. No new order can be discerned. Because they failed to create legitimate new relationships and structures and espoused the simple-minded idea that letting the market loose would automatically lead to a self-regulating equilibrium, as postulated by neoclassical economics, reformers neglected the need to build political support, as was done in the Czech Republic by Vaclav Klaus, or to build viable institutions. Instead, in good Russian style, they made another revolution from above with a basically elitist mentality and implications.

### **Towards Presidentialism.**

Paradoxically the so-called "Chicago boys" sought to use the state to make this revolution from above to remove the state from the economy. They failed to understand that the fact of state regulation cannot be an issue in 1993. Rather the quality and direction of that intervention is at issue and is crucial. Thus, the reformers fell into well-known traps of Russian and Soviet institutional history. Each minister quickly became an advocate

for his ministry at the expense of others.<sup>38</sup> Like Tsarist ministers they soon publicly and privately complained about each other. Furthermore, like good Tsarist bureaucrats, they and Yeltsin have increasingly resorted to rule by decree to freeze out Parliament. Since they also believe the masses to be little better than ignorant savages, they became both increasingly highhanded and flouted any concept of rule by law. In true bureaucratic fashion they moved to depoliticize policy as much as possible and convert it into essentially administrative fiats, a long-standing Russian practice.<sup>39</sup> Worse yet, the new government succumbed quickly to corruption, without which the network of crime across the state and military cannot exist, and which quickly became a weapon of political intrigue within the cabinet.<sup>40</sup> But perhaps most debilitating for the rule of law, an essential ingredient of consolidated democracy, was the bureaucratic and rule-making proliferation that has occurred since 1991. Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakray observed in early 1992 that,

While acknowledging that there were (as of early 1992) more than twenty structures in Russia in the defense, security, and enforcement sectors operating without any coordination, Yeltsin's young legal adviser maintained this was probably a positive development, as the competitive struggle would allow the more competent institutions to prevail.<sup>41</sup>

One can see why Shakhray might favor this process, but it brings a smile of recognition to the student of Tsarist or Soviet institutional history, since this exactly replicates their beliefs and practices.<sup>42</sup> Such phenomena of intra-bureaucratic competition were and remain autocrats' constant tactics to preserve their power lest the bureaucracy become a self-perpetuating oligarchy not answerable to them.

These processes also reflect society's weakness wherein the state could try to take over more and more social functions. But Shakhray's view also explicitly renounces any effort by the state to control its own rule-making, defense, and security apparatus by law. This failure has had predictable results. All these agencies have since grown in number across the entire range of government, and neither the government, the old Parliament, nor the Constitutional Court has any conception of being bound and ruled by law. This state of affairs only leads to divided and paralyzed government, and is the quintessential institutional basis for the primacy of the Russian autocrat to continue. In this sense William Safire was probably not far wrong when he suggested that Yeltsin, although he will never admit it, was the election's real winner since he got his constitution with its formidable presidential powers, a convenient whipping boy with which to blackmail external audiences, i.e., Zhirinovskiy, and it greatly diminished his proteges, all of whom were already thinking how they would run against him.<sup>43</sup> Yeltsin has assiduously divided his proteges against each other to preserve

his own undiminished prerogative. While this tactic helps him retain ultimate power and authority, it works against a rule of law state, coherence, and viable policies. But it does carry on Russia's political tradition of centralized autocratic rule.

Indeed, if we look at policies before and after the election we see the steady trend to centralize power in Yeltsin above and beyond any public, institutional, or legal scrutiny. Yeltsin, since October 1993, has pursued "untrammelled power" that removes him from accountability to anyone or any organization.<sup>44</sup> Today, like a Tsar, he says he is only answerable to his conscience.<sup>45</sup> We need not even look to the crisis of September-October 1993 that led to the forceful end of Parliament as an example. Yeltsin had good reason to believe that his enemies there, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi, were planning their own military coup before that, thus justifying Yeltsin's preemptive strike of disbanding Parliament in September.<sup>46</sup> So too they provoked the open use of force in Moscow on October 3-4. Clearly neither they nor Yeltsin believe they were bound by laws or answerable to anyone. Yeltsin's defense of the Constitution's broad presidential prerogatives could have come from the mouths of any Russian leader. He claimed first, that the constitution really did bind him in important ways although he had shown earlier his readiness to rule by decree; second, that he had more interest in social stability than anyone else; and third, that the people themselves acknowledged the need for strong leadership, not only his.<sup>47</sup> But he went on to say,

I won't deny that in the draft the president's powers are really considerable. But what do you want? In a country that is used to Tsars or "great leader," in a country where clear-cut interests have not been defined and normal parties are only just beginning to emerge, in a country where executive discipline is extraordinarily weak and where legal nihilism is enjoying an unrestrained spree--in such a country, should we place our stakes only or mainly on Parliament? In six months, if not before, people would be demanding a dictator. Such a dictator would be found, let me assure you, possibly in the Parliament itself.<sup>48</sup>

Similar quotations from any of his Tsarist or Soviet predecessors could easily be found. But this one shows that Yeltsin does not see that the point of a Parliament is to impose executive discipline under law. Worse yet, Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets announced in November 1993 that since Yeltsin had decreed the constitution into being he could, if displeased with any clauses, amend or abolish them by decree as well.<sup>49</sup>

On the other hand the need for executive self-discipline is clear. In Yeltsin's government, ministers routinely in public, and even in foreign press conferences, denounce their colleagues and their programs and demand that they resign.<sup>50</sup> Can one imagine

a Deputy Prime Minister telling a newspaper interviewer three weeks before a Parliamentary election, "I have categorically parted with any hope that our leaders know where they're going."<sup>51</sup> But Fyodorov did just that in mid-November 1993 when he denounced the lack of a political or economic strategy and lambasted his colleagues for being unprofessional and kept in the dark about many decisions until they come out--another hallmark of Russian autocratic practice.<sup>52</sup> Since the election it has only gotten worse with Chernomyrdin publicly calling on Gaidar and Chubais to resign.<sup>53</sup>

### **Presidentialism: Its Nature and Content.**

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that we see a trend to concentrate power in Yeltsin personally or in his office that one might label presidentialism. This trend has also been accompanied by visible moves towards imperial restoration in the CIS, more public espousal of Russian chauvinism by officials and political analysts, and the military's growing role in politics. The latter phenomenon is seen in the very interesting military events in the Caucasus, increased suspicion that the military is not under strategic control, the security concept of May 1993, and the new military doctrine in November 1993.<sup>54</sup> Should those trends eventually predominate they would naturally doom Russian democracy. But the trends towards an imperial and authoritarian polarization of power in the person and office of the President can also be seen in more purely domestic issues as recently decreed. These trends predate the elections whose returns will probably still be used to justify their acceleration since public and state support for a tough line at home and abroad are clearly quite strong.

Presidentialism stems from the government's failure to control itself and society as Madison demands of state makers. Only now have reformers begun to understand the need for strong social supports to buttress economic or political reforms. Foreign Trade Minister Glazyev ruefully concludes that the reformers' hypothesis, that by eliminating large-scale state regulation and privatizing the economy market mechanisms would come into play and automatically ensure the economy's emergence from crisis and economic growth, was misplaced.<sup>55</sup> Instead the reformers misread the economy's nature. Therefore, he concludes that macroeconomic methods to prevent excessive growth in the money supply (i.e., tough monetarist policies) only work "if certain conditions for them exist at the microlevel, the most important of them being the presence of a competitive market environment and strict budgetary limitations on enterprises."<sup>56</sup> This statement is the newest reflection of an old dilemma of Russian reformers and revolutionaries--the society cannot support their vision which then is either disfigured or becomes the object of an authoritarian drive to impose that vision upon recalcitrant reality. Usually the result is a perpetual crisis. Glazyev now calls for an undogmatic evolutionary policy based on

real microlevel economic processes, but it probably is too late. Instead presidentialist authoritarianism will be called upon to create from the top down the institutional prerequisites for successful reform.

The presidentialist contempt for the law and the desire of strong-willed figures in authority to get on with reform against obstructive Communist local legislatures (Soviets) has also spread to the local level, reproducing autocratic tendencies across Russia. Local governments of all stripes are bitterly warring with the center over economic and political powers and mimic the authoritarian and presidentialist trends.

Chechnya's radical nationalist president, Dudayev, ousted the parliament in April 1993; that republic is now close to civil war. Kalmykia's reformist president Ilyuzhimov disbanded the parliament and vowed to replace it with a much smaller, more "professional" body. Yeltsin did not oppose Ilyuzhimov's actions, although they were in clear violation of the RF constitution. In Mordova, the conservative parliament ousted president Guslyannikov and ignored Yeltsin's demands that the president be reinstated. . . . The disregard of RF laws in all three republics illustrates the confusion over which law takes precedence: that of the center or that of the constituent republics.<sup>57</sup>

However one defines the struggle over the stability and constitution of the Russian Federation, it also obviously comprises local and central governments' fights to polarize power and authority in the hands of one man or center.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, Yeltsin and his followers wish to impose a federal constitution on Russia that levels all republics and regions and takes powers away from the former. Like any federal constitution, this one arranges power from the top down, not the bottom up as in a confederation, a historical anathema to Russian reformers and statesmen.<sup>59</sup> Presidentialist centralism, if it is successful, means institutional centralism in politics, law, and economics, Russian imperialism, and abets Zhirinovskiy's or his allies' game.

Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhray claims that throughout the entire current "transitional period" Russia will develop as an asymmetrical federation. Although Krays and Oblasts will be legally equalized with republics, "we will not be able to overcome national specifics, including the republic form of government in those regions where 15 percent of the Russian federation population lives but which occupy 51 percent of Russian federation territory."<sup>60</sup> He also favors a superior position for the Russian people and that other peoples accept the notion that although they live in the Russian state it is an ethnic Russian state, not a state of all the peoples. Russia is at once an ethnic Russian state that affirms Russian "constitutional nationalism"<sup>61</sup> but at the same time legally binds other inhabitants to be thus Russified as well. Shakhray's state

strips them of any meaningful political rights while being at one and the same time ethnic and supra-ethnic. This sleight of hand is not far from Lenin's thinking on this question.<sup>62</sup>

It is also necessary, I think, to take into account such an important factor as the renewal of the process of the formulation of the Russian [Russkaya, i.e., ethnic Russian] nation after an interruption of 76 years. Who are the Russians in Tatarstan, for example? A part of the Tatar people or a part of the Russian nation? Unless we understand that the process of the formation of the Russian nation is going on and that it is upon the self-awareness [samochuvstviya in Russian] of the Russian nation that the self-awareness of all the other nations and peoples of the Russian Federation depends there could be very regrettable consequences in store for us. . . . the right to self-determination up to and including secession and formation of a separate state is unrealizable in Russia. It is impossible to create 150 ethnically pure states on one territory. And having recognized this reality, we must bear in mind that Russia is our common home and the Russian Federation is the single form of self-determination of all 150 Russian Federation peoples.<sup>63</sup>

Although Russia is an ethnic state, nobody else there can have one. Only later does he recommend creating national cultural autonomous entities for other peoples who have, of course, already self-determined themselves as Russians. One also wonders whether Shakhray's frank espousal of the state as an ethnic political formation except for Russia which self-determines other peoples within it as well would meet with Yeltsin's approval if Tallinn, Vilnius, Riga, and Kiev used the same argument. Such thinking, not all that far from Zhirinovskiy's, has long since put those states on their guard, an apprehension that the elections' explicit rightward drift, has only further reinforced.

Shakhray's views also comport well with those of officialdom, for example, Yeltsin's personal representative in Sverdlovsk province, Vitaly Mashkov. He rejected the province's claim to republican status by saying, Moscow "is not against a territorial principle for the [administrative] division of Russia, or against its involving the consolidation of the members of the Federation. But this process should proceed from above."<sup>64</sup> Similarly the head of the Presidential Department on Work with Territories, Nikolai Medvedev, remarked that secession from Russia was out of the question since 18 of 21 federated republics are subsidized, and that it was a mistake to keep local administration intact after October 1993. He stated that "no reform will succeed without strong state power" and cited Chile as an example of overcoming crisis "through dictatorship."<sup>65</sup> It is worth noting that those who supported and planned the August 1991 coup were the first to invoke Pinochet and Chile. That this is being done again can only have the most ominous implications.

The trends that predated the election: divided government, divided policy, presidentialism, a unitarian top-down approach to state building, and concentration of powers, not their separation; have been strengthened since then. To judge from statements and actions of Yeltsin and his advisors the drift to strong and at least quasi-authoritarian rule will likely continue, and true to Yeltsin's past instincts he will try to find common ground with the right and even Zhirinovskiy. Thus his press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, whom *The Financial Times* describes as a "Mephistophelean figure," reacted to the outcome by saying that much of the Fascists' and Communists' programs, "quite corresponded to the social aspect of the president's policies--that is the social policy of the state, patriotism, making Russia great."<sup>66</sup> Since Chernomyrdin had already publicly admitted that there was no social policy, this statement has interesting connotations. In like manner Yeltsin advisor Andranik Migranyan, an outspoken advocate of the 'iron hand' stated,

The results show the people want authoritarianism and not democracy, . . . Russia has no chance to have a democracy now. There is only a choice between different types of authoritarianism. . . . This parliament will be as hostile to executive power as the previous parliament.---[But] The parliament is a kind of circus.<sup>67</sup>

Medvedev also insists upon strong central authority and "the dictatorship of law."<sup>68</sup> In the aftermath of the October violence the Moscow police and authorities already showed their desire for the strong hand by their attempts to suppress civil liberties and beat up or harass Asiatic and Georgian foreigners. Similarly the government has never really permitted the media the space it needs freely to criticize it during the elections and tried to forbid any critique of Yeltsin and the proposed constitution.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, much evidence indicates that the media is regarded as a prize of the state, not as an independent agency.<sup>70</sup> Recently still more insidious policies have come to the fore.

By far the most dangerous one was Yeltsin's subordination of the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, and Police directly under his personal control, and the personal subordination of the Mobile forces to Defense Minister Grachev, a harbinger of Praetorianism.<sup>71</sup> Apparently there will also be ministries for Russians abroad, a clearly imperialist move. At home, on December 17, 1993, immigration and border controls sought by Zhirinovskiy came into force restricting the movement of peoples from former Soviet republics into Russia. The authorities have also suddenly found the internal passport system, autocracy's most obnoxious symbol, useful to preserve Moscow's "Russianness." The immigration and border laws also demand preferential hiring for Russians and can deport workers without work permits, i.e., companies must pay monthly minimum wages for permits. This decree arbitrarily reintroduces ethnic



discrimination into the labor market.<sup>72</sup> Yeltsin also reintroduced subsidized loans at below interest rates to producers of agricultural machinery, relics of the old order and a contradiction to a policy that was supposed to be phased out. Chernomyrdin simultaneously signed two decrees restricting Gaidar's Ministry of Economics from allocating export quotas or granting centralized credits without his permission. While that exemplifies bureaucratic politics, the decrees also made the distribution of these quotas the prerogative of the two top men in government, Chernomyrdin and his supporter Soskovets, men who are already overburdened and who cannot supervise these decisions adequately. These decrees also further politicized control over export quotas and centralized credits, reinforcing potential recipients' dependence on the political authorities.<sup>73</sup>

Yeltsin also decreed the amalgamation of all the government's, Council of Ministers', Parliament's, and Constitutional Court's own financial and economic services into one body under his business manager. Thus he bypassed all nonpresidential institutions and deprived them of any fiscal independence while giving himself and his manager a tremendous lever to force compliance with presidential policies. For instance, all contracts to construct and maintain real estate under these organizations' jurisdiction are now under his control and can be leased only if this directorate concurs.<sup>74</sup> This secret decree makes a mockery of all branches of government's economic independence, and freedom of assembly. It strongly attacks the principle of separation of powers and severely breaches the principle of parliamentary control of the purse. And it reminds journalists of the Central Committee's supervision of state offices. There is also a report that Chernomyrdin is contemplating creating a new first vice premier to oversee the power ministries (Defense, Interior, Intelligence). The implications of any such move would be enormous. They betray a suspicion of the military, a possible effort to downgrade the Security Council that already supervises these ministries, and the possible creation of a Minister of National Security, who would certainly be chosen for his political loyalty.<sup>75</sup>

Yeltsin's own administration now totals 3500 people and has taken over both the Kremlin and the old Communist Party's offices.<sup>76</sup> As *Izvestiia* noted, that staff is taking over more and more state functions, including legislative and judicial ones.<sup>77</sup> The policies listed above reflect that trend and the inertia of the state bent on controlling both itself and society by undemocratic methods since it cannot either use or more likely abide other methods and their shortcomings. These policies, along with Glazyev's observations above, also display reformers' belated political education and failure to know what land they lived in. They naively believed, like Chubais, "that our work spoke for itself."<sup>78</sup> Like Yeltsin they did not create a political party because they believed they acted for the whole people, the national interest, and were above selfish appeals to bail out dinosaurs and other partial interests at the expense of the

people and state interests. They duly disdained mere "politics" and parties, believing them merely vehicles for selfish factionalism, a view that dates back to Ivan the Terrible and has invariably led to autocracy. When Yeltsin says "all parties are equal before the president," he may think he is following De Gaulle, but he really is following ancient Russian tradition. Even De Gaulle headed a party and would have been quite impotent without its organized mass support. Without stable presidential and opposition parties, the only alternative is authoritarian rule through a bureaucracy emancipated from all social supports and constraints, the logical outcome of Russian institutional history. Today we can expect further pressure for that trend to develop. The Parliament's first days shows the Communists to be the best organized force and able to forge a working coalition while the reformers are dispirited, divided, and with Gaidar's resignation from the government, increasingly isolated.<sup>79</sup> Those factors offer the government more reasons to bypass Parliament.

### **Future Possibilities.**

Now Yeltsin and his government are hoisted by their own petard and confront a situation where no real parties articulate and aggregate interests. Interests' lobbies which predated these new parties do that. Most of Parliament's delegates represent only themselves, as shown by their vote on salaries, and most parties are essentially inheritors of the local tradition of personality politics and lack of organization, also a hallmark of prerevolutionary parties. Only the Communists have over 500,000 members and the reform parties cannot join together. Although we are likely to see these groups' continuing fragmentation, a cabinet reshuffle, and attempts in and out of Parliament to coopt or neutralize Zhirinovskiy and his allies; the one thing we are not likely to see is effective parliamentary action or power.

It is likely, for example, that different economic lobbies will seek directly to influence and contact executive branch officials rather than act through Parliament because the latter is so weakly organized and a minor player. In that case a form of corporatism and interpenetration among them and state officials, which to some degree replicates the Soviet and Tsarist pattern of lobbies and factions each seeking direct access to the Tsar or General Secretary, will ensue. That breeds disdain for and neglect of vital horizontal institutions and the replication of parallel but contending vertical chains of "family retainers" with the corruption and factionalism inherent in that system. Such politics both characterized previous autocracies and facilitated autocracy as its practitioners sought to channel and thereby limit the exercise of autocratic power.<sup>80</sup> The constitution will be increasingly a facade since the government cannot govern by it and dare not submit itself to the rule of law. Parliament cannot do otherwise either.

The bitterness engendered by the violence in October 1993

will probably intensify because Parliament and/or the government may well be too Balkanized to act coherently for the national interest. That national interest, we believe, means privatization and monetary stabilization, as well as a social net for those caught in the process, not bailouts for the dinosaurs. It also means coherent institutional reform toward a genuine separation of powers and rule of law. To bring this off in peaceful conditions is hard enough, but given the mistakes in Russia to date it will probably be years and many zig-zags before and if Russia approaches European standards in either direction. Yet delays in democratic transformations are warning signs that trouble is ahead and that they may not be consummated.<sup>81</sup>

Presidentialism, by its absolute nature, tends towards winner take all politics, strong but inflexible character, and inability to play a truly representational role, and along with other factors, will lead either to autocracy, dual power in a struggle with a similarly inclined Parliament (as in 1992-93) or to a breakdown of parliament and governance that may only be reconciled by military intervention.<sup>82</sup> Yeltsin has invited this by his statement on December 22, 1993 that he will stay above the rival parliamentary parties which "should be equal before the president." More accurately this means they should be equally weak and divided to give him a free hand to conduct what looks like a Gaullist experiment in leadership.<sup>83</sup> But while the conscious model may be Gaullism, the deeper tradition is the Russian autocrat standing above parties who seek to influence him directly and whom he can manipulate only by playing one off against the other.

The problem is that this mode of governance undoes both the rule of law and coherent institution building, the sine qua non of successful political transformation. In any case it will not be democracy, but likely resemble the interwar successor states in Eastern Europe where democracy was blocked and dictatorships generally triumphed, or Russia in 1905-17 when the Duma, the crown, and the government could not cooperate. Max Weber felicitously termed this sham-constitutionalism, *Schein-konstitutionalismus*, a facade of constitutional and legitimate legal authority behind which went on the real business of state.<sup>84</sup> Unfortunately it was not stable then and survived neither internal socio-political transformation nor war.

In today's desperate economy, overwhelming pressure towards strident mass politicization, dubious control over the armed forces, and where neighboring states are descending into an even greater crisis than Russia's, it remains an open question whether or how long this 'transitional period' and its accompanying structures may survive. At the same time observers have no confidence that any government can resist pressures from below and truly turn back from the abyss. As Sergei Khrushchev writes, there is no doubt that facing the threat of a general strike by coal miners, oil workers, teachers, and doctors who have not been paid for months, the government will pay off their debts and

restart the inflationary cycle.<sup>85</sup> But an autocrat like Zhirinovskiy or more sober types could do just that. Thus Yeltsin's presidentialism cannot inspire confidence in its ability to control either government or society. The government's viability, let alone democracy's durability, remains an open question.

### **Choosing Between Authoritarianisms.**

Many besides Migranyan see Russia's choices as either "mild" or harsh authoritarianism. That choice also need not be between Yeltsin and Zhirinovskiy. Others could do just as well.<sup>86</sup> Obviously that is no choice but without Yeltsin a mild authoritarianism will be unchecked and perhaps uncheckable and its future unknown. The situation is not unlike 1922-23 in the USSR.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, democratization means installing legitimate and long-lasting constitutions and institutions to immunize Russia against the decisive influence of personality or of the breakdowns on its periphery or in its neighborhood.

Here the international dimension enters the scene. Zhirinovskiy's victory intensifies the already growing fears of revived Russian imperialism that we find across Eurasia. This military-imperial trend of Russian policy not only threatens Russia's neighbors but also Russia itself because Russia cannot sustain an empire without undoing democracy, demilitarization of its security policies, and fiscal stability. Yet along with presidentialism those negative trends are making a steady comeback. At the army's urging and at a ruinous cost to fiscal stability and conversion of military resources to civilian productive investment, Yeltsin scrapped plans to halve the army and raised soldiers' salaries while exempting them from income taxes. An army of 2 million men is now the goal since Yeltsin has had to buy the army.<sup>88</sup> But he increases neither his control nor their respect for him by so doing, a potentially explosive combination.<sup>89</sup> Kostikov told ITAR-TASS that "undisputed emphasis in foreign policy will be given to protection of Russia's national interests and the rights of Russians and Russian-speaking people--on the basis of pan-national solidarity."<sup>90</sup> At recent CIS meetings Russia tried to win special status for the Russian diaspora in the members' states including dual citizenship, and sought to create a special Russian state office to oversee this process.<sup>91</sup> This is the most explosive foreign policy issue imaginable and it alarmed all CIS members. But perhaps the most alarming move is the treaty that essentially incorporates Belarus' and its economy into Russia's. This treaty restores a ruble union, allows Belarus' central bank to issue rubles at a 1:1 ratio with Russia's, grants it access to Russian gold and hard currency reserves, and allows it to exchange rubles for hard currency at Moscow's hard currency auctions. Moscow will also transfer 1.6 billion rubles to Minsk at the 1:1 ratio although Russia's currency trades at five times that value. It also will charge below world market prices for energy to

Belarus.<sup>92</sup> This destroys any hope of fiscal stability in 1994, drove Gaidar and Fyodorov out of the government, cements renewed imperial policy through an inflationary ruble union by giving Russia control of Belarus' industry, and satisfies conservatives' wishes. Russia is choosing empire and inflation over stability and the market.<sup>93</sup> Chernomyrdin openly linked the accord to pressure on Ukraine to fall in line with it.<sup>94</sup> This agreement also accords with successful defense and heavy industrial efforts to get new state subsidies from Yeltsin.<sup>95</sup>

This lurch to the right is partly a reaction to the election. But presidentialism predated the reformers' unexpected defeat. In October 1993, Yeltsin sought "unfettered" powers to be "invulnerable" to legislative, judicial, or republican challenges.<sup>96</sup> As reformers' divisions became clear, Yeltsin administration officials sought to place the executive branch in an unassailable position and eliminate legislative and judicial restraints on presidential power.<sup>97</sup>

### **The International Repercussions of Russia's Crisis.**

The United States has tolerated all the imperial tendencies in security policy and has minimized their negative implications.<sup>98</sup> Yet despite this forbearance, steady pressure on Ukraine to denuclearize, and the crafting of a NATO policy explicitly aimed at satisfying arrogant Russian demands, Russian policy continues to run faster towards its appointment in Samarra, e.g., the accord with Minsk. As numerous analyses of Russia suggest, a benign security climate is essential to reduce the military's role in overall security policy and to induce a general ease and relaxation at home. Security abroad obviates a need for internal enemies because any credible notion of an internal enemy is tied to the visibility of an external one. Thus the current world situation, more benign than any since 1870, should limit military intervention in politics, the ability to sustain an imperial policy, and authoritarian prospects. Yet that is not happening. Purely internal developments are driving Russian policy in those directions despite our forbearance.

The foregoing analysis suggests that the stress on elections found in our political science does not suffice alone for democratization.<sup>99</sup> More is needed, e.g., separation of powers, legitimate and democratic political institutions, and the rule of law. As Dimitri Simes suggested, in early 1994, what we face is the return of Russian history.<sup>100</sup> Therefore we must restudy Russian history (and not just the superficial version that seems to be all Sovietologists remember from their education), particularly its abiding institutional and political dilemmas and learn from them. Close study of those trends will alert us to the fact that terms like rule of law state, constitution, democracy, in fact our whole political vocabulary, still mean something very different in today's Russia than in the West. While contemporary political science and analysis has much to offer, ultimately they

fail to give either full or true answers to what is happening in Russia, the meaning of those events, or a way out.<sup>101</sup> The same is true for economics. After having formulated shock therapy, in 1992 Jeffrey Sachs publicly derided the reformers for not being politicians but mere problem solvers, powerfully underscoring our blindness to our ideas' impact in Russia.<sup>102</sup>

This fact alerts us to yet another relevant consequence of Russian history. In few other places is the disjunction between ideas, or what politicians think they are doing, so widely separated from real developments and outcomes. Those who thought they had ejected the state from the market by a radical 'scientific' revolution from above and abroad have unwittingly paved the way for renewed authoritarianism and bureaucratic despotism. If elections and at least seemingly democratic laws to form capitalist markets sufficed, we could clearly say we have a democratizing regime as the bulk of our neoliberal theory tells us. Unfortunately that is not the case and opposing trends have gained ground. Gaidar's and Fyodorov's resignation is the latest sign of that trend. Our government may think Russia is continuing, however imperfectly, to reform and quote Tiutchev that one must believe in Russia. However historians, politicians, and political analysts should generally prefer prose to poetry, especially in Russia. In that case we might, with Gogol, observe that Russia's troika is out of control and galloping madly into the future. Russia surely has a rendezvous with destiny. Unhappily it promises to be harder, more arduous, longer, and more troubled than anyone can see.

## ENDNOTES -- CHAPTER 2

1. Fred Hiatt, "Russian Elite See Vote as Betrayal," *The Washington Post*, December 21, 1993, A17; Margot Light, "Democracy Russian-Style," *The World Today*, December 1993, p. 229.

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## CHAPTER 3

### THE RUSSIAN ELECTIONS AND THE FUTURE OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY CONTACTS: THE SPECTER OF ZHIRINOVSKY

Jacob W. Kipp

#### **Introduction: The Russian Military.**

In 1985 when Mikhail Gorbachev embarked upon the process of trying to revive the Soviet system by reinvigorating "real socialism," his reform-minded advisors identified three distinct sets of institutions/elites within the Soviet polity which might serve as levers of change, i.e., the Communist Party, the KGB, and the Armed Forces. Gorbachev and his advisors choose to focus their hopes on the Party, since they believed the KGB to be institutionally opposed to systemic reform and viewed the military as a drain upon resources and a bastion of conservatism.<sup>1</sup>

In the end, however, the Party, too, proved unreformable. And in the 11 months leading up to the August Coup of 1991, as the process of reform got out of control and Gorbachev vacillated between repression and radical reform, conservatives in all three institutions made common cause in an attempt to restore order and central control. Rumors of coups and counter-coups abounded. In the first instance, after November 1990 this was in open alliance with Gorbachev in trying to suppress nationalist calls for independence in the Baltic states, culminating in the unsuccessful military crackdown in Vilnius, Lithuania, in January 1991. By that time, however, there were already signs of deep political divisions within all three institutions, associated with the emergence of an alternative power center in Moscow in the form of Boris Yeltsin and his supporters within the government of the Russian Federation. Gorbachev's drift back towards the center and Yeltsin's victory in the democratic and free elections for President of the Russian Federation in June 1991 gave a new cast to negotiations over a new union treaty. By the summer of 1991 the opponents of reform in all three elites were making common cause to restore order before the union treaty could be signed. At the same time reformers within all three institutions were rallying to Yeltsin's banner. There was a distinct shift in the Armed Forces as Party control broke down and politization threatened to undermine military professionalism. Although senior military figures played leading roles in plotting the August coup, others sided with Yeltsin and the vast majority of the officer corps opted to stay out of the struggle.

In the aftermath of the coup a purge of senior military leadership and renewed efforts to push through military reform coincided with the rapid and final disintegration of the Union

itself, leaving many analysts to fear that with the collapse of the Soviet Union the successor states would be left with a "masterless army." There were fears that it would also become a hungry army and that its dissatisfactions would provide the spark for civil war. Efforts to maintain a unified defense ministry to direct a unified armed force for the Commonwealth of Independent States proved only a stop-gap measure. In the meantime the Russian government had embarked upon a series of reforms to democratize the government, speed the marketization and privatization of the economy, and open the society. By May the Russian government had begun building a national ministry of defense and armed forces. This attempt to re-nationalize the Soviet Army went hand-in-hand with efforts to bring it home from abroad, to reduce its size, and to reshape it to fit the needs of a democratic state. At the same time, the Army was drawn into fighting on the periphery of the old Soviet empire in Moldova, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. For the last 18 months the Russian Army has loomed as a key factor in domestic politics and in Russia's relations with the "near abroad." This role proved a particularly difficult challenge to the military when the executive and legislative branches of government moved into direct confrontation over the constitutional limits of each's authority as they did in the late spring of 1993. By late summer, soldiers were complaining that this political crisis would place an unacceptable strain on civil-military relations, as each of the sides tried to gain the military's support. In September, Yeltsin brought the crisis to a head by adjourning the parliament, calling for new elections for parliament and for a referendum on the new constitutions, and removing his Vice President. In October 1993, as the crisis reached its climax, a professional military, which wanted to stay above domestic political disputes, was drawn into armed struggle between Yeltsin and his opponents in the White House. In putting down that armed revolt the officer corps found itself in an awkward and unpleasant position. A month after the suppression of the coup President Yeltsin rewarded the officer corps with a new military doctrine. But rumors about conflicts among even those who finally supported the President, as they jockeyed for positions, suggested an unstable situation with the military itself.<sup>2</sup>

Whether Russia's military would play king-maker in the future, be content to be the power behind a civil government, or would assume overt control remains a topic of domestic and international speculation. In the scenario planning discussed in the Yergin-Gustafson forecast of Russia's future, the military occupies a key position in the resolution of the three key issues confronting Russia in its transition period, i.e., building democracy, a market economy, and a nation-state. In one scenario, that of the "Russian bear," the military actually takes power.<sup>3</sup> The outcome of the transition period will shape Russian policy and thereby have a profound impact on the peace and stability of Eurasia. In this context military-to-military contacts have developed between the United States and Russian Armed Forces.

## **Military-To-Military Contacts.**

Military-to-military contacts between the U.S. and Russian Armed Forces were born from those developed with the Soviet Armed Forces. While U.S.-Soviet military-to-military contacts between the cold war adversaries can be dated as far back as the 1970s and the Carter administration, they were disrupted by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Contemporary contacts began with Gorbachev's strategic disengagement from Afghanistan and developed under the leadership of Admiral Crowe, the Chief of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Marshal Akhromeyev, Chief of the Soviet General Staff. Initially, such contacts were part of the confidence-building measures associated with winding down the cold war and involved a wide range of activities from joint conferences, talks, and exchange visits. This program was well underway in late 1991 when the Soviet Union disappeared. A period of hiatus followed, while new institutions appeared and the shape of U.S.-Russian relations took form. By the summer of 1992, the U.S. Joint Staff under General Powell was once again actively engaged in developing a program of military-to-military contacts with the Russian General Staff. The content of the program had changed significantly. Democratic Russia was viewed as a partner with whom it was possible to conduct a radically different type of contact program. The mutually-agreed upon bilateral program stressed contacts that would enhance professionalism, build mutual confidence, contribute to downsizing and defense conversion, and encourage the subordination of the military to civil authorities within a democratic government. Russian officers attended U.S. service schools. American and Russian delegations visited schools, facilities and units. The planning of joint staff exercises in the area of U.N.-mandated peacekeeping activities has gone forward. The program has encouraged military transparency in many areas. In short, a bilateral program of cooperation and partnership has been developed over the last year and a half.

Over the same period, military-to-military contacts have also taken a multilateral form. U.S. military representatives participated in North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) military-to-military contacts. In June 1993 General Grachev, the Russian Minister of Defense, was an invited participant at the opening of the Marshall Center for European Security Studies, an effort by the U.S. Department of Defense and German Ministry of Defense to support the efforts of Central and East European states, including Russia, to develop effective civil-military relations and national security, decision-making processes in keeping with democratic societies. At the opening of the Center then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin met with General Grachev and discussed the possibility of conducting U.S.-Russian peacekeeping exercises.<sup>4</sup>

NATO has further developed its military-to-military contacts program in Central and Eastern Europe in conjunction with its



NACC initiative and intends to deepen those contacts, including those with Russia. In October 1993 in the face of mounting pressure for immediate NATO membership by several Central European states, Secretary Aspin spoke of an alternative to immediate membership, which he identified as "partners for peace." Aspin spoke of all the states from the former Soviet bloc and spoke of military-to-military contacts as an important part of such relations.<sup>5</sup> In January 1994 NATO embarked upon its own Partnership for Peace and extended an invitation to Russia to join in those activities. These will include closer military cooperation and peacekeeping field exercises in 1994.<sup>6</sup> The United States had provided leadership in developing the concept of Partnership for Peace as a device for contributing to increased stability and peace in Central and Eastern Europe. The Russian government, which was hostile to the rapid expansion of NATO into Central and Eastern Europe, has said that it will look favorably upon cooperation under the Partnership for Peace, and so the task has emerged to coordinate the partnership initiatives with the existing the U.S.-Russian bilateral program of military contacts. On January 14, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin signed a joint declaration heralding the achievement of "a new stage" in relations between Russia and the United States characterized by a "mature strategic partnership based on equality, mutual advantage, and recognition of each other's national interests." The declaration also stressed that Moscow and Washington are ready to "move forward on the path of openness and mutual trust" in their relations and pledged to continue efforts to overcome the division of Europe. Among the "urgent tasks" related to these efforts are "preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and protection of human rights and the rights of national and other minorities."<sup>7</sup>

Thus, in bilateral and multilateral forums military-to-military contacts with Russia have developed in the direction of partnership with the objective of enhancing peace and security in Europe. Given the intensity of the conflict between reformers and counter-reformers, the fate of democratic reform and social transformation depends in good measure on the role the Russian military will chose to play in the continuing crisis. One road leads towards democratic consolidation, national rejuvenation, and the construction of a vital civic society. The other leads towards revived authoritarianism, national chauvinism, and the risk of civil war, regional war and even general war. Aid to Russia is an issue of historic proportions and assistance in transforming the residual Soviet Armed Forces into a Russian national army under elected civilian control is a vital part of that process.

Military assistance in this case may be the best insurance against militarism. A key to dealing with the military dimension of this crisis is Western engagement of the Russian Armed Forces, not as the old adversary, but as a new partner. Military-to-military contacts should address those defense and security problems that are our common legacy from the cold war. The capital issue is not who won the cold war--in a profound

sense we all did by avoiding the threat of "absolute war" which hung over our head for four decades--but who will win the peace.

Professional contacts, based upon mutual respect, are one of the ways of undercutting the Russian officer corps' isolation, frustration and fear. These contacts can be about problem solving, finding ways in which the U.S. military can support the processes of demobilization, military reform, defense conversion, and the development of new military doctrine. Much benefit will come from encouraging military professionalism and discouraging political adventurism. While Russia's crisis is immediate, the problem of integrating the new national armed forces into their states and societies exists across Central and Eastern Europe and in every one of the successor states from the former Soviet Union. Progress has been substantial, if viewed against the backdrop of four decades of cold war. Under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, Russian and other East European officers are being educated at American military institutions. More such contacts, including American officers attending Russian military schools, are in the process of development. Exchanges of instructors between military academies and our senior military colleges and universities are being given serious consideration. These and other contacts are aimed at mid-level officers, the professional center of gravity of each army, and have high potential dividends for long-term cooperation. These programs are designed to turn cold war adversaries into partners. The process of military reform and doctrinal development in Russia is turning the former Soviet Armed Forces into a national armed forces. If this leads to a new relationship, openness, cooperation, and professionalism will play a key role. Russia's new military doctrine speaks favorably of such military-to-military contacts which are seen as a prudent investment in good will and are intended to make a democratic outcome of Russia's transformation more likely.

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry in a recent speech at George Washington University, given on the eve of his departure to Russia, made a forceful argument for military cooperation with Russia even in the face of the continuing instability there. In that speech he noted that a successful partnership with a democratic and open Russia did not exclude rivalry in some areas and cited relations with France and Japan as cases of cooperation and competition.<sup>8</sup>

Over the last few months, however, a number of dark clouds have appeared on the horizon, calling into question the utility and feasibility of U.S.-Russian military-to-military contacts. The most conspicuous problems within the military sphere related to the role of the Russian military in the "near abroad," i.e., the tendency of Russia to militarize political disputes over the rights of Russian minorities in the near abroad, delays in the withdrawal of Russian troops stationed in other successor states, including the Baltic Republics (Latvia and Estonia), and the ambiguous role that Russian troops played in such regional

conflicts as the civil war in Georgia or the question of General Lebed and his Russian 14th Army in Moldova. The darkest cloud, however, came with the December elections for parliament, which exposed the weakness of Russia's reformers and raised the specter of the statism, xenophobic nationalism and imperialism in the strong showing of V. V. Zhirinovskiy and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), especially among the military. The success of Zhirinovskiy's LDP has raised the prospect of a "worse case" scenario for the outcome of Russia's crisis. In his recent speech Secretary Perry noted, "Reality number two is a worse case outcome and is possible, and we must be prepared for it." That reality was a Russia emerging from its crisis as "an authoritarian, militaristic, and imperialist nation, hostile to the West."<sup>9</sup>

### **The December Elections and Their Aftermath.**

The initial response in Russia and the West to Zhirinovskiy's electoral success could best be described as panic. Zhirinovskiy was close to gaining power. On December 13, Reuters quoted Egor Gaidar, the leader of Russia's Choice, as saying that it would be "an enormous danger not only for Russia but to all humanity if there is the slightest chance that this man Zhirinovskiy could really become the president of Russia."<sup>10</sup> Reformers issued calls for an anti-Fascist coalition, to include Communists, to stop him. Later, as the total composition of the new parliament became clear, the assessments of the threat became more measured. While talk of "Weimar Russia" and the rise of Fascism remained a common interpretation of recent events, mature observers stressed the mid-term dangers of Zhirinovskiy using the electoral process to gain that presidency as a vehicle for dictatorship and personal rule.<sup>11</sup> While in no way spreading panic about the Liberal-Democrats' strong showing in the elections, Serge Schmemmann wrote in *The New York Times* that Zhirinovskiy's electoral success was one of "the latest symptoms of a nation in the throes of a protracted revolution, ricocheting in all directions as it searched for its final course."<sup>12</sup>

The results of the voting for party slates in Russia's elections, in which his party got just under 25 percent of the total vote cast, have once again given Zhirinovskiy's name notoriety in the West.<sup>13</sup> Two and a half years ago when he got six million votes and finished a remarkable third in the elections for the presidency of Russia he was treated as an anomaly. He was an extremist and a clown who got votes because he was a spoiler and a symbol of broad discontent among the masses. He and his Liberal-Democratic Party had appeared out of nowhere. By the late fall of 1991 informed observers were saying that because of rising discontent Zhirinovskiy would have doubled his vote in any new elections.

As it was, with the center of political gravity shifting to the struggle between President Yeltsin and the Russian

parliament, he became the non-person of Russian high politics. Some journalists refused to interview him because they did not want to promote "the future dictator" or his party.<sup>14</sup> No one wanted to talk about the "Zhirinovsky Phenomenon" in the hope that it would just go away. Zhirinovsky himself understood that the only path by which the Liberal-Democratic Party could come to power was through parliamentary elections, and already in 1992 began preparing for that eventuality. Zhirinovsky observed that the "democrats" until August 1991 had assumed that they would be in the opposition for an indefinite future period and had been broken by their easy victory over the Putsch and the collapse of the Soviet Union. He pledged not to repeat their mistakes and devoted his efforts to preparing for the next elections whenever they might come.<sup>15</sup> He worked on the assumption that they would come sooner rather than later. Yet, even up to the eve of the December elections, until survey results began to hint at a strong showing for Zhirinovsky, he was dismissed as a "harmless clown."<sup>16</sup> Some opposing politicians devoted considerable efforts to avoid being seen with Zhirinovsky on a television program.<sup>17</sup> Alexander Yanov pointed out in an article in *Novoye vremya* in 1992 that Zhirinovsky was beyond the pale even for the Red-Browns. "In fact, the position of Zhirinovsky in today's Russia is the classic outsider, pretender, always appearing in times of trouble literally out of nowhere--at that moment when the forces struggling for power begin to lose public trust."<sup>18</sup> Zhirinovsky himself stressed this role as outsider, first as a Russian living in "non-Russian regions" of the Union and then as "non-party" activist which prepared him for the role of oppositionist.<sup>19</sup>

### **Zhirinovsky as Leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party.**

What has made Zhirinovsky into this specter haunting Russia's revolution? Why are he and his party so intolerable to both the "democrats" and their national-communist opponents? Answers to those questions may help to explain both the appeal of his Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia, and his political isolation. The answer can be found in his very opportunistic program, which is blatantly imperial. To paraphrase Voltaire's comment about the Holy Roman Empire, the Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia is not liberal, democratic, a party, or about today's Russia. It is a front for nationalist, chauvinist, elitist, and imperialist ideas. At first glance, the designation "liberal-democratic" seems a misnomer. Yet, Zhirinovsky's choice of the terms liberal and democratic to describe his party is no accident. It is, rather, a conscious piece of political will to set his movement off from a host of other nationalist movements that range from monarchist to communist. It makes it possible for Zhirinovsky to treat the party as a tool of his personal search for power and to use it as a "centrist" base.

In Zhirinovsky's hands liberal is an ahistorical category designating his outsider status. This is a necessary condition

for his political success since it allows him to invoke a mythic past before Soviet power and to place himself outside the political process that brought about the current crisis. Liberal in this regard is used by Zhirinovskiy to invoke the idea that his party stands in the center of the political spectrum, in which the democrats and Communists occupy the extremes. The Party's slogan "Through a pluralism of opinions to the Superiority of the law," consciously invokes ties with Russian liberalism.<sup>20</sup>

Liberal and liberalism in its prerevolutionary meaning carried a notion of moderate reform and westernization. Russian liberals sought to build a civic society under law and were hardly radical democrats. Moreover, conservative nationalists, populists, and Marxists, who were at odds with one another on almost every issue, were united in their rejection of liberals and liberalism. Even the Christian existentialist N. Berdyayev could write that liberalism was a thing of the past. "Liberalism, democratism, parliamentarianism, juridical formalism, humanistic morals are yesterday's history, for all these forms of thought and life are based on the assumption that Truth is unknown and that perhaps the Truth does not even exist."<sup>21</sup> Liberals (and liberalism) have been branded parts of a utopian dream, disconnected from Russian realities. They were depicted as compromisers, spouting noble sentiments but achieving petty deeds.<sup>22</sup> In short, liberal would seem to be the last term that a charismatic leader would embrace to build a mass movement in post-Soviet Russia.

But liberal-democrat serves Zhirinovskiy's purpose very well since it puts him and his followers outside of Soviet politics. No group was subjected to more attack by the Communist Party than liberals. No concept was more rejected than the idea of gradual reform. Indeed, Western scholars in gauging the failures of liberal bureaucrats, Zemstvo reformers, and Constitutional Democrats have called attention to the disconnect between backward Russia and the liberals' advocacy of individual freedom within a civic society.<sup>23</sup> For the liberal, the emancipation of the individual and society from the oppression of an autocratic state could only come through a state under law (*Rechtsstaat*). But how one might create a *Rechtsstaat* in a multinational empire proved an unsolvable dilemma. Indeed, the ideologues of the Liberal-Democratic Party have invoked no less a liberal champion than Pavel Milyukov, historian, leader of the Kadet Party and Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government, to reject the concepts of "popular consciousness and national consciousness in favor of social consciousness," i.e., mass consciousness inside a given political and social order.

The gradual development of the state of consciousness according to the degree of the development of the process is also included in the number of necessary elements of social development. The carrier of this consciousness is, of course, not all of the popular mass. The Leading Historical Actors of the Epoch, i.e.,

the representatives of power and their advisors, are these carriers.<sup>24</sup>

The importance of such leaders depends upon the degree to which their ideas and actions correspond "to the conditions of a given epoch." For Zhirinovskiy, "statism" was, is, and will be the most important aspect of Russian social consciousness. Here Zhirinovskiy and his party have broken with the liberal tradition on one key point. His party, like Lenin's Bolsheviks in 1917, was, even in 1991, ready to take state power into its own hands.<sup>25</sup>

### **Zhirinovskiy, State Power, and Empire.**

Zhirinovskiy has put that question of empire and state back on the political front burner after the 75 year Soviet experiment with a totalitarian solution based upon federalism in form and empire in content. Zhirinovskiy's program addresses the key issue raised by Tolstoy, i.e., the relation of Russians to power (*vlast'*) and statehood (*gosudarstvennost'*). As he observed in his address to the 3rd Congress of the Liberal-Democratic Party in mid-April 1992: "Political parties are created, leaders come and go, but our state must remain eternal [and] unshakable."<sup>26</sup> His vision of the state is centralized, authoritarian, and expansionist. While speaking of reform and even a European model "to go forward bravely towards a European model of society: a free economy, the rights of the individual in first place, a civic society," the road to be taken is quite different and is in keeping with Russia's tradition of "revolutions from above." "What is needed is a strict, centralized authority, otherwise no reforms will be achieved." Zhirinovskiy has no time for separation of powers. "There must be one state, one president. But without a centralized economy."<sup>27</sup> Finally, there must be no challenges to Russian sovereignty and authority. For Zhirinovskiy Russia is the empire. "For us the main [point] is the territory of our state. Return to us the historical borders and name of the state--we only want that!"<sup>28</sup> He has no time for federalism and expects "small nations" to accept their fate. Zhirinovskiy speaks of restoring Russia to the imperial frontiers of 1900, when Russia included parts of contemporary Poland and Finland. He warns that any change in Russia's historic borders can only end in war.<sup>29</sup> In this fashion the very acceptance of the dissolution of the Soviet Union into sovereign successor states is an act of treason. The Liberal-Democratic Party rejects the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States as an "illegal, anti-constitutional act."<sup>30</sup> Party ideologues refer to Commonwealth as the "Countries of Beggars and the Hungry" and a "public toilet."<sup>31</sup>

At the same time that he speaks of restoring Russia's historic frontiers, Zhirinovskiy, the Turkic specialist and child of Kazakhstan, also has called upon Russia to expand to the south. This "final thrust to the south" Zhirinovskiy has associated with a "final division of the world."<sup>32</sup> This

geo-political coup is to be done as "shock therapy, suddenly, rapidly, and effectively" and will end with Russia and India sharing a common border. This would bring order from Kabul to Istanbul, eliminate the "red, Muslim, Turkic, and Islamic threats, and remove the threat of third world war."

The final "thrust" to the south. As I dream of it, Russian soldiers will wash their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and forever change to summer uniform. . . . That any platoon of Russian soldiers could bring order to any area. And even better that that would not be necessary. We must pacify that region forever.<sup>33</sup>

Zhirinovskiy ties this expansion to the south to the question of nationality policy and the survival of the Russian nation.

In post-Soviet politics the question of national sentiment, i.e., the very definition of what it means to be a citizen of Russia, has taken on great importance, and no one has been more successful in manipulating Russian nationalism to his purposes than Zhirinovskiy. Rejecting Communist federalism as "a pretty Bolshevik myth," Zhirinovskiy's supporters oppose the idea of a territorial state in which citizenship is a function of residence. They reject a multinational, Russian Federation (*Rossiyskaya Federatsiya*) in favor of a centralized Russia (*Rossiya*) of one nationality (*Russkiy*) who share one culture and language. In short, they reject a state based upon a civic society in favor of an ethnic state.<sup>34</sup> Non-Russians would be russified and the Orthodox religion given "dominant position."

The new Russia this is a state under law, an enlightened state, this is a powerful presidential regime, a powerful, multi-party parliament, this is legislation, which is for the ages, which we won't have to change every ten years. This is a Constitution, which respects everyone from infant to elder. This is a unified symbol throughout the entire country--the black, yellow, white flag, the state flag of Russia. It must wave over all state institutions in every region of our huge Fatherland. This is the country's anthem, one anthem. This is the state language, the language of inter-ethnic communication, Russian. This is a single monetary unit--the ruble.<sup>35</sup>

Zhirinovskiy's ideologues understand the force of such ideas in the struggle for power and note the weakness of their Communist and democratic opponents in trying to enlist Russian nationalism in their cause.<sup>36</sup>

Those democrats who were responsible for CIS and the ensuing reforms, according to the Liberal-Democratic Party's ideologues, embraced radical reform and revolution in the interests of their masters, the United States. Thus Egor Gaidar, the architect of

"shock therapy," and his supporters are labeled "comprador democrats or more exactly false democrats." With its notion of a national bourgeoisie in the service of foreign capital, Zhirinovsky's use of the term is a throw-back to Marxian criticism but from a nationalist perspective. As used by Zhirinovsky, liberal has an elitist tone. One of his supporters even spoke of "the noble Liberalism of Zhirinovsky."<sup>37</sup> True democrats are dedicated to Russia's national interests and are the sworn enemies of the "comprador democrats," who would sell out those interests by serving the United States. True democrats, according to the Liberal-Democratic Party, form a natural governing elite of the "serious, enlightened, honest, intelligent, gifted, broad-minded, experienced, and competent."<sup>38</sup> Thus, the struggle for power in Russia is depicted as among corrupt party apparatchiks, corrupt democrats in the service of foreign capital and the domestic mafia, and this noble elite. Under these circumstances a multiparty system is an excess. In its place, for the transition period there would be strict centralization under the LDP to resolve economic problems.<sup>39</sup>

### **Zhirinovsky and State Capitalism.**

The economic program of the Liberal-Democratic Party could be described as a return to state capitalism under the banner of a highly-efficient, socially-oriented economy, which would embrace privatization and even private property. But it is a program designed to protect the state structure and stability. State-directed "industrialization" under Peter the Great, tsarist reformers after the Crimean War, and Stalin serve as the model for building a national economy and catching up with the West.<sup>40</sup> This position, which owes more to Friedrich List than Karl Marx, rejects "shock therapy" in favor of state-directed development so that Russia can avoid becoming an economic colony within the world market, i.e., the supplier of raw materials and an importer of industrial goods. One model for such a course is imperial Japan, where the state directed the gradual transformation of the country into an industrial superpower. This has led S. F. Dergunov, one of the ideologues of the LDP to posit the following thesis regarding Russia's economic transformation:

[as capitalized in the original] THE ECONOMY OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD OF THE FORMATION OF MARKET STRUCTURES MUST OPERATE ON THE BASIS OF STATE PROGRAMS INVOLVING THE CREATION OF COMPETITIVE SECTORS, MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE, THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE ECONOMY. AN OBLIGATORY ELEMENT OF THESE PROGRAMS IS A PLAN FOR THE GRADUAL, ORGANIZED CURTAILMENT AND TRANSFER OF STATE PROPERTY INTO MARKET STRUCTURES--ITS [property's] PRIVATIZATION.<sup>41</sup>

Dergunov states only two factors which would make this program of state capitalism work. First, it is true to national traditions--"for our country state programs are natural." Second,



it would require only minimal retraining for managers. The model of state capitalism invoked here are "tough mobilization methods" like those used in the relocation of industry in 1941.<sup>42</sup> In this manner the LDP's program in 1992 sought to build an alliance between Communist managers of enterprises via state direction and their personal enrichment via state-directed privatization. The program promised to take privatization out of the hands of the bureaucrat (*chinovnik*) and put it the hands of citizens. The privatization program of the LDP calls for a 3 year process of conversion of most enterprises into "self-financing" ventures and a leasing arrangement with funds used to cover social programs. The LDP program also calls for financing the privatization fund run by the Russian State Bank. The fund would be divided evenly the first year and then subsequently more would go to a privatization fund to finance state privatization certificates on which an annual dividend would be paid. The ownership of such certificates would be confined to Russian citizens and Russians living abroad to avoid the injustice of "foreign or shady capital" buying up enterprises on the cheap.<sup>43</sup> Playing upon the economic chaos created by hyper inflation, the LDP places the blame for declining production and collapse of many enterprises on the Yeltsin's government's slavish behavior in the face of the demands of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The LDP's answer to Gaidar's "Shock Therapy" was to declare: "We do not need great shocks."<sup>44</sup> The LDP's program calls for a state-regulated program to stimulate production by using a gradual conversion of the monetary system to a "non-cash, convertible ruble" (*beznalichnyy konvertiruemyy rubl'*) that would exchange at 1 ruble to 1 dollar. This would be achieved by restoring state control over the trading in foreign currencies via the State Bank, which would control the buying and selling of "non-cash, convertible rubles" and would effectively restore the state's role in controlling exports and imports.<sup>45</sup> For Zhirinovskiy and the LDP, state power is the critical instrument in the process of national transformation and provides the rationale for a particularly Russian version of state capitalism. Nowhere is the uniqueness of this model more evident than in their approach to the issues of land ownership and the peasant question. Stability and order take on the greatest importance. And in this sense stability comes from maintaining the link between Russian national consciousness and the village. Russians are, in this view, a colonizing people, and their forms of landholding, especially the commune, are ways to preserve order and prevent the emergence of a rural proletariat. Stability in the post-Soviet village depends upon maintaining collective ownership via the *kolkhozy* (collective farms) and *sovkhozy* (state farms). Writing on the emancipation of the gentry's serfs in 1861, Zhirinovskiy has quoted with favor the remark of the liberal bureaucrat, N. A. Milyutin. Zhirinovskiy fully supports the idea of "N. A. MALYUTIN [*sic*]," when he spoke out in favor of emancipation with land: "You want to make the peasants as free as a bird (i.e., free them from serfdom but give them no land). We want to make them free as a bird, but a bird that has a Nest."<sup>46</sup>

Stability is in the interests of the state supported emancipation with land and the maintenance of communal agriculture to protect the peasantry from "kulaks, blood suckers and generally more prosperous people able to purchase their land from poor peasants [*bednyaki*]." <sup>47</sup> Today, this means maintaining collective farms to prevent the appearance of a new landless agrarian class. It is not an argument about economic rationality or efficiency, but a social policy of stabilization and order that also reflects the interests of the social strata composed of collective and state farm managers. <sup>48</sup>

Thus, in Zhirinovsky's state capitalism the industrial and agricultural managerial elite are to see their interests served and to view Zhirinovsky as an ally, particularly if they seek a special arrangement with the state to support their enterprises or look to intervention to protect their products from foreign competition. Recent survey research on the social groups who tended to vote for Zhirinovsky has identified two such groups. The first is middle-aged men from state enterprises in provincial towns and cities. They are threatened by loss of their jobs as their enterprises go bankrupt. These are men from the old Soviet working class, who have lost security and have gained little or nothing through the reforms. In their minds they remain Soviet citizens. The second group is young men from 25 to 40 from large cities, who are better educated and have been apolitical. What seems to draw these supporters is Zhirinovsky's image on television, an image of power and decisiveness. <sup>49</sup> They are a generation shaped by Perestroika and the collapse.

### **Zhirinovsky and the Nationality Question.**

Zhirinovsky's views on the nationality question follow those on the state. While declaring that he is not a chauvinist, Zhirinovsky speaks of a state run for Russians and tells those of other nationalities who do not like it to leave. A unitary Russian state is his answer to the threat of anarchy. In place of the existing federal system with attention to the rights of national minorities, Zhirinovsky has proposed a return to a provincial [*guberniya*] system of local government. <sup>50</sup> *Guberniya* was the tsarist term for province, and in imperial Russia it was a unit of government run and directed by the central government under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the governors appointed by the Emperor. Thus, rejecting Marxist-Leninist solution to the nationality question and the Wilsonian version of national self-determination, Zhirinovsky returns to the age of historic nations, whose power and authority are manifest in their historical, political, economic, social, cultural and, not least, military claims. The Russian Empire is not a luxury but a means of national survival for a colonizing people. "Russians everywhere become a national minority, gradually being destroyed. This will be the slow murder of the Russian nation. Because nowhere is there purely Russian territory, nowhere . . . . If we follow such a path, then the

Russian nation will die."<sup>51</sup>

Zhirinovskiy's claim to being at the forefront of post-Soviet politics is bolstered by his fundamental breaks with the values of the past. United with small bands of overt Russian Fascists, such as A. P. Barkashov and the Movement "Russian national unity" (*Rescue natsional'noye edinstvo*), Zhirinovskiy has reconsidered the role of Adolph Hitler, in history.<sup>52</sup> When asked about his evaluation of Hitler, Zhirinovskiy cited a generational shift away from those older Russians who hated the Fuhrer to a new generation who look on National Socialism differently: "Today's young people look on all that differently, some even to some degree sympathize with the ideals of national-socialists." Zhirinovskiy did note that some extreme measures had harmed Germans but concluded: ". . . but in general his ideology does not contain anything negative in itself."<sup>53</sup>

### **Zhirinovskiy's Liberal-Democracy as National Socialism.**

Ideologues of the Liberal-Democratic Party have gone much further than the leader himself in claiming ties with Nazi Germany and Hitler. Igor Minin has said that national socialism forms the "third force" in Russian politics between Communists and democrats, both of which have discredited themselves by their hostility to the national idea. "The true carrier of the ideals of national socialism is the national-patriotic movement," of which the Liberal-Democratic Party will assume leadership. In this fashion Zhirinovskiy's party intends to coopt the rest of the Russia right and to militarize it. The national-patriotic movement will require its own paramilitary formations, like Hitler's SA, called the *Druzhina* (guard) and organized into the "Agitation and Propaganda Groups" (*gruppа agitatsii i propagandy*) and the "Protection-Assault Groups" (*okhranno-shturmovaya gruppа*) for street operations during electoral campaigns (protection of LDP meetings and the break-up of opponents' meetings). These groups are to be organized "in each micro-district, block, and in each factory" and be composed of 10-15 persons, including 1-2 experienced activists and several military."<sup>54</sup>

The same ideologists have also been very candid about the Liberal-Democratic Party's foreign policy. The Liberal-Democratic Party's theorists look on the ties between the internal political struggle and foreign policy and see a symmetrical relationship between "national and antinational forces in both cases." The LPD views "capital" as objectively "antinational" and will use state control to limit such tendencies by controlling investments and profits. This national system of political economy "would seek to exclude the possibility of foreign-trade tricks on the difference of internal and world prices." In short, this would be a state dedicated to national autarky of a statist and militarized nature: "Of course, all enterprises necessary for the functioning of the state structures must be state property. For example, defense

industry enterprises, railroads, major enterprises under the control of republics."<sup>55</sup> It is, of course, a rejection of the economic reforms of Yeltsin's democrats, which the LDP blame for bringing nothing but inflation, unemployment, poverty, chaos, and disorder. By rejecting Communism and democratic reform, the LDP ideologists have positioned themselves as saviors with no responsibilities for past failures or current problems. More important, they present a convenient scape-goat upon which to blame past and current problems. Egor Gaidar is persistently caricatured in LDP literature as Yeltsin's "Jew."<sup>56</sup> Gaidar, the democrat, became Gaidar, the thief--the court Jew, using his position for personal gain for himself and his clients. "And Zhirinovskiy achieved success because he presented himself as the defender of the nation, ready to deal with its oppressors."<sup>57</sup>

Just as the LDP seeks to build a common front of nationalist forces in Russia against anti-nationalist forces, i.e., communists and democrats, so it seeks to build similar connections abroad. The key to this process is an international, anti-Semitic alliance. The chief source of "subjective" anti-national forces is "Zionism." Minin has asserted: "Zionism has as its final goal the establishment of the economic and political supremacy of Jewry in all the leading countries of the world and is a direct result of the basic features of the national character of the Jewish people." In this case, the LDP's version of national socialism claims that it will practice a "humane" policy towards "Jews" and confine its version of the final solution for Zionists.<sup>58</sup> Viewing the governments of the United States, France, and Great Britain as tools of international Zionism, the LPD ideologists will seek to reduce contacts with those governments. They will also seek to accelerate the emigration of Jews out of Russia and will reduce the influence of Jews in the mass media by imposing national-proportional representation on such positions. Indeed, they view such proportional representation as the vehicle for maintaining Russian hegemony in a centralized, multi-ethnic state.<sup>59</sup>

### **A National-Socialist Foreign Policy.**

In seeking to create an alliance against Zionism, the LDP ideologists look to those capitalist countries which have retained a government with a "national," as opposed to cosmopolitan character. Not surprisingly this leads to a rather ahistorical interpretation of contemporary German and Japanese society and a search for nationalist allies in these societies.

We are speaking first of all about Japan and Germany. Everyone knows the patriotism and faithfulness to national values of the Japanese people. The Japanese government maximally, to that degree allowed by capitalism, has used the features of Japanese national character and in its turn has adapted to them as much

as possible. Now it feeds off the fruits of its correct strategy.

Germany has had a difficult fate. It is located in the very center of Europe and that means in the very epicenter of subjective anti-nationalist forces and as a consequence 150 years of its history have taken place under the influence of the continual struggle of the German nation against these influences. We will not discuss the details of this struggle or the mistakes made by the Germans. What is important is that this struggle did not end with the unification of the German states but entered a new phase.

National socialism supports the maximum widening of cooperation with the most nationalist governments, in particular Japan and Germany. Only this cooperation can bring good to our nation and help in the matter of constructing national government.<sup>60</sup>

In short, the foreign policy objectives of Zhirinovsky's movement can only be achieved by overthrowing the existing world order and undermining the position of the United States in that order. Race figures prominently in that foreign policy. Ideologues of the Liberal-Democratic Party speak of the yellowing, reddening, and blackening of the world's population and even use the metaphor of a white Fay Wray in the hands of King-Kong to describe the fate of the white race. This is, according to the Liberal-Democrats a threat to that civilization itself, which gives more than it receives, loosing both "its way of life and its purity of blood," while undermining "other pretty patriarchal civilizations of other peoples."<sup>61</sup> Thus, the solution is to challenge the dominant, cosmopolitan order represented by the United States in the name of the development of "parallel civilizations" with a single dominant power directing the development of that civilization and its associated region.

In the end Zhirinovsky predicts the United States will fall because of its own internal contradictions arising out of the cosmopolitan character of its society. This crisis will force a weak and divided America to give up its leading role in defending the current world order and lead it to adopt its own version of the final thrust to the south. "We say to the Americans: Stop in time. We say to Bill Clinton: Do not repeat the mistakes of Napoleon and Hitler. . . . America will also soon start to come apart. Within it very many contradictions already exist. From these many problems and inter-ethnic confrontations are created."<sup>62</sup>

### **The Liberal-Democratic Party and the Army.**

Given the conscious cultivation of National-Socialism, one would expect that the Russian military, with its ties to the

historic victories of the Red Army over the Wehrmacht in what most Russians still see as a "just war," would not be particularly hospitable to Zhirinovskiy and the Liberal-Democratic Party. Indeed, the Party's Program in 1992 even challenged the concept of a mass army based on conscription and called for "a gradual abolition of universal conscription to a well-planned transition to the formation of a professional army."<sup>63</sup> Regarding the future of the military, the LDP's Military Program pledges financial support for a strong army and a security policy of "sufficient defense" under Napoleon's slogan: "He who does not want to feed his own army will end up feeding a foreign one." The Program also speaks of "the gradual reduction of the level of confrontation, disarmament on the basis of strictly parity bases." It commits the Party to the creation of "deserved living conditions for servicemen and their families." Moreover, the statism of its ideology, which emphasizes empire and order, finds strong support in the military because it opposes those actions which lower the prestige of the Armed Forces, including the use of the army to "resolve the problems of other countries," i.e., international peacekeeping, the internal use of the armed forces within the country, and "the distortion of the fatherland's military history, the conscious discrediting of the army in public opinion, and the lowering of the honor and worth of the defenders of the Fatherland."<sup>64</sup>

Zhirinovskiy views the army as a potential ally in restoring order, if it can be won over to the LDP. "I see such a Russia. She will have the most powerful army in the world, strategic rocket forces, our missiles with multiple warheads. Our space combat platforms, our space ship 'Buran' and our 'Energiya' missiles--this will be missile shield of the country."<sup>65</sup> His views are close to those Red-Browns, who dominated the editorial policy of *The Military-Historical Journal* of the Ministry of Defense during the tenure of General-Major V. I. Filatov in 1989-1991.<sup>66</sup> He has stated: "The destruction of the army must stop immediately. This is the last [institution] that we have that has a unified, healthy power. It can stop the collapse of the state, for the political forces of compromise have not achieved mastery there."<sup>67</sup>

Zhirinovskiy's approach to winning over the army is to create a new unity between the army and the nation by mobilizing both around a shared image of a "foreign enemy," and for all practical purposes this is the United States as a power and Zionism as an ideology. He is holding out to the army future glories through which it will be reborn.

We need another border. We must either reach the shores of the Pacific and Indian Oceans or cut ourselves off from the south behind a 'Chinese wall.' . . . That means there is only one variant. We must execute this operation under the code name 'final thrust to the south.'

Our army will accomplish this task. This will be the means to revive the entire nation. This will be the basis for the rebirth of the Russian Army. The new armed forces can be reborn only as a result of combat operations. The army can not gain strength in garrisons and barracks. It needs a goal, mission. Such was the mission-- counter the threat of German occupation, and gave birth to red regiments and divisions, for the struggle against the foreign invaders. Thus a powerful Red Army made its appearance. Today a Russian Army must be reborn, if it finishes with the fighters in Central Asia, in the Caucasus, in Moldavia, if it executes the operation to set up Russia's new borders in the southern direction. All this will provide stimulus for the development of the economy, transport, communications, for the extraction of resources for production, light industry, cheap labor, the possibilities of building new main lines to Deli, Teheran and Baghdad, new air lines, and new highways.<sup>68</sup>

At the Party's 3rd Congress many speakers addressed the military and its fate. The LDP set out to use the politization of the military to its own ends, seeking to discredit the government and the current military leadership. It played upon the loss of prestige felt by the officer corps. K. N. Popov spoke of a collapse of discipline, tanks rusting in Siberia, warships unable to put to sea, planes that could not fly. He criticized the current military leadership as businessmen and not commanders. The only hope was to spread the Party's ideas among "mid-level officer corps, where many are sympathetic to our ideas."<sup>69</sup> The Party's propagandists were instructed to take their message into the barracks and academies to gain support against a compromised military leadership. So M. I. Musatov, Leader of the LDP's Moscow Organization, reported at the Party Congress.<sup>70</sup> V. I. Ivanov also appealed to the officers and men of the Soviet Army, who with the dissolution of the Union had been left to swear allegiance to new masters.

We must remove this mark of shame from our army, an undeserved mark but continually, assiduously applied. We must declare publicly: you are not guilty of anything and have nothing for which to blame yourself. Your banner is not stained. You only obeyed orders. And those who gave a second oath, let them think about what troops, who are given other oaths, stand.<sup>71</sup>

The implications of this position were made clear in another speech, when a naval officer spoke of the Party's efforts to organize its own detachments within the armed forces themselves. Captain 3rd Rank Yu. L. Savin, serving in St. Petersburg, also spoke of a growing chaos and violence in the near abroad, the popular inertia at home and governmental incompetence as they affected the armed forces: "the troops will not go against the people, but the troops will march against thugs (*pogromshchiki*).

Therefore, we, the St. Petersburg Organization, have created self-defense detachments."<sup>72</sup>

The LPD's efforts in the military did pay off in the December elections for Parliament, when one third of the military voted for their slate of candidates.<sup>73</sup> The actual number of military personnel voting for LDP is hard to estimate. Various figures regarding the percentage of military personnel in specific units, branches of the armed forces and institutions that voted for Zhirinovskiy and the LDP have appeared in the press. The more sensational ones have gotten the widest attention: 87.4 percent of those who voted in Taman Motorized Rifle Division and 74.3 percent of those who voted in the Kantemirov Tank Division, two of the garrison divisions in the Moscow Military District, went for Zhirinovskiy, as did 72 percent of the voters in the Strategic Rocket Forces, and 40 percent of the Air Force. Among the students and staff of the Humanitarian Academy, i.e, the renamed and supposedly reformed Lenin Political Academy, 93 percent voted for the LDP.<sup>74</sup> Since most of these soldiers voted at civilian polling places, it is very difficult to know on exactly what basis these figures were compiled. More solid figures exist for the Russian garrisons in the "near abroad" or in isolated communities within Russia proper. Helena Fiedorcowa, writing for *Polska zbrojna*, reported: ". . . in Tadjikistan Zhirinovskiy received 43.4 percent of the votes of the military electorate, in the garrisons of the Black Sea Fleet 19 percent, in Kaliningrad 29 percent, in the units stationed in Georgia and Turkmenistan around 40 percent."<sup>75</sup> President Yeltsin gave the figure of one-third for the LDP vote within the armed forces at a recent press conference and stated: "We are worried about this and appropriate measures have been taken."<sup>76</sup>

On December 22, Yuriy Belichenko, writing in *Krasnaya zvezda*, defended the large army vote for Zhirinovskiy in the following terms:

The Army voted for itself, for its own interests, which certainly are not narrow, corporative, petty interests but state interests. For a strong, united and patriotically-oriented Russia. For politicians not to drag it into their games in the future. For the Army to be respected and socially protected. For worthy service for its new recruits and a worthy life for its veterans.<sup>77</sup>

Speaking more bluntly, General Valdimir Dudnik, chairman of the Army and Society organization, which draws much of its strength from the Humanitarian Academy, asserted: "the army has bidden adieu to Yeltsin."<sup>78</sup> Dudnik overstated the case. The bulk of the military remain committed to Yeltsin as Commander in Chief, but a political struggle is underway for the Army. And the momentum seems to be in Zhirinovskiy's favor.



## Zhirinovskiy as Charismatic Leader.

While the ideology and program of the Liberal-Democratic Party are important as a guide to the popular appeal of the Party and as some hint to its possible policies, should it come to power, Zhirinovskiy as leader and symbol has much to do with the movement's success. There is no shortage of radical, Red-Brown opponents to Gorbachev and Yeltsin, but Zhirinovskiy has been able to steal their thunder and emerge as the undisputed voice of the opposition. Of course, the fact that other opposition figures managed to discredit themselves, e.g., the Gang of Seven who in August 1991 tried to save the Union by coup, or Khasbulatov and Rutskoy who were defeated and discredited in October in their struggle with Yeltsin, has made his task easier. But one should not underestimate his appeal. In August 1991 he openly sympathized with the Putsch and his political career seemed over. In 1992 he sided with the parliamentary majority against Yeltsin's government. In both cases temporary setbacks became the basis for political recovery and expansion of his base of support. Zhirinovskiy's appeal has been the subject of analysis by supporters and opponents. While many democrats underestimated him in the elections of 1991 and 1993, others have considered him the only serious, consistent, oppositional challenge to Boris Yeltsin's leadership.<sup>79</sup>

Moreover, the LDP's propaganda cultivates an image of Zhirinovskiy as a "leader of a new formation." He is depicted as a leader thrown up by the people, who is hated by those "democrats" eager to sell the Russian nation into the slavery of foreign capital. To his followers Zhirinovskiy represents exactly the antidote to the excess of democracy, i.e., disorders, arbitrariness, the anarchy of production and a catastrophic decline in the living standards of working people. In him they see the basis for a "firm, intelligent, and powerful authority [vlast']."<sup>80</sup> Zhirinovskiy is "ready to be a strict Papa."<sup>81</sup>

Typical of this view of Zhirinovskiy is the portrait of Zhirinovskiy as "leader" drawn by I. S. Kulikova in a article attacking the Mayor of St. Petersburg, Anatolyi Sobchak. Sobchak is presented as unprincipled careerist, seeking power as an end in itself. Zhirinovskiy, who shares with Sobchak the distinction of being a lawyer, followed a different road to politics. Zhirinovskiy began "with a program and its delineation first for himself, of the concrete ways to save the motherland from the impending crisis." Zhirinovskiy rejected self-promotion and found he could not trust other parties and so set out on the difficult path of building his own movement, the Liberal-Democratic Party. His ideas, according to Kulikova, were ones already proven abroad and even in Russia before revolutionary excess drowned them in 1917. Zhirinovskiy's appearance, indeed the "Zhirinovskiy Phenomenon," is depicted as "historical necessity, the consequence of perestroika, glasnost, and democratization of our much suffering society."<sup>82</sup>

Zhirinovskiy's propagandists present him as a man from the people, who understands their suffering and longing. As he has declared at each campaign meeting, "I am one of you."<sup>83</sup> He lives in a two-room apartment and is an astrological Taurus.<sup>84</sup> No one put red carpets in his path. Rather as a Russian in Kazakhstan he found his path blocked by what he called "colonialism in reverse."<sup>85</sup> He had to develop his skills as a fighter and expend his energy in the process of entering into the political arena.<sup>86</sup> He is depicted as the continual victim of distorted reporting from the press, unfounded charges that he is a Fascist, Communist, uses narcotics, or worked for the KGB.<sup>87</sup> Reading this propaganda, one is struck by two points: first, the utter naivete of these presentations of the leader and, second, the calculated cultivation of the leader's image as a cult figure, whose power and appeal is vested in the masses themselves, who see in him the embodiment of their collective experience. This is, in short, meta-politics of the type seen in Weimar Germany--the politics of the outsider who becomes the embodiment of the nation's hopes, fears, and anger. It was a role that Boris Yeltsin played against Mikhail Gorbachev after his exile from Kremlin politics. In Zhirinovskiy's case, however, the exile, in fact, played the role of minor clerk, Gogol's Akakiy Akakievich, in service of Brezhnev's stagnating order, where lawyers served the interests of the Party-State order. In Zhirinovskiy's case his own model seems to be that of the reformist bureaucrat, an N. A. Milyutin, who has liberated himself from serving a capricious tsar and may act in the interests of the state, which he understands and represents.<sup>88</sup> In the end, society is to be reshaped in the interests of the state by reform from above.

Critics of Zhirinovskiy divide into two broad camps: those who dismiss him as a clown and see darker forces manipulating his phenomenon and those who take Zhirinovskiy's appeal seriously and have tried to fathom the nature of his charisma. Those who see Zhirinovskiy as a tool focus on the dark forces in the old Communist Party and KGB, who have sought to use him for their own ends. Those who focus on his charisma do not deny the efforts by such forces to use Zhirinovskiy, but emphasize his emancipation from their control. One of the most astute observers in this regard is Alexander Yanov, a scholar and journalist who has devoted considerable time to the study of Russian Fascism and extreme nationalism. Yanov has described Zhirinovskiy's position in Russia as "the classic situation of the outsider, the pretender, if favorable, who are always created in times of trouble literally out of nowhere--at the moment when the forces struggling for power begin to lose the trust of the public."<sup>89</sup> Of all the Red-Brown leaders seeking power, no other has "the Lumpen recklessness, unbridledness, amorality, tactlessness, anti-intellectualism, and charisma" of Zhirinovskiy.<sup>90</sup> Yanov describes Zhirinovskiy as a late 20th century "Robin Hood," whose foreign policy pronouncements are matters of practical politics. He openly declared that he would embark upon nuclear blackmail of the West once he came to power. This approach, which would seek

to end Russia's crisis by simple extortion of the West, would, as Yanov points out, violate all the rules of international politics. But for Zhirinovskiy such an argument is irrelevant. Rules are meant to be broken if this will enhance his drive for power. In the area of nuclear deterrence this has special relevance. "In distinction from conventional Russian and Western politicians, *he is prepared to risk mutual destruction.*"<sup>91</sup> (emphasis in original) This is more than simple blackmail and represents a throw-back to the pre-nuclear era when a leader like Hitler could speak of naked force and decisiveness in creating "a completely new political universe." "This new universe exactly reflects the situation of his country, a situation of total collapse. He intends to thrust it upon the world."<sup>92</sup> His universe is a nightmare answer to Western claims of a new world order. With nothing to lose, he is willing to threaten cities with nuclear destruction in exchange for getting what he wants. Zhirinovskiy, born after the Great Patriotic War and during the nuclear era, is unmoved by either the terrible losses of that war or the even greater casualties his nuclear blackmail could bring in its wake.

The electoral performances of Zhirinovskiy and his party make this more than a matter of Zhirinovskiy's own unbridled ambitions and fantastic projects. His new universe is one of a restored and expanded empire, stretching into the Middle East and allied with like-minded powers in Germany and Asia.

Yanov sees Zhirinovskiy's electoral support coming from the broad strata of Soviet society who were "Lumpenized" by the totalitarian regime and left without status or protection by the collapse of that regime. In an interview with Yanov, Zhirinovskiy openly admitted seeking a mass political base from these de-classe elements of society upon which he can build an electoral majority and reach power. When Yanov warned that such an approach carried the risk that such forces, when they did not get immediate satisfaction of their demands from his government, would within hours turn up and devour it, Zhirinovskiy answered, "History will show."<sup>93</sup> Zhirinovskiy's universe invites comparisons with Dostoyevskiy's worst nightmares about marginalized and superfluous men in a world without God or morals. His world is populated by Raskolnikovs, Grand Inquisitors and Father Karamazovs. Zhirinovskiy in commenting on his birth in Kazakhstan and the 18 years he spent there has referred to himself as "a peripheral Russian" who felt this marginalization there and even in Moscow, where he was admitted to the elite Institute of Eastern Languages of Moscow University. Among the children of the Soviet elite he was a gifted outsider. Throughout the Brezhnev era of stagnation he served as a minor official until, as Yanov observes, Perestroika created a market for his politics of anger and frustration.<sup>94</sup> Reading Zhirinovskiy's autobiography one is left with the impression that the early frustrations and burdens of life strike a very responsive cord with many Russians of his generation, who put up with so much, while others with better access to power and privilege prospered. Zhirinovskiy asserts that

his own sufferings prepared him for the struggle for power. Of Gorbachev, Zhirinovskiy wrote: "Gorbachev lived a sweet life. Why did he destroy the country and could not do anything good? He was weak, because he had everything. The son of the chairman of the kolkhoz, that means the son of the estate owner (*pomeshchik*). He lived like a little lord (*barchonok*) already then."<sup>95</sup> The blows that Zhirinovskiy suffered have given the leader the will to power.

This marginalization has contributed to his sentiment for empire by conquest. The strong take what they can and the weak suffer. It is the morality of the labor camp and a perverse Hobbesian struggle for survival. In such a universe there are no constraints. "Here for him the concepts of legitimacy, property, or law do not exist."<sup>96</sup> What does exist is the state. In this regard the state holds all property and territory in its interests. Once having held territory and possessing sufficient power to enforce its authority, the state may claim back any territories or peoples that were within its domains. Other peoples either lack a state or have a state too weak to act in defense of their interests. As Yanov observes, "This is simply the logic of a gulag thief erected here in the ranks of state policy."<sup>97</sup> In an interview in a Lithuanian newspaper Zhirinovskiy stated:

The Baltic region is Russian land. I will shoot you. In the border zone of Smolensk *oblast'* I will begin to collect nuclear waste, and you, Lithuanians, will die from radiation sickness. I will remove the Russians and Poles. I am the lord, I am a tyrant. I follow in Hitler's footsteps.<sup>98</sup>

## **Conclusion.**

For the last 2 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union Zhirinovskiy has devoted his efforts to preparing his party for upcoming elections. In the fall of this year, when Yeltsin moved against the Parliament the LDP was ready to compete in parliamentary elections and benefited from those preparations. However, the ultimate prize is still Zhirinovskiy's own election as president. And whether those elections come in the spring of 1994 or in 1996, the point is that Zhirinovskiy will be competing for a powerful presidency that could give him the leverage to initiate his foreign and domestic program. In assessing his own chances for success, Zhirinovskiy has declared: "Give me a billion dollars, and I will become president of Russia."<sup>99</sup> Given his program and base of support, he is much closer to realizing his objective today than he was only a few months ago.

Zhirinovskiy is neither a Russian Hitler nor a simple throwback to "Black Hundredism." He and his party are distinct products of the Soviet system and its collapse. The chaos and disorder of the last several years have created a climate of fear

and anger, which he has been quite astute in exploiting. That he is a Russian statist, an imperialist, authoritarian, xenophobe, and anti-Semitic is without question. But this mix is joined with a vulgar charisma that gives him broad appeal to those seeking order and security. Given his amorality and declared willingness to engage in nuclear blackmail and take risks, his raise to power would signal an end to any hope for a democratic Russia and the prospects for a renewed era of confrontation with a Russian state bent upon overturning the international balance of power and reasserting its hegemony by conquest. Zhirinovskiy in power means war:

*Let Russia successfully execute its final 'thrust' to the south. I see Russian soldiers, assembling for this final southern campaign. I see Russian commanders in the staff headquarters of Russian divisions and armies, drawing the line of march of the troop formations and the final points of the march routes. I see airplanes at airbases in the southern districts of Russia. I see submarines cruising along the shores of the Indian Ocean and assault ships approaching the shores along which the soldiers of the Russian Army already march, armored personnel carriers are moving, huge masses of tanks move forward. [italics in the original] At last, Russia completes its final military campaign. It once and for all excludes war from the south for Russia, and from the north it was already long ago impossible. To the West they will understand this. And to the East they will also understand this.*<sup>100</sup>

We have heard the soliloquy of this self-proclaimed, would-be tyrant but need not be slaves to his plots. The Army is a key vehicle on his road to power and in the execution of his plans. He is our sworn enemy. We can not afford to stand aside and let those plots unfold. His final thrust for empire could turn the next century into another nightmare of total war and human suffering. To ignore this threat and to give up our efforts to aid Russian democracy will only aid his cause. Our enemy is not Russia, its people, or its Army. Rather, they are a battleground. Just as we seek partnership with a democratic Russia and support military-to-military ties to enhance professionalism and the integration of the Army into an open and free society, so we must oppose Zhirinovskiy and his party. Zhirinovskiy is the most foul product of that revolt against totalitarianism and empire now recasting Eurasia. We will master this bastard child of revolution, or he will surely master us.

Military-to-military contacts are one way in which the West can undermine the xenophobic chauvinism to which Zhirinovskiy has appealed in his struggle to gain influence within the Army. So long as Russia remains committed to democratic reform, we should continue these efforts. What is required at the present time is a strategy of active engagement to bring bilateral and multilateral efforts into a coherent whole so that they can have the greatest

influence on the views of Russia's mid-level officer corps, i.e., the center of gravity of the Armed Forces.

Partnership for Peace, by extending a hand to democratic Russia, holds out the promise of a peaceful and whole Europe. At the same time it also asserts that, should Russia and its Army come under the sway of Zhirinovskiy or others with his imperial ambitions, then the West is prepared to look most closely at using NATO to create a broader system of collective defense to prevent the reassertion of Russian hegemony by force of arms in Central and Eastern Europe.

### ENDNOTES -- CHAPTER 3

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4. *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1993, p. A1.

5. *The New York Times*, October 22, 1993, p. A1.

6. NATO, "Declaration of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 10-11 January 1994," Brussels, Belgium: NATO Press Service, 1994, p. 3.

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8. Michael R. Gordon, "Perry Says Caution is Vital to Russian Partnership," *The New York Times*, March 15, 1994, p. A4.

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12. Serge Schmemmann, "Russia's Elections: A Dose of Invective," *The New York Times*, December 19, 1993, p. E3.

13. Serge Schemann, "Votes Born in Anger," *The New York Times*, December 15, 1993, p. A-8.

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16. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, No. 237, December 13, 1993.
17. *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 45, November 1993, p. 5.
18. Alexander Yanov, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," *Novoye vremya*, No. 41, 1992, p. 8.
19. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, Moscow: LDP (Liber'no-demokraticeskaya partiya), 1993, pp. 48-49.
20. E. A. Kolkotin, "LDP - partiya tsentra," *Liberal*, Nos. 6-7, 1993, p. 14.
21. Lyudmila Saraskina and Larisa Piyasheva, "Rossiyskiy liberalizm: Luchshe byt' svobodnym chem nishchim," *Stolitsa*, No. 46, 1992, p. 6.
22. M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, "The Liberal," in *Tales from M. Saltykov-Shchedrin*, Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, n. d., pp. 139-145.
23. George Fischer, *Russian Liberalism*, Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1958, pp. 203-204.
24. "Samosoznaniye sotsial'noye i natsional'noye: S tochki zreniya P. I. Milyukova," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 21.
25. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, p. 57.
26. V. V. Zhirinovskiy, "Politicheskii doklad i vystupleniya predsedatelya LDP V. V. Zhirinovskogo," *Liberal*, Nos. 6-7, 1992, p. 3.
27. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 9.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*
30. Zhirinovskiy, "Politicheskii doklad . . . ," p.3.
31. Sergei Zharikov, "Vysshaya rasa," *Sokol Zhirinovskogo*, No. 2, May 1992, p. 13.
32. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, p. 64.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
34. Aleksey Vinogradov, "Rossiyu Russkim," *Sokol Zhirinovskogo*, No. 2, 1992, p. 7.

35. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, p. 113.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Anatoliiy Ivanov, "Blagorodnyy liberalizm Zhirinovskogo," *Sokol Zhirinovskogo*, No. 2, May 1992, p. 5.
38. Kolkotin, "LDP - partiya tsentra," *Liberal*, Nos. 6-7, 1992, p. 14.
39. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 27.
40. A. Antropov, "Tri Industrializatsii Rossii," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 12.
41. S. F. Dergunov, "Ekonomika perekhodnogo perioda," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 13.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
43. S. Zhebrovskiy, "Privatizatsiya cherez arendu (Kontseptsiya privatizatsii v interesakh vseh grazhdan," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 9. Zhebrovsky drew up the economic strategy that the LDP followed in the recent parliamentary campaign and has been nominated by Zhirinovskiy to be shadow minister of economics. Zhebrovsky is a physicist by training, taught at various technical institutes, and was a science editor for *Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, and *Mir* publishing houses before joining the LDP apparatus. On Zhebrovsky's career and role in LDP "shadow government" see: *Izvestiya*, December 18, 1993, p. 4.
44. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 38.
45. "Ne svobodyye tseny na energoresursy, a gosudrstvennoye regulirovaniye ekonomicheskoy deyatel'nosti (Kontseptsiya stimulirovaniya vnutrennego proizvodstva)," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 10.
46. V. V. Zhirinovskiy, "O sud'bakh Rossii: Zemlevladienie i krest'yanskiy vopros," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 23. Zhirinovskiy seems unique among contemporary Russian politicians in his invocation of statist reformism and its tsarist champions, i.e., Count P. D. Kiselev, N. A. Milyutin, S. Yu. Witte, and P. A. Stolypin. See Plekhanov, "Ya - odin iz vas," pp. 87-88.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
48. "Osnovye zadachi i tseli LDP," *Liberal*, Nos. 6-7, 1993, p. 31.
49. Steven Erlanger, "Who Voted for Rightist in Russia? Mostly Nervous Men, Poll Shows," *The New York Times*, December 30, 1993, p. A-4.



50. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 17. The Perm Organization of Zhirinovsky's Falcons (Sokoly), the youth organization of the LDP, is reported to have proposed the amalgamation of Perm and Sverdlovsk oblasts to create one guberniya. They already have their candidate for the governorship, a young medical student, and have laid out a program to expel all Gypsies, Trans-Caucasians and Vietnamese from the Guberniya and to restore law and order by introducing a new criminal code and execution by firing squad. See: *RFE/RL Daily Report*, No. 243, December 21, 1993.

51. Yanov, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," *Novoye vremya*, No. 41, 1992, p. 12.

52. Alexander Barkashov and the Movement of Russian National Unity differ from Zhirinovsky in that the former is overtly Fascist in its signs, symbols, and language. Their slogan "Russian Order" (*Russkiy poryadok*), their symbol (crossed blades over a swastika), and their creed of racism and anti-Semitism leave no doubt about their program and direction. Barkashov openly sided with Ruts koy and Khasbulatov in September 1993, his followers in their black uniforms were to be seen around the White House, and with the armed coup of early October and its suppression he and his followers were driven under ground. In December Barkashov was wounded in a drive-by shooting and then arrested in his hospital bed. Zhirinovsky, on the other hand, seeks to be embraced by them without making an overt commitment to their program. Zhirinovsky, rather than rejecting all of the Soviet period as a Jewish-Masonic conspiracy against the Russian nation, has tried to build a link through the concept of state and empire that knits Muscovite, Imperial, and Soviet Russia. His imperial ideology in this regard is inclusive, even if it has to hint at some points, such as his reappraisal of Hitler. On the ideology of the Movement of Russian National Unity see: *Azbuka russkogo patriota*, Moscow, Dvizhenie, "Russkoye natsional'noye edinstvo," 1991; and *Russkiy poryadok*, No 2, 1992. On Barkashov's fate see *RFE/RL Daily Report*, No. 2, January 4, 1994.

53. Vandenko, "Sokol Zhirinovskiy," *Novyy vzglyad*, No. 38, 1992, p. 1.

54. Igor' Minin, "Teoreticheskie osnovy natsional-sotsializma," *Sokol Zhirinovskogo*, No. 2, 1992, pp. 10-11.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

56. *Liberal*, No. 6-7, 1992, pp. 8, 17, 29.

57. Leonid Pronskii, "Spiriticheskiy seans v Rozhdestvo: Dukh Nikolo Makiavelli o rossiyskikh 'gosudaryakh'," *Rossiya*, January, 11, 1994, p 8.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 12. German radical right parties share this view of the world. Gerhard Frey of the German People's Union *Deutsche Volkunion* Party attended the 3rd Congress of the LDP and is quoted in the LDP's organ, *Liberal*, as speaking with admiration of the LDP's program and saying that his organization "stands opposed to America's supremacy in the world and seeks that Russia should be powerful and occupy a deserved place in the world." (p. 7)

61. Andrey Arkhipov, "Novyy poryadok: Parallelnyye tsivilizatsii," *Sokol Zhirinovskogo*, No. 2, 1992, p. 8.

62. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, pp. 118-119.

63. "Platforma Liberal'no-Demokraticheskoy Partii," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 2.

64. "Osnovnyye zadachi i tseli LDP," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 31.

65. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, p. 112.

66. On the ideology of this group of civilians and soldiers see: Jacob W. Kipp, "Perestroika and Order," *Military Review*, No. 12, December 1989, pp. 10-12. Filatov and Karem Rash after the failure of the August Putsch joined the Red-Brown forces at *Den'* and *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. Filatov kept a semi-official position for a time as editor of *Situatsiya*, the weekly newspaper of the Internal Troops of the MVD and served on the editorial board of *Na boevom postu*, the journal of the Internal Troops.

67. I. S. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," in E. A. Kocherin, ed., *Fenomen Zhirinovskogo* in: Biblioteka Zhurnala Kontrolling, *Seriya "Tayny vlasti v organizatsiyakh"*, Vypusk 3, Moscow: Kontrolling, 1992, p. 10.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

69. *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 6.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Ibid.*

73. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, December 23, 1993.

74. *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 21, 1993, p. 1.

75. Helena Fiedorcowa, "Zyrinowski -- zonglovanie

obietnicami," *Polska zbrojna*, December 15, 1994.

76. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, No. 245, December 23, 1993.

77. *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 22, 1993, p. 3.

78. *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 21, 1993, p. 1.

79. Unlike Speaker Khasbulatov and Vice President Rutskoy, who both were Yeltsin allies in 1991, Zhirinovskiy has been a consistent opponent of Gorbachev and Yeltsin.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

81. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 29.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

83. S. N. Plekhanov, "Ya - odin iz vas," in Kocherin, *Fenomen Zhirinovskogo* in Biblioteka Zhurnala Kontrolling, *Seriya "Tayny vlasti v organizatsiyakh,"* p. 82.

84. One should not dismiss the fact that Plekhanov saw fit to give Zhirinovskiy's astrological sign as a piece of human interest. As if in revolt from the objectivity imposed by formal adherence to "scientific Communism," a long-suppressed, underground interest in the occult has emerged as a popular mania in Russia. Radio programs carry daily charts as do many mass-circulation newspapers. The author remembers his first interview with supporters of Boris Yeltsin in April 1990. In addition to Yeltsin's objective qualities as a leader, they cited two astrological charts, one for Yeltsin and one for Russia, which supposedly confirmed a common fate, including a period of challenge over the next several years and then a positive future beginning in 1993.

85. Plekhanov, "Ya - odin iz vas," p. 84.

86. I. Kulikova, "Sobchak, k bar'eru," *Liberal*, No. 2, 1992, p. 27.

87. Kulikova, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," p. 57.

88. The statist predilections of many reform bureaucrats in 19th century Russia is discussed in: W. Bruce Lincoln and Jacob W. Kipp, "Autocracy and Reform: Bureaucratic Absolutism and Political Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *Russian History*, Vol. VI, Pt. 1, 1979, pp. 1-21.

89. Alexander Yanov, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," *Novoye vremya*, No. 41, 1992, p. 8.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

94. *Ibid.* Upon graduation he was sent to study for eight months in Turkey, where "he got into some sort of trouble and ended up in jail." This turn of events effectively ended his career as an area specialist. Then he served in the military in the Trans-Caucasian military district. On his return to Moscow he worked for the Committee for the Defense of Peace and took night classes in the Law Faculty of Moscow University. He became a mid-level Soviet bureaucrat with frustrated ambitions and hatred toward those who had ruined his chances. Of his six classmates at the Institute of Eastern Languages Plekhanov states one was the son of a general, one the son of a deputy minister of Foreign Affairs, one the son of a senior official in the Central Committee of the Party, one the son of a directorate in the State Committee for Foreign Economic Ties. Plekhanov, "Ya - odin iz vas," p. 85.

95. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, p. 49.

96. Yanov, "Fenomen Zhirinovskogo," *Novoye vremya*, No. 41, 1992, p. 10.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

99. *Ibid.*

100. Zhirinovskiy, *Posledniy brodok na yug*, pp. 142-143.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE IMPACT OF THE RUSSIAN ELECTIONS ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Thomas M. Nichols

#### Introduction: An "Electoral Mutiny?"

Still reeling from the shock of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's victory in the December 12, 1993 Russian elections, observers in Russia and the West soon realized that Zhirinovskiy had won not only among a broad spectrum of Russians, but also decisively carried the vote among perhaps the most important and unpredictable segment of Russian society: the Russian Armed Forces. This chapter seeks to identify the sources of Zhirinovskiy's popularity among the armed forces, to consider the impact of that support on Russian civil-military relations, and to examine military loyalties in the wake of the October 1993 attack on the Russian Parliament and the subsequent December elections, which *The Economist* likened to "an electoral mutiny."<sup>1</sup>

As of this writing, it appears that the military is emerging as a forceful broker in Russian politics, capable of altering domestic and foreign policy priorities to suit its own values and interests. Indeed, such fears are already being voiced by Russian political leaders of various orientations. "I have a feeling," former CIS Commander in Chief Evgenii Shaposhnikov said after the elections, "that today power structures [i.e., military and security forces] are completely beyond presidential and governmental control."<sup>2</sup> Foreign Minister Kozyrev concurs; "The armed forces," he told *The New York Times*, "have a foreign policy of their own."<sup>3</sup> Civilian defense analyst Sergei Rogov adds: "The effort to build a civilian-led Defense Ministry has failed miserably . . . For this I blame Yeltsin, who believes that letting the military do what it wants is safer politically, so the army is uncoupled from the weak Russian state."<sup>4</sup> And several Russian commentators have been unnerved by Defense Minister Pavel Grachev's ostensibly joking remark made in response to a question about what the military would do if the new Parliament amended the recently revamped Russian military doctrine. If that happens, Grachev said, "We shall amend the parliament."<sup>5</sup>

Before taking up these and other issues, it is important to consider the scope of Zhirinovskiy's victory among military voters.

#### The LDPR and the Armed Forces.

In attempting to gauge military support for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), one fact becomes clear from the available evidence, however scattered or incomplete: the military supported Zhirinovskiy in numbers at least equal to, and almost certainly much greater than, the support the LDPR found in

society at large. A complete accounting of the military vote in the December election will never be available, since most servicemen and officers voted at public (*otkrytii*) polling stations, where their votes were tallied in the aggregate vote. Nonetheless, even if the reported results from stations at military facilities represent only 1-2 percent of the military vote, they still tell an alarming story.<sup>6</sup>

Initial reports indicated that some two-thirds of the Strategic Rocket Forces had voted for the LDPR, and *The Economist* reported that Zhirinovskiy had actually won 93 percent of the vote at the "Russian Military Academy."<sup>7</sup> When the votes were later tallied more completely, the actual composition of the military vote was even more disturbing. The Russian press has cited both the Central Election Commission and the Ministry of Defense as confirming that 72 percent of the SRF voted for the LDPR, with the Communists taking 16.5 percent and Russia's Choice a distant third with 5.8 percent; worse, the "academy" referred to was actually the Humanitarian Academy, the successor to the old Lenin Political-Military Academy.<sup>8</sup> The new academy was supposed to be the foundation for a new breed of Russian officer, although academy officials have admitted that this has proven to be a difficult transition to make.<sup>9</sup>

In other regions, the LDPR seemed to do as well if not better. A spokesman for the Central Electoral Commission said that the LDPR "proved popular among servicemen in the Far East and Baikal Military Districts," but he did not say how popular--a revealing omission in itself.<sup>10</sup> (Later reports claimed that Russia's Choice came in *fourth* in the Far East District with 4.3 percent of the vote; the LDPR came in first with 19 percent, the Communists next with 11.5 percent, and Civic Union third with 8.5 percent, the remainder apparently spread out over several smaller parties.)<sup>11</sup> The LDPR also came in first in voting among soldiers serving in Georgia, with Russia's Choice second and the Party of Russian Unity and Accord third. Again, however, no figures were listed; one would assume that a close race with Russia's Choice would have been reported with hard numbers in order to minimize Zhirinovskiy's victory. These numbers were obviously available, since the authorities reported that voter turnout among Russian soldiers in Georgia was 83 percent, with 80 percent approving the new constitution.<sup>12</sup>

Moscow television tried to put a better face on the results, reporting a few days after the election that Russia's Choice won "a number of battalions" of the Moscow Military District, with Russian Unity and Accord second and the LDPR third.<sup>13</sup> But *Sovetskaiia Rossiia*, citing figures from the *Moscow Times*, claims that the final tally in the Moscow Military District (reports of "some battalions" notwithstanding) actually revealed a smashing victory for Zhirinovskiy: 46 percent for the LDPR, 13.7 percent for the Communist Party, and 8.5 percent for Russia's Choice.<sup>14</sup> The report goes on to claim that 87.4 percent of the Taman division, and 74.3 percent of the Kantemir division

(supposedly, after the October events, the President's own division) voted LDPR. The Russian Air Force, according to this report, also gave the LDPR a commanding plurality of 40 percent, compared with 11.5 percent for Russia's Choice, and 8.7 percent for the Communist Party, although how the *Moscow Times* was able to isolate the "Air Force" vote was unclear.

The Russian Ministry of Defense has tried to minimize the political damage done by the vote. The large military vote for the LDPR presents a picture of the military that is quite dissonant with the image favored by Grachev and others in the MOD of an army that is pro-Yeltsin and pro-reform (and in foreign affairs, nonaggressive). Even though there was some good news (initial results indicate that some 70-80 percent of servicemen voted for the new constitution), Russian journalist Pavel Felgengauer has rightly noted that "evidently, the Defense Ministry's current policy is to keep from the public, if possible, the data on how the army voted on party lists."<sup>15</sup>

Elena Agapova, Defense Ministry spokesman, retorted that it was "intolerable and irresponsible to draw conclusions to the effect that servicemen voted only for the leader of the LDPR," especially since the majority of military men voted at public stations and their votes are therefore unknown. Agapova was apparently unaware of the tenuousness of her denial; after all, if results at the restricted polls show a large LDPR victory and results of military voting elsewhere are unknowable, then why is it "irresponsible" to draw the statistically appropriate conclusion? Agapova claimed that results of voting at restricted stations "cannot reflect a true and complete picture of the results of the ballot in the Armed Forces, as the number of servicemen who voted at restricted polling stations constituted less than 1 percent of the [military]."<sup>16</sup> As in previous reports, Agapova issued this denial without mentioning exactly *which* results at the restricted stations were to be ignored, or exactly what the numbers for each party were.

Even if the actual votes of the majority of servicemen are difficult to find, military candidacies are not, and it should be mentioned at this point that the LDPR managed to field more military candidates for the Duma than any other party. Whether this was because other parties shunned military candidates remains unclear in most cases. As far as Russia's Choice was concerned, military men were discouraged from running by retired Col. Gen. Volkogonov, military adviser to Yeltsin and himself a Russia's Choice candidate.<sup>17</sup> This was in marked contrast to remarks by Admiral Chernavin, commander in chief of both the Soviet Fleet and the present Russian Fleet, and a candidate from Civic Union, who was disappointed that there weren't more military candidates, "because, of course, there must be representatives in parliament who have first-hand experience of [military issues]."<sup>18</sup>

In any case, of the 25 active-duty servicemen and officers

(and two semi-retired officers) who stood for office either from single-member districts or on party lists, the majority (10) were sponsored by independent voter groups.<sup>19</sup> These independent candidates were mostly enlisted men, all but one of whom came from areas outside of Moscow or St. Petersburg. The next largest group of military candidates, however (8), represented the LDPR. All were enlisted men, except for Professor (and colonel) G. Lukava, who is actually a former senior instructor from the Lenin Political-Military Academy. Nor were these old men or senior officers: the average age of the LDPR candidates (excluding Lukava) was 43.7, and all are apparently enlisted men. Of the other parties that fielded military candidates, the Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms, led by Marshal Shaposhnikov, included three other servicemen, while Civic Union had Chernavin and one other senior officer listed; Russia's Choice, the Democratic Party of Russia, and the Communist Party each had one (although the Russia's Choice candidate was actually Volkogonov, who is no longer an active-duty officer). As of this writing, no information is available about which of these individual candidates will serve in the Duma. However, the relatively large number of military candidates running on behalf of the LDPR, combined with the large margins for Zhirinovskiy among military voters, shows a clear pattern of support for both Zhirinovskiy and his party among Russian military personnel.

In the ensuing weeks after the election, Yeltsin's government finally came to terms with the scope of Zhirinovskiy's victory. Presidential spokesman Vladimir Smirnov admitted that "Most Russian servicemen voted for the Liberal Democratic Party . . . Press reports on this are correct," even though Yeltsin himself had claimed only days before that Zhirinovskiy had garnered only one-third of the military's votes. Smirnov laid the blame for the vote on "current educational work in the Army, which has reshaped the Communist doctrine into a national-socialist one."<sup>20</sup> Smirnov did not specify what kind of "educational work" was being done with the troops, and he seemed to imply that poor pay and harsh conditions in the military were also to blame. But Zhirinovskiy's showing may have been helped significantly by political workers, and the price to be paid is the disbanding of the political apparatus. On December 21, the Defense Ministry decided "to substantially reorganize" the Main Personnel Directorate (the former MPA). "The former political propaganda bodies," according to *Segodnia*, "have been deemed 'unreformable' and a decision has been made to abolish them."<sup>21</sup> The "question" of the Humanitarian Academy, the report continued, is soon to be "resolved" as well. (It should be noted that this is not the first time the former MPA has been slated for disbanding, and whether this happens remains to be seen.)

In sum, the Russian government is faced with the hard fact that the military supported the government's worst enemy at the polls in even greater numbers than the population at large. All previous assumptions of military loyalty must be discarded, by political figures in Moscow as well as political analysts in the



West. Even some military commentators have argued that this is effectively the end of any viable relationship between Yeltsin and the Army; this "army salvo of voting slips," as Maj. Gen. Vladimir Dudnik (head of the "Army and Society" group) has put it, means that the military "clearly has said 'Goodbye' to Yeltsin."<sup>22</sup> A colonel serving on the General Staff has been even more blunt: should the incumbent president "become unamenable to [the military] for some reason or other," he said, then "Boris Yeltsin's illusions about his power functions will be dispelled at once."<sup>23</sup>

How did this situation come about? The events of the 1991 coup attempt and the apparent obedience of the military in the 1993 attack on the White House had convinced many Western observers that the military was well in hand. Stephen Meyer, for example, represented the complacency of many sovietologists in early 1992 when he argued that the months prior to the 1991 coup represented "the *illusion* of increased military institutional influence in Soviet policy-making," and that the coup itself was "merely one event in a long sequence of political shocks" that served to "hasten" military reform.[emphasis original]<sup>24</sup> One might well wonder what military reforms were in fact "hastened" by the coup; in December 1993, Marshal Shaposhnikov told the Russian press that there had been "no substantial progress in army reform," and this and other reports suggest that it is reform, and not military influence, that has proven illusory.<sup>25</sup> The outcome of the December election indicates not only that the events of 1991 and 1993 were misinterpreted, but also that our understanding of the basic orientation and loyalties of the Russian (and Soviet) Armed Forces is essentially flawed.

Three factors need to be taken into consideration when discussing the influence of Zhirinovskiy and the future of Russian civil-military relations. First, the Russian and other CIS militaries still carry the strong imprint of seven decades of Soviet control, and in particular of Soviet indoctrination.<sup>26</sup> These military organizations are still staffed by officers who cannot conceive of serving any state but the Soviet Union, and still identify the Soviet imperial system as their "fatherland."

Second, the October 1993 attack on the Russian Parliament divided military loyalties, and forced many officers (who were suffering significant material deprivations under Yeltsin's reforms) to reconsider their role in Russian political life. On one hand, they had vowed to remain aloof from politics; on the other, they were being used as an instrument of political force against many men whom they viewed with some sympathy--in some cases, as former comrades-in-arms.

Finally, much in Zhirinovskiy's platform--such that it was--appealed to men who had suffered the humiliation of finding themselves in a crumbling, third-rate army after joining, long ago, one of the two most powerful military organizations on the planet. Zhirinovskiy's call to humble the Baltic states, fight to

victory in Afghanistan, destroy Germany and Japan, reestablish the Union (and then the Empire), all this and more found resonance in a group of men who had sworn to lay down their lives for a state that no longer existed and a cause that, until Zhirinovsky appeared, seemed all but forgotten.

These issues are considered in more detail below.

### **The Persistence of the "Soviet" Officer.**

One aspect of Russian civil-military relations that deserves brief mention is the persistence of what may be thought of as the "Soviet" officer. This is the professional officer who joined the Armed Forces of the USSR, served in various areas of the old Union and the former Warsaw Pact, and in general believed in the rectitude of the Union and the ideals for which it stood: internationalism, socialism, Marxism-Leninism. This might well be called a kind of Soviet nationalism, and it provided a receptive audience for Zhirinovsky's bizarre program of recreating the Empire within the boundaries of the Soviet Union while settling old scores with traditional Russian and Soviet enemies.

The attachment of these officers (who I believe represent the majority of the CIS officer corps in Russia and elsewhere) to the old Union was more visceral than intellectual, and the present situation seems to them abhorrent--and temporary. As Serge Schmemmann of *The New York Times* put it, "At home, torn by the breakup of the Soviet Union into forces with conflicting loyalties and missions, many officers deplore the collapse of the superpower they served and do not accept its dismantling as final. The hammer and sickle still adorn the military's seal just as the empire mentality prevails."<sup>27</sup> This is more, however, than just stung pride. "The military," one unnamed senior officer told *Argumenty i Fakty* in November 1993, "lives by the idea of a state. We are convinced," he continued,

that the breakup of the USSR into separate states, executed contrary to the will of the people expressed in the 17 March 1991 referendum, is a short-lived phenomenon . . . And if the Union under any name is not restored in the nearest future, the politicians will be swept out. The Armed Forces will find the means to "convince" them of this.<sup>28</sup>

When *Argumenty i Fakty* asked Major General Aleksandr Vladimirov (now recently retired, but known as a reformist officer since at least 1990) for his response to such comments, he repeated a line heard from military reformers as early as 1991: "We need a purge of all enforcement structures, including the military. Far from all generals and officers share democratic values. Germany underwent denazification after the war; we, and first of all the military, must undergo decommunization."<sup>29</sup> Col. Gen. Dmitrii Volkogonov, once one of the most conservative

members of the USSR Armed Forces Main Political Administration and now Yeltsin's military aide, said much the same thing in September 1991: "Military reform began only in August of 1991, with the departyization of the Armed Forces and the abolition of the military-political organs; that is, when deideologizing [of the army] began to take place."<sup>30</sup>

Some have suggested that this is little more than the institutional imperative supposedly typical among military organizations to seek a strong state that can provide the military with resources, while others argue that this is merely the resurgence of Russian imperial ambitions. But the rhetoric and actions of the senior Russian officer corps do not bear either of these hypotheses out. As Felgengauer has emphasized, "The military believes there will soon be some sort of reconstituted union. It's not just imperial nostalgia, and it could be very dangerous."<sup>31</sup> Then-CIS Commander in Chief Shaposhnikov reflected a common line of reasoning among many officers in early 1992 when he weighed in on the issue of national military oaths in the new CIS. "It seems to me," he said, "that the officer does not need to be tormented by any sort of oaths today. He's already sworn an oath to the Soviet people. *And it's not the officer's fault if the people have come to be called something else.*"[emphasis added]<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, little interest seems apparent in reviving a great Russian empire; rather, the military seems to be seeking a restoration of the Union, not the Empire. In September 1993 it was leaked that Grachev had said during a September 14 internal briefing that a decision had been made not to pull back to Russia's borders, but to maintain old Soviet borders, especially in Central Asia and the northern Caucasus.<sup>33</sup> (This was acknowledged publicly shortly thereafter by Andrei Nikolaev, Border Troops chief, who told *Krasnaia Zvezda* that "on the current stage [sic] the reliable protection of the borders of the former USSR meets the common interests of the CIS member states and the national interests of Russia."<sup>34</sup>)

It might have been expected that the inability of the Russian officer corps to accept the demise of the Soviet state would have led to greater military support for the successor to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the reconstituted Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPFR). But the CPFR ran an incoherent campaign, and what few clear messages its leaders got across could not compete with Zhirinovskiy's uncompromising rhetoric. When asked after the election whether the Communists would cooperate with the nationalist parties in the new Duma, the leader of the CPFR, Gennady Zyuganov, gave this muddled answer: "We have nothing in common with those who seek expansion for Russia as far as the borders of the former Soviet Union. . . . We do not wish to bring back the Russian empire, we simply want to prevent the system of links which held together the peoples of the Soviet Union from being scattered in the wind."<sup>35</sup> To an officer of the former Soviet Armed Forces, this

can only sound like the kind of meaningless equivocations heard from CPSU officials in 1991 as the Union was falling apart.

The destruction of the Union is a passionate issue among the officer corps, and this almost certainly increased Zhirinovskiy's support among the military. Consider the intense anger expressed in *Pravda* by Russian Army Lt. Col. S. Rodionov in late 1992:

For some of us our Motherland is simply "THIS" country [sic]. For me, and I know, not just for me alone, "THIS" country is my Fatherland--the Soviet Union. "THIS" people is my own, native Soviet people. We Soviet officers, as before, see no division of it in terms of nationalities. It is equally painful to us to see losses among Armenians, or Azerbaijanis, or Ingush, or Ossetians . . . It is precisely to crush this Soviet attitude that the "democrats" send us off to kill. . . . For this the Army has to be deprived of its Soviet moral backbone. [emphasis original]<sup>36</sup>

Numerous other examples of this kind of attitude exist among officers from Volkogonov (who has spoken of his "grief" over the end of the Union), to Airborne Forces commander Lt. Gen. Evgenii Podkolzin.<sup>37</sup> Podkolzin claimed that he had "tears in his eyes" when he had to hand over a Soviet unit to Kazakhstan (where he himself was born); his men took it badly as well, even to the point "where guys have refused to take off their striped shirts and blue berets [the Soviet airborne uniform]," despite pleas from their own parents that they return home.<sup>38</sup> Other such stories abound.<sup>39</sup>

These kinds of intense attachments should be less of a surprise given the inability--or unwillingness--of the Russian military to create new institutions to replace previous Soviet institutions. Training and education remain steeped in Soviet practices and beliefs; Defense Minister Grachev has admitted that the persistence of Soviet institutions in the Russian Army "is an anomaly that many ranking military men privately acknowledge," and Yeltsin himself complained in late 1992 that "up till now, men have been drafted into the Army of the Soviet Union, not Russia's."<sup>40</sup>

### **The October Parliament Attack.**

Another wedge between Yeltsin and the military, one that surely drove yet more servicemen into Zhirinovskiy's arms, was Yeltsin's October 1993 decision to use force against the parliamentary opposition in the Russian White House. Earlier reports that the military was quick to support Yeltsin in his struggle with the Supreme Soviet (and his own vice-president) are now clearly erroneous; as Schmemmann reported, the events leading to the attack "showed the generals to be far from united in their loyalties or their views."

Their initial reaction when Mr. Yeltsin cracked down on the Parliament was to shut off the Defense Ministry's outside telephone lines and to declare neutrality. . . . many reports have emerged of vacillation in the military and of heated midnight debates on the eve of the attack. Most startling was a recent interview in which Mr. Yeltsin openly accused General Grachev of wavering.

"My Defense Minister couldn't make up his mind," the President said. "There was a time of uncertainty when the troops did not arrive. Apparently he had been given too much responsibility, and he doubted whether the soldiers would follow his orders."<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, even before the attack against the Rutskoi-Khasbulatov group, military officers in the Moscow area were already voicing doubts about their earlier support for Yeltsin. One poll taken in early 1993 found that 73 percent of the officers of the Moscow Military District claimed that they were "crazy to decide against storming the White House" during the 1991 coup.<sup>42</sup>

These doubts surfaced forcefully during the debate within the military high command over whether to support Yeltsin. An unnamed "high-ranking General Staff officer" told *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, in terms that revealed years of Soviet indoctrination, that the order to attack was intuitively unacceptable to many officers:

Deplorable as it is to admit, the edict split the army. . . . The paradox is that we have stopped being the people's army, and become, as the foreign press says, government troops. When did we become government troops?! . . . The only hope is that our people will be able to acquire a normal government that will express the interests of the working people and not a handful of the bourgeoisie. Then the Army will really become a people's army. And we will serve in it with pride, and I am confident that we will never permit the shame and disgrace of October 1993. . . .<sup>43</sup>

Several Russian sources, including *Komsomolskaia Pravda* and *Obshchaia Gazeta*, claim that a number of generals were sympathetic to Rutskoi and Khasbulatov, including the former commander of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, Col. Gen. Boris Gromov; and Air Force commander, Petr Denikin. General Staff personnel chief Valerii Mironov, and airborne commander Podkolzin were also accused of supporting the rebels.<sup>44</sup> Grachev denied any such sympathies, noting that Rutskoi and Denikin are old friends from their Air Force days, and that communications between the two were nothing more than an attempt on Denikin's part to get Rutskoi to give up. When asked on October 12 about Gromov's

loyalties, however, Grachev said only that there was "no confirmation" of any communication between Gromov and the White House leaders.<sup>45</sup> Two weeks later, Gromov was made "assistant to the deputy defense minister for the affairs of internationalist servicemen," a slight demotion, but not a serious one. More disturbing is that, as one General Staff officer told the Russian press, among the "troika" of Grachev, Gromov and Deputy Defense Minister Konstantin Kobets, Grachev is unpopular with the other two and "Gromov has the greatest authority [among the army]."<sup>46</sup> More recent reports continue to imply that Gromov and Mironov are to be dismissed, and Mironov's directorate (personnel) is in fact being downsized. Also supposedly "hanging by a thread" are Denikin, Ground Forces commander Vladimir Semenov, Podkolzin, and Leonid Kuznetsov, Moscow Military District commander.<sup>47</sup>

This inclusion of Kuznetsov among those whose loyalties are in question would explain at least one strange postscript to the events of October 3-4: the appointment of an Interior Ministry officer, Gen. Kulikov, as commandant of the city of Moscow during the state of emergency. This was a break with precedent, in that only professional military officers had ever held that post, and it prompted *Komsomolskaia Pravda* to ask: "Does the president really not trust his own army?"<sup>48</sup>

Even in the field, there were scattered mutinies against the order to attack the White House. Grachev himself has admitted that there were attempts in various units to raise volunteers to defend the Parliament. Specifically, the Defense Ministry has acknowledged several events in which officers engaged in insubordination, including incidents in the Humanitarian Academy, the Frunze and Dzerzhinskii Academies, and at least three other Moscow-area military units, including one air defense unit whose colonel actually managed to raise 18 volunteers. The only indication of violence involved a junior officer from a Moscow-area unit who led 17 men to Moscow; when he was stopped at a military checkpoint outside the city, he shot himself to death and the others then fled.<sup>49</sup> If there were other incidents, the MOD has not admitted to them as yet.

In the end, despite the moral support for the parliamentarians among several high-ranking officers, the calls from Rutskoi and would-be "Defense Minister" Achalov for a mutiny in the armed forces against Yeltsin may have been too much even for those predisposed to sympathize with their cause. Grachev seemed to warn the parliamentary group of this in a televised press conference a few weeks before the attack. "The point has come," he said, "where the army must not be made angry."

If they [Rutskoi and Khasbulatov] do not leave the army in peace and it [the army] blows up, if the army is provoked, there is not a single force that will be able to restrain the army then. Not one. If the blood of completely innocent people in Russia is shed, the army will have its say. And it will have its say in a

decisive manner.<sup>50</sup>

He later excoriated Gen. Achalov personally, adding that he and the others in the White House "are once again attempting to make officers confront one another on the barricades." The result of such a confrontation would be "not a series of local conflicts, but the start of a real civil war."<sup>51</sup>

There have been both recriminations and rewards in the wake of the October attack. Two results seem clear enough: one is the damage done to the previously flexible relationship between Yeltsin and Grachev, while the other is the obvious material and political payoff to the military for its part in suppressing the Rutskoi-Khasbulatov group. These are not contradictory outcomes; Yeltsin may well resent Grachev's apparent indecision at the moment of truth while nonetheless recognizing that deals were made with the high command that he, as a president in an untenable situation, must now honor.

There have been other signs of tension between the President and the Defense Minister, none of which can inspire confidence among the military. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* claims that Grachev told troops during a visit to Khodynskoe Field in Moscow (where many of the soldiers involved in the October 4 action were later based) that an order to go in earlier would have saved lives, thus implying that the hesitancy was Yeltsin's, not the Army's.<sup>52</sup> This account goes on to suggest that Yeltsin has retaliated by awarding higher medals--and promotion to four-star general--to Interior Minister Yerin in an attempt to dilute Grachev's influence by setting him in opposition to Yerin. In any case, at least one officer has claimed that Kobets was given command of the actual operation to suppress the revolt (with Volkogonov as his deputy) after discussions between Yeltsin and Kobets about Grachev.<sup>53</sup>

Whatever the tensions between the President and the Defense Minister, most observers agree that the attack on the White House has boosted the high command's power in the Kremlin to unprecedented levels. Interviewed by *Moskovskoe Novosti*, Col. Dmitrii Kharitonov was explicit about the growth of the Army's power: "Pavel Grachev has made the most of the 4 October victory. At present no one doubts that it is the army that controls the situation in the country. I think that as of now the period of endless compromises has finished, and an era of order begins, and it will be enforced by us, the military."<sup>54</sup> General Staff officer Col. Konstantin Ivanov concurred: "Never before have the power ministers [security, military and interior] moved so close to the helm of political power."<sup>55</sup>

Among the many results of this bargain, according to one account, was a "win" for the "hawks" on the new military doctrine, which is nothing less than a return to Soviet military doctrine--including the notion of preemptive nuclear strikes. Material resources for the military will also be increased in

1994; *Kommersant-Daily* has no doubt that the increase in defense outlays to 8.2 percent of GNP is a direct result of the "political renaissance the army is living through after the October events."<sup>56</sup> Grachev later confirmed that the military would remain at 2.1 million men, rather than being reduced to the target of 1.5 million set by the former parliament.<sup>57</sup>

Maj. Gen. Dudnik practically boasted of this renaissance on Russian television a few weeks after the attack. After discarding the idea of the military's political neutrality, Dudnik alluded to the political and material payoffs demanded by the military after October 4:

The idea that the army, the Soviet Army, the Army of the Russian Federation, is outside politics is a false one to begin with. The army never was, cannot be, and never will be outside politics. This is the most powerful, most sharp, and most decisive argument in politics. The position being formulated now, that the army is the guarantor of stability and social order for the state, is a political one.

The army, he added, "never supports the weak; the army always supports real power. . . . Second, it will support the power that shows a real readiness to raise its status; third, it will support the power which is ready to implement a moral cleansing away of the dead weight it has inherited."<sup>58</sup> (What kind of "moral cleansing" was needed, or what it may involve, was left unelaborated.)

While Dudnik's rather mercenary evaluation of the situation may not reflect the full range of reasons the military has distanced itself from Yeltsin, there is no question that the suppression of the White House group carried a significant price. This, however, raises a further question: Why, if Yeltsin was apparently ready to meet that price, did the military abandon him at the polls on December 12?

### **Zhirinovsky's Appeal Among the Armed Forces.**

Certainly, the miserable living standards of service personnel (and in society at large) account for a number of protest votes, and it is tempting to ascribe Zhirinovsky's large margin among the military to material deprivation. However, several factors call this simplistic explanation into doubt. First, it is clear that Yeltsin was dedicated to courting the military with increased resources after October 4, and there could be little reason for any serviceman to think that his lot would be significantly better under Zhirinovsky. (As *The Economist* report noted, Zhirinovsky's call to stop the conversion of defense industries "may please some coup-minded soldiers. But it would not provide them with any more money."<sup>59</sup>)



Also, it is important to consider the sources of political rage among Russian servicemen. A major survey of military attitudes that appeared in November 1993 in *Argumenty i Fakty* said:

Despite the gravity of the accusations the military levels at the government and Yeltsin personally, all of this fades in comparison with the belief--common in the military (especially among higher-ranking officers)--regarding . . . [sic] **betrayal of the interests of the state--signing of the Belovezha agreements, which led to the disintegration of the USSR** [emphasis and ellipses original].<sup>60</sup>

"One can forgive Yeltsin our pauper salaries, the poor health of our children and wives, who are being evicted from warm housing into what nearly amounts to an open field," one senior officer recently withdrawn from the Baltics told the interviewers, "but one cannot forgive when for no reason whatsoever we give up the land our fathers and grandfathers fought for, as well as our people living in those lands." If this kind of opinion is at all representative of military attitudes, then the bases of support for Zhirinovsky become clearer, and more complex than a simple matter of housing or money. This corresponds with findings by the All-Russian Central Public Opinion Research Institute, which noted that the "backbone of the LDPR electorate consists of the active, able-bodied section of the population," whose "dissatisfaction with the reforms is most likely caused not by the deterioration of its own material base but by the growth of disorder and anarchy."<sup>61</sup>

Zhirinovsky's rantings have been well-publicized and need not be reiterated here in detail, especially since they seem to have little unifying theme except a generalized hatred. His appeal may well lie in his incoherence; because he is all over the political map, frustrated voters could find whatever they were looking for. At times he sounds like an anti-Communist, while at others he has said that communism forestalled Zionism in Russia, and that the KGB is the only force that can save the nation.<sup>62</sup> (He has also promised to look into securing the release of Communist generals Makashov and Achalov from Lefortovo). He is virulently anti-American (he repeatedly refers to the Russian Foreign Ministry as a nest of CIA spies), and boasts that the LDPR sent volunteers to Iraq to fight for Saddam Hussein.

In short, Zhirinovsky is a kind of extreme Russian nationalist, seeking to recreate the Soviet Union as a Russian empire within former Soviet borders; the new, expanded Russia, he says, will be a "fatherland" for all ethnic groups great and small. He promises a return to the draconian public morality of Soviet society (where only "good news" is reported by announcers with "kind, Russian faces"), but one in which the underlying racism and imperialism of the former Soviet empire are brought to

the surface and embraced, finally, as virtues. This amalgam of Sovietism and fascism (of the same sort represented by the ill-fated parliamentarians) has come to be referred to as the "red-brown" axis.

It is important to note the congruence of military attitudes with many of the goals of the so-called "red-brown" movement-- although I would argue that the military interest is more in the "red" than the "brown." These attitudes are no doubt what led many Russian officers to join Col. Stanislav Terekhov's "Officers' Union," a pro-Soviet group that later made common cause with the "National Salvation Front," a bizarre compact between far-left Soviet Communists and far-right Russian racists.<sup>63</sup> This prompted repeated statements from Grachev warning that the Army "stands behind the president," and that pro-Communist officers must not be allowed to "split the army."<sup>64</sup> To what degree Terekhov's group did split the army is unclear, but in the end, Terekhov was not bluffing: he was later arrested in one of the first acts of violence related to the Parliament standoff, when he attempted to shoot his way through the gates of the CIS Joint Command Headquarters. Terekhov, although a violent extremist, was not alone in his beliefs. Shaposhnikov admitted in early 1993 that after the collapse of the USSR, "there were forces in Russia, in the Army and in the Commonwealth countries who would have liked the Army" to recreate the Union "through coercive methods."<sup>65</sup>

In any case, whatever the immediate loyalties of the officer corps or the enlisted men, there was some sense among the military as a whole that the "democrats" had gotten their just desserts in the aftermath of the Zhirinovsky victory. As Felgengauer pointed out, with some apprehension, after the election:

. . . there have been no signs of panic among [officers or enlisted men] following the publication of the election results. Rather, there is some malicious joy and satisfaction . . . Now, the strong factions of the LDP and the Communist Party will evidently be able to restrain somewhat those whom the army sees as 'radical democrats.'<sup>66</sup>

"Many things in Vladimir Zhirinovsky's campaign monologues," he concluded, "have undoubtedly elicited a favorable reaction from the Russian army's officer corps."

Even before the election, the anger among some members of the military was palpable, and it was an anger that played directly into Zhirinovsky's program. Resentment at the loss of material privilege, combined with humiliation of the loss of Soviet superpower status, led to a consequent hunger for revenge against the "reformers" who had brought about the division of the Soviet Armed Forces into what amounts to a series of Third World national guards. Lt. Col. Rodionov described the feelings of many

of his fellow officers now serving in new CIS armies:

Officers are now faced with the cruelest of moral choices: take the new oath or get lost. But there's nowhere to go; the country that you love and to which you swore an oath is gone. And you have a wife and children to look after. . . . And so the former Soviet officer mutters the words of the damned oath through his clenched teeth, vowing his allegiance while hiding his contempt.<sup>67</sup>

Rodionov claims identification with the USSR is so strong among the Russian officer corps that Grachev's attempt to introduce a new Russian oath in December 1992 was rejected "unanimously," forcing Grachev himself to repudiate it publicly. Like many officers, Rodionov does not trust Grachev's motives (Grachev, says Rodionov crudely, "wants to plunge us all into the crap [der'mo]"), and he accuses the Defense Minister of serving those who would turn the Russian Army into the defenders of the interests of the "nouveau riche."<sup>68</sup> He adds a final warning to the leaders of all of the CIS republics: "Do not think, gentlemen, that they will forgive you for THIS [sic]. Abandon the hope that trampled human dignity will turn into loyalty to your regime."

Former Soviet officers have responded to the destruction of the Soviet Union, the collapse of Soviet power abroad with a reawakened and outraged sense of Soviet nationalism. Stung by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the loss of the Union, Zhirinovskiy's call to reestablish the Russian empire understandably found resonance among men who had served the Soviet empire. Moreover, these Soviet officers seems to share a sense that Russian foreign policy since 1991 has been dishonorable and even cowardly; most officers, according to the *Argumenty i Fakty* report cited earlier, "do not accept Russia's current foreign policy," and "many are still convinced that Russia should have observed its treaty obligations with respect to old friends in Cuba, North Korea and Iraq."

Even the new Russian military doctrine shows the influence of a new, harder line in Eastern Europe; in a discussion of the issue of NATO membership for former WTO members, military commentator Maj.Gen. Gennadii Dimitriev sounded a warning that could not have been expressed better by Zhirinovskiy himself: "Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and also Ukraine, which are dreaming about entering NATO, should realize that if they do that, they will immediately fall among the list of targets for Russian strategic forces with all the consequences this entails."<sup>69</sup> In other areas, one might expect Zhirinovskiy's neo-imperialism to be well-received by troops who are now fighting on formerly Soviet soil. Some reports, for example indicate that the Defense Ministry is "extremely reluctant to help Eduard Shevardnadze who, many people think, had a hand in breaking up the Army as USSR foreign minister," and it should be

no surprise that a call to reestablish the Union would be well-received by Russian soldiers fighting in Georgia for a man they hate and a cause they do not understand.<sup>70</sup>

All of this is consonant with the analysis of the election results in the population at large, which indicate that the LDPR emerged clearly as the new "Soviet" party among middle and lower-middle class voters:

VTSIOM [All-Russian Central Public Opinion Research Institute] studies have shown that the LDPR electors stand apart from the others in their irritation and anxiety. Their misgivings primarily relate to Russia's losing its great power status, which was enjoyed by the USSR, and the weakness of state authority in the country. Sociologists also claim that identification with the 'Soviet people' is very essential for Zhirinovskiy followers.

All this suggests that the LDPR is recruiting its allies from among the Soviet working class, in contrast to the Communists, whose [voters] have moved out of the working class by virtue of their age.<sup>71</sup>

In other words, voters who most strongly identified themselves as Soviet, rather than Russian, tended to vote LDPR, while many older and somewhat poorer voters returned to the Communists. The Army rewarded both parties by giving, in most cases, victory to the LDPR and second place to the Communists.

### **Conclusions.**

If we accept that the majority (and probably the overwhelming majority) of Russian military officers and enlisted men voted for Zhirinovskiy, and that they did so at least as much out of a sense of humiliated national pride as out of "protest" against current economic conditions, then what does this portend for the future of Russian civil-military relations and for the Russian political stability in the near future?

The most important fact of Russian political life for the next 3 years is that Boris Yeltsin has vowed to finish his term, which expires in 1996. This is not meant as an overly optimistic assessment of Yeltsin's capabilities as president; indeed, it could be well argued that Yeltsin's own indecisiveness and incompetence created the October 4 standoff, and his detachment from the political scene then allowed Zhirinovskiy to grab the spotlight and move to center stage. However, it is obvious that Yeltsin is more committed to creating a docile and obedient military than Zhirinovskiy might be, even if he is at present going about it in a rather desperate and haphazard way.

In fact, Yeltsin's attempt to manipulate key posts and units

in the military as he tries to outmaneuver Zhirinovsky and other opponents may do more harm than any other interference with the military in the next few years. Grachev and others are not above the art of the deal, and they have learned from the October events and the December election that deals are theirs for the making when society is adrift and politics are chaos. Continued tensions between Yeltsin and the new Duma (in which Zhirinovsky and his coreligionists may well be able to form a majority in alliance with the Communists and the Agrarian Party) will only strengthen the political position of the Russian Armed Forces, and encourage them to raise the specter of a divided army, of the "army card" being played (even as they themselves are the ones playing it).

This will almost certainly mean that Yeltsin will feel forced to turn to the right in the near future. Actually, this turn has already begun, as evidenced by the new Russian military doctrine, a reassertive military presence in former Soviet republics, attempts to reestablish Soviet borders (under the guise of CIS borders) and the bloated Russian military budget that was restored within weeks of the Parliament attack. In the future, it may mean more vigorous diplomacy with regard to Eastern Europe and NATO, slowed defense conversion, more rapid military integration in the CIS, and a slew of other questionable policies in which Yeltsin so far has shown little interest.

Zhirinovsky's success may also split the Ministry of Defense, and has the potential to split the military overall as well. Evidence suggests that Grachev, as Yeltsin's man in the Defense Ministry, is becoming increasingly isolated among senior colleagues whose political sympathies are with Rutskoï, Khasbulatov, Zhirinovsky, Makashov, Achalov, and other bitter Yeltsin foes. (Compounding the problem, of course, is the fact that relations between Yeltsin and Grachev are not exactly warm at this point, either.) As of this writing, rumors of a purge in the Defense Ministry--a purge, as mentioned earlier, which would ostensibly claim Gromov, Mironov, Denikin, Podkolzin and many others--are beginning to circulate. This would be the expected and understandable move on Yeltsin's part, but it could leave a vacuum of leadership in the military that the increasingly unpopular Grachev may not be able to fill. If that happens, the pro-Zhirinovsky forces may abrogate the chain of command and seek leadership elsewhere, a frightening possibility in the context of further domestic violence.

There is also the possibility that Zhirinovsky may overplay his military hand. He is, after all, the man who has called for re-invading Afghanistan, and one may hope that it is only a matter of time before Russian servicemen decide that Zhirinovsky is merely another politician, and sillier than most at that.

The most likely prospect for the near future, however, is that the military will seek to exploit tensions between the President and the Duma. At the least, it is clear that Yeltsin

can no longer take military loyalty for granted. Russian politics, and Russian civil-military relations will, for the next 2-3 years, be characterized by weakened civilian authority and the constant suspicion of an emergent praetorianism among the high command. Perhaps the last word here should go to Gen. Beltchemko, deputy commander of Russian troops in the Transcaucasus, who told the French journal *Liberation* in October 1993: "The Russian Army does feel stronger now; this is obvious. Each political upheaval strengthens our position. We are the defender of the motherland and the nation, as any army should be. We are the true patriots, and we know the value of human life."<sup>72</sup>

#### ENDNOTES -- CHAPTER 4

1. "Russian reform: At risk," *The Economist*, December 25, 1993- January 4, 1994, p. 63.

2. "Russian reform: At risk," p. 63. Shaposhnikov himself was a candidate for the Duma, but his party, the Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms, failed to clear the 5 percent benchmark for a seat.

3. Serge Schmemmann, "An Army Adrift," Part III, *The New York Times*, November 30, 1993, p. A12.

4. Schmemmann, p. A12.

5. "Expert Sees Hawks' Win on Military Doctrine," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)-SOV-93-221*, November 18, 1993, pp. 39-40.

6. American pollsters, it should be noted, routinely poll less than 1 percent of the electorate during national elections, with margins of error less than 4 percent. As long as it may be assumed that the people who voted at military polling stations were generally representative of their comrades in the military at large (as Russian government spokesmen now admit they were), then a sample of 1-2 percent is significant indeed, especially considering the lopsided margins reported at those stations.

7. "Russian reform: At risk," p. 63. The SRF press office denied these numbers, arguing that 99 percent of missileers voted in public stations, thus making their vote unknowable. "Missile Forces Deny Reports of Pro-Zhirinovskiy Vote," *FBIS-SOV-93-248*, December 29, 1993, p 18.

8. This report, according to *FBIS*, appeared in the December 21, 1993 issue of *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, which then cited the *Moscow Times*. "More on Army Voting Patterns," *FBIS-SOV-93-243*, December 21, 1993, p. 14. A reporter for the *Moscow Tribune* later told me that his interviews at a polling station near another Moscow military school indicated somewhere between 70-80 percent of the cadets' vote went to Zhirinovskiy.

9. One senior officer of the academy told me in Moscow in mid-1993 that wrenching the students away from the belief that they still served the Soviet Union was proving to be one of the academy's most difficult tasks. "They still think they are Soviet officers," he said. "They have no idea what it means to serve 'Russia' rather than the Soviet fatherland."

10. "Zhirinovskiy Appears 'Clear Winner' in Far East," *FBIS-SOV- 93-237*, December 13, 1993, p. 61.

11. "More on Army Voting Patterns," p. 14.

12. "Servicemen in Georgia Back LDPR," *FBIS-SOV-93-239*, December 15, 1993, p. 9.

13. "Military's Participation, Choices in Election Viewed," *FBIS-SOV- 93-240*, December 26, 1993, p. 5.

14. "More on Army Voting Patterns," p. 14.

15. "Support from Military Noted," *FBIS-SOV-93-239*, December 15, 1993, p. 46.

16. "Defense Minister Aide on Speculation About Army Vote," *FBIS-SOV-93-241*, December 17, 1993, p. 8.

17. "Yeltsin Aide on Army Participation in Politics," *FBIS-SOV-93-234*, December 8, 1993, p. 43.

18. "Admiral on Need for More Servicemen in State Duma," *FBIS-SOV- 93-227*, November 29, 1993, p. 48. There is little evidence to suggest that Chernavin is himself very different from his pro-Soviet colleagues; when noting the return of St. Andrew's Flag to Russian ships, he denied that the change in ensigns was motivated by shame for the old Soviet flag. "Soviet seamen," he said, "bore it with honor and glory and won worldwide recognition." The reason, then, for the change? "It is simply that the emblems of the Soviet flag do not correspond to the present Russian navy." See "I snova--Andreevskii flag," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 25, 1992, p. 1.

19. These and following figures are taken from candidate lists published in *FBIS-SOV-93-220*, November 17, 1993; *93-219*, November 16, 1993; and *93-234-S*, December 8, 1993. These figures correspond to the figures given by the Russian MOD (that is, 25 active-duty military men ran as candidates); I have assumed that the appellation "serviceman" denotes an enlisted man, since officers were listed with ranks specified.

20. "Official: Most Servicemen Voted for Zhirinovskiy," *FBIS-SOV- 93-246*, December 27, 1993, p. 2.

21. "Reasons for Reorganization Viewed," *FBIS-SOV-93-247*, December 28, 1993, pp. 10-11.

22. LTG Aleksei Smirnov, in this account, concurred, claiming that Yeltsin no longer has any support in the Army. "More on Army Voting Patterns," p. 14.

23. "Expert Sees Hawks' Win on Military Doctrine," pp. 39-40.

24. Stephen Meyer, "How the Threat (and the Coup) Collapsed: The Politicization of the Soviet Military," *International Security*, Winter 1991/1992, p. 6, and p. 6n.

25. "Grachev's Future Assessed," *FBIS-SOV-93-249*, December 30, 1993, p. 39.

26. I have discussed the effects of ideology on Soviet civil-military relations at length in T. Nichols, *The Sacred Cause: Civil-Military Conflict over Soviet National Security 1917-1992*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

27. Serge Schmemmann, "An Army Adrift," Part I, *The New York Times*, November 28, 1993, p. 18.

28. "Article Examines Armed Forces View of Yeltsin," *FBIS-SOV-93-216*, November 10, 1993, pp. 60-62.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

30. See "Voennaia reforma nachalas' tol'ko v avguste," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, September 25, 1991, p. 1.

31. Schmemmann, Part I, p. 18.

32. "Vstrecha s Nazarbaevym vseliaet nadezhdy," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, January 15, 1992, p. 1.

33. Serge Schmemmann, "An Army Adrift," Part III, *The New York Times*, November 30, 1993, p. A12.

34. "ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 16 Sep," *FBIS-SOV-93-178*, September 16, 1993, p. 2.

35. "Zyganov Rules Out Alliance With Nationalists," *FBIS-SOV-93-249*, December 30, 1993, p. 32.

36. "Sovetskaia armia: tragediia raspada," *Pravda*, December 5, 1992, p. 2.

37. "Rossiiu spaset nasha neizbyvnaia liubov'," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, June 12, 1992, p. 2.

38. "Airborne Commander on Peacekeeping, Status," *FBIS-SOV-92-200*, October 15, 1992, p. 20.



39. Perhaps most revealing is that CIS officers in Russian and elsewhere have continued to maintain that the oath taken to the USSR is still valid and in force--suggesting that these officers still see the Soviet Union as the state to which they owe allegiance. As one senior Black Sea Fleet officer said after a conflict aboard a submarine: "Look, why create difficult conditions for people--people with access to weapons? . . . Anyway, I have taken a blood oath of allegiance to Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians--I have pledged myself to all our peoples and ethnic groups to protect and defend them." "Black Sea Submarine Mutiny Reported," *FBIS-SOV-92-098*, May 20, 1992, p. 9. See also "Iz obrashcheniia ofitser'skogo sobraniia moskovskogo garnizona," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, January 15, 1992, p. 1; "Komanduiushchie vystupili protiv priniatiia ukrainskoi prisiagi," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, January 11, 1992, p. 2.

40. "Grachev Discusses Military Reform," *FBIS-SOV-93-003*, January 6, 1993, p. 24, and "Yeltsin Addresses Defense Ministry Collegium, Discusses Military Reform," *FBIS-SOV-92-227*, November 24, 1992, p. 18.

41. Schmemann, Part I, p. 18.

42. "Poll Shows 73 percent Regret Not Storming White House," *FBIS-SOV-93-028*, February 12, 1993, p. 33.

43. "Staff Officer on 'Shame' of October Events," *FBIS-SOV-93-243*, December 21, 1993, p. 40-42.

44. "Military Doctrine May Trigger Defense Ministry Purge," *FBIS-SOV-93-205*, October 26, 1993, p. 41.

45. [Grachev] "Says Generals Backed Yeltsin," *FBIS-SOV-93-195*, October 12, 1993, p. 50.

46. See "Gromov Given Responsibility for Internationalist Servicemen," *FBIS-SOV-93-208*, October 29, 1993, p. 42; and "Article Examines Armed Forces View of Yeltsin," pp. 60-62.

47. "Generals Seen Imperiled," *FBIS-SOV-93-247*, December 28, 1993, p. 10.

48. "Papers Report Grachev Hesitant in Committing Army," *FBIS-SOV-93-192-S*, October 6, 1993, p. 24.

49. "Grachev Says Army Acted 'Resolutely, Bravely'," *FBIS-SOV-93-194*, October 8, 1993, p. 35.

50. "Grachev Holds News Conference on Yeltsin's Actions," *FBIS-SOV-93-182-S*, September 22, 1993, pp. 15-16.

51. "[Grachev] Reaffirms Support for Yeltsin," *FBIS-SOV-93-182-S*, September 22, 1993, p. 16.

52. "Yeltsin Tries to Counterbalance Grachev's Influence," *FBIS-SOV-93-195*, October 12, 1993, p. 55.

53. "Staff Officer on 'Shame' of October Events," p. 40-42.

54. "Expert Sees Hawks' Win on Military Doctrine," p. 40.

55. *Ibid.*

56. "Defense Outlays Increased to 8.2 Percent of GNP," *FBIS-SOV-93-206*, October 27, 1993, p. 45.

57. On December 31, 1993, Grachev told *Krasnaia Zvezda* that the Army's reduction to 1.5 million men was "clearly at odds with the scale of the tasks that [the military] is resolving;" a week later, a report on National Public Radio confirmed that the 2.1 million-man figure was now official. See "Grachev Holds Meeting With Journalists," *FBIS-SOV-94-001*, January 3, 1994, p. 38, and "All Things Considered," National Public Radio broadcast, January 7, 1994.

58. "General Defends Political Role of Army," *FBIS-SOV-93-201*, October 20, 1993, p. 48.

59. "Russian reform: At risk," p. 63.

60. "Article Examines Armed Forces View of Yeltsin," pp. 60-62.

61. "Profile of LDPR Voters Outlined," *FBIS-SOV-93-249*, December 30, 1993, p. 33.

62. "Ostankino Carries Zhirinovskiy Film," *FBIS-SOV-93-237*, December 13, 1993, p. 16.

63. Shortly before the October attack, Terekhov represented the Officers' Union at a "Congress of Soviet Nations" that called for the restoration of the USSR. "Participants Demand Restoring USSR," *FBIS-SOV-93-181*, September 21, 1993, p. 3.

64. See "Communists, nationalists rally against Yeltsin," *The Boston Globe*, February 24, 1992, p. 2; and *FBIS-SOV 92-212*, p. 43.

65. "CIS Armed Forces Commander Shaposhnikov Interviewed," *FBIS-SOV-93-017*, January 28, 1993, p. 7.

66. "Support from Military Noted," p. 46.

67. "Sovetskaia armia: tragediia raspada," p. 1.

68. *Ibid.*

69. "Expert Sees Hawks' Win on Military Doctrine," p. 39.

70. "Paper Launches New Feature on Military Issues,"  
*FBIS-SOV- 93-211*, November 3, 1993, p. 36. William Odom has argued that Shevardnadze's reliance on Moscow's help means that "the Russian military has trapped the man whom they blame for destroying the Soviet position in Central Europe." William Odom, "Moscow's Two Foreign Policies," *The Washington Post Weekly Edition*, December 13-19, 1993, p. 24.

71. "Composition of Zhirinovskiy Base Analyzed,"  
*FBIS-SOV-93-246*, December 27, 1993, p. 13.

72. "General Outlines Russian Interests in Georgia,"  
*FBIS-SOV- 93-201*, October 20, 1993, p. 7.

## CHAPTER 5

### RUSSIA'S CRISIS OF EVOLVING STATEHOOD: THE IMPACT OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Jessica Eve Stern

I would like to thank Deborah Yarsike Ball, Charles Ball, Jerry Dzakowic, and Jeffrey Frankel for comments on this chapter.

Russia is undergoing a crisis of evolving statehood. Its faltering metamorphosis from authoritarian empire to law-based federal state will profoundly affect not only Russian citizens, but also Russia's neighbors to the west, south, and east. The new Russian state is simultaneously losing control over the peoples within its current geographical boundaries, and inappropriately intervening in the affairs of the newly independent states. These developments are likely to emerge as the most serious threats to international security in the coming decade.

In December 1993, Russia held elections to a new two-chamber parliament. Many Western observers hoped for the emergence of a truly democratic society willing to implement a nonimperialist foreign policy consistent with Western interests. Precisely the opposite obtained. The victory of Nationalists and Communists in the lower house of parliament has encouraged Yeltsin's government to assert a far more aggressive policy toward the nations Russians revealingly refer to as the "near abroad." Since the election, Moscow's complaints about poor treatment of Russians living abroad in the former Soviet republics have turned increasingly to intimidation and threats. Russians' humiliating sense that they were defeated in the cold war, and their desire to recover the empire they lost, are increasingly likely to lead to violence.

A referendum on a new federal constitution was also held in December 1993. This constitution, which replaces the Communist-era Russian constitution adopted in 1978, was passed by a narrow margin in the nation over-all, but was rejected in over a third of Russia's territorial units. Russia's electoral law does not require that Russia's subjects approve the constitution, so the text was adopted. The constitutional assembly's difficulty in crafting a constitution acceptable to Russia's 89 "subjects" (the term used for Russia's territorial units), and the electorate's lukewarm endorsement of the text, do not bode well for Russia's peaceful transition to a law-based state.

Yeltsin and the drafters of the newly adopted constitution were strongly motivated by the desire to prevent the disintegration of Russia, and the constitution they crafted reflects this. The constitution gives the executive exceptionally

strong powers--not only over the parliament and the judiciary, as has been widely noted, but over the periphery as well. It attempts to ameliorate some of the most pressing center-periphery ethnic, economic, and juridical tensions: It asserts the equality of Russia's 89 subjects; affirms the supremacy of federal laws over regional ones; and allows republics to maintain constitutions. But Yeltsin may have gone too far in the direction of a unitary state. There is a danger that the subjects will rebel, for instance, by demanding concessionary bilateral treaties that allow them greater control over budgets, taxes, and regional laws. The result will be a patchwork of contradictory legislation, which will deepen the budget deficit and exacerbate Russians' immanent distrust of lawmakers and the law.

This chapter first discusses the evolution of ethnic tension in Russia and its implications for Russia's territorial integrity; next, it analyses the dangerous implications of Moscow's uncertainty about the legitimacy of its current borders. It then discusses juridical and economic impediments to the evolution of a Russian state. I conclude that these four factors, coupled with the absence of legal culture in Russia, make the evolution of a law-based federal state in Russia unlikely in the near future.

Russian history demonstrates that it is possible to maintain state order without law--but order without law requires tyranny. Under Communist rule, the party enforced order by terrorizing the population into submission; the constitution and the law were niceties to which leaders paid heed only when it served their interests. Under post-Communist rule, the KGB no longer serves its traditional order-enforcing function, and Russians' innate disdain for the law inhibits the development of democratic society. Two possible outcomes seem likely: increasing chaos or authoritarian rule, probably the first followed by the second.

The West should pay closer attention to Russia's crisis of evolving statehood for four interrelated reasons. First, continued disintegration of the Russian state could ravage Russia's already fragile economy, increasing the prospect that Russia will succumb to forces whose policies could threaten international security, including fascism, war-lordism, civil war, or renewed attempts to expand militarily. Moscow's increasingly aggressive policy toward the newly independent states, especially toward Ukraine and the Baltics, could lead to a war in which the West might be called upon to intervene.

Second, nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons are located in some of the most volatile regions within Russia. If Russia were to fragment, thousands of weapons and tons of toxic materials could be inherited by new states with inadequate safeguards, infrastructure, and minimal experience in controlling borders--a situation potentially far more dangerous than the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Third, central control of the armed forces is eroding. Russian military leaders were reportedly split over whether to support Yeltsin during his siege of the ousted parliament in October 1993. Because of military leaders' indecision and manpower shortages, the forces that were eventually used for the assault on the White House had to be assembled from a number of different divisions.<sup>1</sup> Several military districts, including the Volga and Ural Military Districts, were reportedly prepared to support the ousted parliament in its confrontation with Yeltsin in October 1993, although Grachev later played down the significance of these reports.<sup>2</sup> Support for Zhirinovskiy was higher among military personnel than among civilians, and unconfirmed reports suggest that Zhirinovskiy has met with Moscow area military commanders to request their support for certain parliamentary factions.<sup>3</sup> A reported triple alliance among regional commanders, regional administrators, and industry leaders, together with reports that unit commanders are selling weapons, sometimes to local police forces, to finance recruitment of troops, does not bode well for Moscow's ability to reign in renegade regions, or to control weapons exports.<sup>4</sup>

Finally and most importantly, a spontaneous privatization of the former Soviet military is now under way. Troops increasingly desperate for hard currency are selling their weapons abroad, often with the assistance of organized crime. The Russian "mafia" has reportedly infiltrated law enforcement agencies, commercial banking, and the political and military leadership, especially outside urban centers. Organized criminal networks are reportedly now coordinated at the regional level.<sup>5</sup> Yeltsin admitted last year that mob activity has "acquired such scale and character" that it threatens the future of the Russian state.<sup>6</sup> The networks established between military units and organized crime could eventually lead to proliferation of materials used to manufacture nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, or even the weapons themselves.

### **Evolution of Ethnic Tensions in Russia.<sup>7</sup>**

*Ethnic Groups.* Twenty-five million ethnic Russians live in former Soviet republics outside the Russian Federation (RF). Thirty million non-ethnic Russians (comprising over 100 ethnic groups) live within the RF out of a total population of 150 million. Of these, Tatars are the most numerous, followed by Ukrainians, Chuvash, Bashkirs, Byelorussians, Mordovans, and Chechens.

The Russian Federation is comprised of 49 administratively defined oblasts (provinces) and 6 similarly defined kraia (territories), 21 ethnic republics, 10 ethnic okrugs (areas), 1 ethno-religiously defined autonomous oblast, and 2 city-subjects. (See Figure 1.) Many of the 21 republics pose grave threats to the integrity of the RF by virtue of their escalating demands for economic and political autonomy. They are peopled by Finno-Ugric

(Karelian, Komi, Udmurt, Mari, Mordvin); Caucasian (Adygey,



Figure 1.

Chechen, Cherkess, Dagestani, Ingush, Karbardin); Mongolian (Kalmuk, Buryat); Turkic (Altay, Bashkir, Balkar, Chuvash, Karachay, Khakass, Tatar, Tuvan, Yakut) and Iranian (Ossetian) peoples. Four religions are represented among them: the Finno-Ugric ethnic groups are a mix of Eastern Orthodox and Shamanist; the Caucasian and Turkic groups are predominantly Muslim;<sup>8</sup> the N. Ossetians are Eastern Orthodox; and Tuvans and the Mongolian group are predominantly Buddhist. Those ethnic groups that profess Christianity tend to be the most assimilated in Russia.<sup>9</sup>

Contrary to popular conception, ancient, ingrained animosity is not the motivating force behind ethnic nationalism in Russia.<sup>10</sup> In the Soviet Union, ethnic consciousness was intensified by deliberate policies, including conflation of ethnic and political divisions in the federal structure of the state (both at the union and republic level); by intermittent promotion of national cultures and languages; by preferential treatment of ethnic minorities within their own autonomous



republics-- including ethnic quotas in regional administrations and in higher education; by deportation of entire ethnic groups; by arbitrarily combining groups with no common language into a single autonomous republic, or by splitting single ethnic groups into two or more ethnic regions; and by the practice of identifying citizens by ethnic group on internal passports. The government's essential role in politicizing ethnic groups is not unique to Russia. Scholars note the decisive role of the state in politicizing ethnicity among Muslim Chinese and among many of the national groups in India.<sup>11</sup>

The creation of autonomous republics within Russia was intended as an instrument of consolidation to crush separatism.<sup>12</sup> The policy turned out to have serious drawbacks. Minorities that were not granted their own autonomous republics were resentful. Quotas that favored titular nationalities in republican administrations resulted in the rise of "parasitic attitudes and the diminishing prestige of productive work."<sup>13</sup> National groups living in ministates with their own political infrastructures have been the most effective lobbyists for regional autonomy and, in the case of Tatarstan and Chechnya, independence from the RF. Stalin's most pernicious ethnic policy was his 1944 deportation of seven ethnic groups from their native territories en masse: the Volga Germans; the Kalmyks; the Crimean Tatars; and the Chechens, Ingush, Karachai, and Balkars of the Northern Caucasus. Robert Conquest estimates that the total number of people dispatched into exile was approximately 1,250,000.<sup>14</sup> Many thousands of deportees perished en route.

Khrushchev's 1956 edict to allow most of the deported nationalities to return created new problems, which were aggravated by the Law on the Rehabilitation of the Repressed Peoples passed by the Supreme Soviet in 1991. This law allowed the deported nationalities to claim their former territories. The conflict over land formerly held by Ingush on the territory of N. Ossetia has become especially fierce. Russia's apparent pro-Ossetian stance resulted in extraordinarily low support for Yeltsin in Ingushetia in the April 1993 referendum, and in Ingushetia's decision to hold a referendum on secession from the RF.<sup>15</sup> Russia's Choice, the party most closely associated with Yeltsin, received only 1.5 percent support in Ingushetia,<sup>16</sup> and because less than the required 50 percent of the electorate turned out to vote, the constitution failed in that republic.<sup>17</sup> Yeltsin's later decree supporting the return of the Ingush to the Prigorodnyi Raion of North Ossetia was strongly opposed by the North Ossetians.<sup>18</sup> Similar problems have arisen for other deported nationalities, although no other conflict is as violent.<sup>19</sup>

### **Will Russia's Borders Change?**

Russia is simultaneously suffering disintegrative pressures in some areas inside Russia and attempting reintegration with other former union republics. Belarus's currency union with

Russia expected to be concluded in 1994 will make that country once again essentially a Russian province. Russia has bases in all former Soviet republics except Lithuania and Azerbaijan, and is likely soon to reach agreement with all but Ukraine and the Baltics about maintaining (or in the case of Azerbaijan, reestablishing) those bases.<sup>20</sup> Russian forces guard most of the borders of the newly independent states; and Russian troops are involved in "peace-keeping operations" in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Tadjikistan. Russians' confusion about the legitimacy of Russia's current boundaries and Russian troops' involvement in regional conflicts in the "near abroad" are likely to pose difficult questions for the makers of U.S. foreign policy in the near future. Is Russia's interest in the newly independent states the legitimate prerogative of a great power, or is Russia abridging these new nations' rights to territorial integrity and nonintervention, which are protected by the U.N. Charter?

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev claims that he is concerned about the danger of "losing geopolitical positions it took centuries to conquer."<sup>21</sup> At a Foreign Ministry conference on Russian foreign policy in January 1994, Kozyrev claimed that defending the rights of the 25 million ethnic Russians living in former Soviet republics is one of Russia's principal foreign policy goals. He also said that it is necessary for Russian troops to remain in the former Soviet republics to prevent forces hostile to Russia from filling the "security vacuum." Were Russian troops to withdraw, he said, these regions would "inevitably be filled by other forces . . . in many cases directly hostile to Russian interests."<sup>22</sup> While the Baltic states and Western countries strongly objected to Kozyrev's remarks, many Russians applauded Kozyrev's courage in ceasing to kowtow to the West.<sup>23</sup> Russians' anxiety over loss of empire partly explains Zhirinovskiy's success in the December elections. Support for Zhirinovskiy was highest among military officers--some of whom find Zhirinovskiy's call for a "march to the south" appealing.<sup>24</sup>

While some former Soviet republics are acquiescing to or, in some cases, inviting Russian intervention into their affairs, parts of the Russian Federation are demanding increasingly more independence. Although the December constitution received the requisite number of votes to be adopted--over 50 percent of the national electorate voted and a majority of those who voted accepted the constitution--it was rejected in over a third of Russia's regions, either because too few people turned out to vote, or because too few voters voted in favor.<sup>25</sup> Thus, if Russian election law had required that 70 percent of subjects ratify the constitution (such as provided for in Article 7 of the U.S. constitution), the Russian constitution would have failed to be adopted. Moreover, a significant fraction of the electorate are believed to have supported the constitution out of deference for Zhirinovskiy, who repeatedly called on his supporters to vote for it, in part to fend off attacks by Yeltsin.<sup>26</sup> Zhirinovskiy, who plans to run for president, is apparently pleased with the extraordinary powers of the president and the executive branch.

## **Legal Impediments to Creation of a Federal State.**

The strongest impediments to the creation of a law-based federal state are legacies of Russia's past, which have not been reversed by the present constitution. Principal among these are the lack of legal culture, incompletely defined property rights, and the lack of understanding of the concept of public goods, which for instance proscribes stealing from the state. Russia inherited from its Soviet past a people with little or no respect for the law. Soviet courts were given extraordinary leeway in determining what constituted crime and in meting out punishment. The first Soviet criminal code defined crime not as a breach of the law but as any activity harmful to the state.<sup>27</sup> Contrary to the popular view that Stalin violated the norms of "Soviet legality" when he carried out his appalling massacres, "his actions were in fact well within the terms of Lenin's Criminal Code," Richard Pipes argues.<sup>28</sup> The idea that crime involved a legal transgression was introduced in the revisions of the 1926 legal code issued in an attempt to protect citizens from future abusive leaders. Citizens could still be found guilty of broadly defined "counter-revolutionary" actions or omissions, even after the legal code was revised.<sup>29</sup>

The idea of a law-based state, which was imported from the West in the late 19th century, was considered bourgeois by the Soviet leadership. The first open publication of a multivolume collection of Soviet laws did not occur until 1980, and there remained a significant body of law intended for internal bureaucratic use only.<sup>30</sup> The Brezhnev constitution contained stronger guarantees of citizens' rights than does the U.S. Bill of Rights, but Soviet citizens quickly learned that their legal system provided little protection from government abuses in practice. Vasily Vlasihin, head of U.S. legal studies at the Moscow Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada, explains:

True, all too many people in Russia think that once you get the right statutes on the books, you automatically create an operative rule of law. But Russians still do not trust law itself: the old Russia saying, 'The law is like the shaft of a wagon, it goes wherever you turn it,' remain firmly embedded in the public consciousness. This reality simply reflects the past failure of the legal system to provide ultimate protection to the people against government abuses.<sup>31</sup>

When Yeltsin was elected president in 1991, the operative constitution was the 1978 Russian Republic constitution. This highly flexible document was amended by over 300 often-conflicting measures.<sup>32</sup> The uncertain division of powers between executive and parliament resulted in the "war of laws" of 1992-93, with each side vying to control fiscal, monetary, and industrial policy. The regions took advantage of the tensions

between executive and parliament by accelerating their demands for greater autonomy, as is discussed further below. The war of laws and Yeltsin's final remedy in October 1993--dissolving the parliament and subordinating the 1978 constitution to his decree--aggravated Russians' already deep distrust of lawmakers and the law.

Many of the arguments for and against stronger central government in Russia are reminiscent of the arguments between American Federalists and anti-Federalists in the late 1780s. The anti-Federalists considered central government and liberty to be antithetical propositions. The American Revolution was against authority--against Kings as Thomas Paine put it in *Common Sense*. Seven of the 13 colonies printed their own money. The colonies imposed interstate tariffs against one another and other protectionist policies. Nine states had their own navies, which periodically seized other states' ships. Benjamin Franklin wrote, "we have been guarding against an evil that old states are most liable to, excess of power in the rulers, but our present danger seems to be defects in obedience in the subjects."<sup>33</sup>

Even though the United States began as 13 separate colonies, and the new Russian state began as part of a larger empire, Yeltsin's position with respect to the regions during the constitutional deliberations was remarkably similar to that of Benjamin Franklin and other Federalists toward the colonies. The colonies saw themselves as independent, sovereign states and delegated authority to the Continental Congress, the colonies' single-body legislature, accordingly. The Continental Congress had no power to impose federal taxes or to regulate interstate or international commerce. Similarly, while Yeltsin's Constitutional Assembly was deliberating, many of Russia's "sovereign" republics asserted the supremacy of local laws; declared themselves subjects of international law; and arrogated to themselves the authority to delegate powers to the center. Many subjects were conducting trade with non-ruble currencies, including dollars or Chinese yuan; substituting locally produced goods such as bricks or trucks for money; or printing "coupons" for intraregional payments.<sup>34</sup> At least 30 territories were withholding taxes from the center, and many demanded to keep a greater share of export earnings. In June 1993, five republics demanded of Finance Minister Federov the exclusive right to levy taxes and to mint their own currencies.<sup>35</sup> Many regions, especially those located on Russia's borders, established bilateral trading agreements or free trade zones, often without Moscow's approval. Some regions set up trading blocs with other regions or refused to allow goods to be transferred outside their borders.

Yeltsin's advisors believed it was necessary to assert control over the regions to stem the escalating disintegration of the state, especially in light of the regions' weak support for Yeltsin in his confrontation with the parliament in September-October 1993. After the October parliamentary siege, Yeltsin changed the composition of the constitutional assembly to reduce

the influence of the regions; sacked several especially defiant regional administrators; encouraged regional soviets to disband themselves; and decreed that elections for the new federal parliament would be held in December 1993, and for local parliaments later. He also greatly increased the power of the executive in the proposed constitution as compared with the previous draft accepted by the Constitutional Assembly in July 1993.

Many constitutional provisions address centrifugal pressures in Russia: federal law is declared supreme throughout the territory of the RF; republics are no longer referred to as sovereign states; interregional tariffs are forbidden; and non-ruble currencies are banned. The 1992 Federal Treaty, which codified inequalities between ethnic republics and other RF subjects and had been incorporated in the existing constitution as well as an earlier draft of the new one, was removed from the text presented to the electorate.<sup>36</sup> Inequalities among Russia's subjects contributed to at least 28 regions' decisions to declare or consider declaring themselves republics beginning in 1993.<sup>37</sup> The December constitution proclaims all 89 subjects equal, but in one of its many internal inconsistencies allows only republics to maintain constitutions (the other subjects are allowed charters) and declares that in cases where the Federal Treaty does not contradict the constitution, the Federal Treaty is still operative.

There is a danger that the regions will ignore the constitution which, although it gives them the semblance of self-rule, is arguably a foundation for a unitary state. Article 11.3 proclaims that the state power of the subjects shall be exercised by the government organs formed by them. Article 73, similar to Article 10 of the U.S. Constitution, gives the subjects residual powers; any power not explicitly given to the center devolves to the regions. Articles 71 and 72 distinguish areas under joint juridical control from those controlled by the center alone. Article 76 declares supremacy of federal laws in fields exercised in joint jurisdiction; and article 78.1 allows the federal government to install representatives of federal authority. Yeltsin has continued to remove and emplace not only presidential representatives but also heads of regional administration even after the constitution was adopted; article 78.1 may be the legal basis for his actions.<sup>38</sup> Soon after its adoption, several republican leaders demanded that the constitution be amended to give them more autonomy-- necessary, they argued, because of the ultranationalists' success in the elections.<sup>39</sup> Although Yeltsin would probably not use the powers granted him by the constitution to mistreat the non-ethnic Russian republics, his successors might.

A number of Russian republics have adopted their own constitutions that clearly contradict the federal constitution. Tyva and Bashkortostan adopted constitutions that contradict the federal one even after the final draft had been published and, in

the case of Tyva, after the December draft had been adopted nationwide. Tyva's constitution proclaims the republic's authority to make decisions on virtually everything--including to declare war; to change frontiers; and to suspend legislative and government acts of the Russian Federation.<sup>40</sup>

Tatarstan, which along with Chechnya is one of the most vocal opponents of central rule, signed a bilateral agreement on mutual delegations of powers with Moscow in February 1994 that allows it to maintain its constitution, even though the republican constitution contradicts the new federal one materially. This bilateral treaty, for which Tatarstan has been lobbying for several years, sets a dangerous precedent for Russia's future as a federal state. Although Tatarstan's demand to decide unilaterally the share of locally raised taxes sent to Moscow was denied, the federal government will reportedly receive a relatively small share. Tatarstan President Shaymiyev admitted that agreement with Moscow was possible only after Finance Minister Boris Fedorov resigned, presumably because the Minister objected to the financial terms of the treaty.<sup>41</sup> The Tatarstan Constitution declares the supremacy of local laws over federal ones; forbids Tatar citizens from serving outside the territory of Tatarstan; makes Tatarstan a sovereign state subject to international law; and declares that Tatarstan controls its domestic and foreign policies. It also gives the Tatar president the power to conclude international treaties and to establish diplomatic representation in foreign countries.<sup>42</sup>

An important question that arises is whether the new constitution will squelch secessionist aspirations. Yeltsin's claim that "this is not a constitution for secessionists," may in principle be true. The text explicitly makes customary international law and international legal norms a "component part of the RF legal system," however, which leaves open the possibility that republics will continue to demand greater independence--or even to secede--based on the principle of national self-determination.<sup>43</sup>

Questions of secession can only be decided by resolving the tension between several fundamental but conflicting principles of customary international law. On the one hand, the principle of territorial integrity is fundamental to the concept of the modern state. The United Nations Charter declares that any deliberate disruption of territorial integrity is incompatible with the purposes of the United Nations. Respect for this principle is essential to peace among states. Under certain conditions, however, other principles may take precedence over those of territorial integrity and of noninterference. Among these are the idea that consent is a necessary condition for legitimate political authority, and the principle that all peoples have the right of national self-determination.<sup>44</sup> Both principles of noninterference and of national self-determination are fundamental United Nations norms and may be considered customary international law.<sup>45</sup> One scholar argues that when "the associated

right of a group to determine its political existence conflicts with an existing state's right of noninterference, the right of secession is paramount, so long as that exercise of self-determination does not abridge the rights of other groups to self-determination."<sup>46</sup> Even if this view were accepted by the Russian court (and the prospects for that are slim), the difficulty lies in determining whose rights are most abridged: the secessionist group, minorities within the secessionist unit, the larger political unit, or other groups within the larger political unit.

In 1991 the constitutional court determined that Tatarstan's proposed referendum on independence was unconstitutional. The court made this ruling on the basis of the existing 1977 constitution, but it also made use of international law. The court ruled that the right of national self-determination does not necessarily provide a legal basis for secession and that other principles of international law--including the principle of territorial integrity--must also be observed.<sup>47</sup> At the time the Tatarstan case was considered, the existing Russian constitution did not include an explicit reference to international law.<sup>48</sup> This is no longer the case. Because the new constitution makes customary international law a component part of the Russian legal system, international legal norms can now be expected to play a larger role in judicial proceedings. Moreover, the Tatarstan decision does not necessarily preclude the possibility that the observance of national self-determination might take precedence over territorial integrity in future cases. Perhaps the most interesting question is whether economic incentives (as distinct from ostensible ethnic ones) will result in future separatist claims.

### **Economic Tensions.**

Russia is increasingly divided into rich and poor regions. Those regions that have benefitted the most from economic reform tend to be located in the North and the East. Average living standards have increased in the North and the East, including the oil-rich areas in the Urals, but declined in the center and in the Northern Caucasus.<sup>49</sup>

Political geographers studying voting patterns in the former parliament note that support for Yeltsin and economic reform follows a similar pattern. Yeltsin's support in the parliament was weakest below the 48th parallel, in the areas where living standards are lowest.<sup>50</sup> Yeltsin's support in the April 25, 1993 referendum was also weakest here.<sup>51</sup> In the December elections, support for the antireform parties (Liberal Democratic Party, the Communist Party and the Agrarian Party) was reportedly strongest below the 48th parallel, especially in the "rust belt" and the "corn belt."<sup>52</sup>

The differing economic objectives of Russia's diverse

economic regions create strong centrifugal pressures. Areas rich in exportable natural resources will be better off if commodity prices are determined on a market basis, if the ruble is competitively priced on foreign exchange markets, and if the government stops subsidizing industry. Industrial regions favor continued administrative pricing, over-valued exchange rates, and continued subsidies for industry. A survey conducted by the sociology departments of two Siberian universities suggests that separatism has more supporters in resource-rich regions, such as Krasnoyarsk Krai, and fewer supporters in subsidized regions, such as Altai Krai.<sup>53</sup> Distortionary trade policies, especially export quotas and administrative pricing of commodities, could exacerbate separatist tendencies in the resource-rich areas. This is especially the case for parts of Siberia and the Far East, whose most natural trading partners are Pacific Rim countries.<sup>54</sup>

It is not unprecedented for divergent objectives on the issue of free trade or monetary policy to result in secessionist aspirations. The United States provides two famous examples: the 1776 secession of the colonies from Britain; and the 1860 attempt by the Southern states to secede from the Union. The 13 colonies seceded from Britain because they believed themselves to be taxed unfairly.<sup>55</sup> The colonies concluded that they had no other recourse to protect themselves from Britain's prejudicial economic policies because they had no representation in parliament. Some historians attribute the U.S. Civil War, in large part, to what the South referred to as discriminatory tariffs. The North favored tariffs on manufactured goods, while the South favored free trade.

Moscow has handled the problem of conflicting regional objectives by simultaneously subsidizing and protecting domestic industry, and by negotiating deals with resource rich areas such as Sakha, which wrested from Moscow the right to keep over half its hard currency earnings from diamonds and to retain all federal taxes collected on its territory in 1994.<sup>56</sup> Special deals such as tax concessions and subsidies flourished while Yeltsin and the now-ousted parliament were competing for provincial support. The republics in particular took advantage of the executive-parliamentary rift to wrest concessions from the center, resulting in what Ned Walker calls a "war of the budgets," in which central authorities tried to "out-bid each other in currying favor with the territories."<sup>57</sup>

Economic tensions are likely to be further intensified by the new government's highly inflationary policies. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin has declared his determination to fight inflation and budget deficits by nonmonetary means--a policy that most economists claim is doomed to fail. The inflation rate nearly doubled in the first month after economic reformers Federov and Gaidar resigned.<sup>58</sup> State enterprises, often referred to as the "state dinosaurs," are demanding seven trillion rubles to cover their debts.<sup>59</sup> First Deputy Economic Minister Jakov Urinson told the Duma in February 1994 that the new government is "in a



critical financial position and will have to print vast quantities of money to avoid financial collapse."<sup>60</sup> Sergei Shakrai warns that the fall of the ruble will lead to increased interregional tensions and ethnic conflicts in 1994. The result will be economic separatism and ultimately, reliance on primitive interregional barter.<sup>61</sup>

Yeltsin's establishment of the Federation Council, which provides each territory with two representatives, is likely to worsen budgetary battles. The government is likely to find it needs the Federation Council to hold the Duma (a more national body dominated by anti-Yeltsin forces) in check. In the long run, kowtowing to the territories' budgetary demands, although politically expedient, will exacerbate economic tensions by aggravating inflation and increasing the budget deficit.

### **Conclusion.**

The new political regime, including the democratically elected parliament and the new constitution, will not resolve Russia's crisis of evolving statehood. On the contrary, the December 1993 elections exposed the Russian state's tenuous foundations. Four interrelated problems remain: ethnic tensions among and within regions; Russians' desire to reestablish more expansive borders; legal impediments to the creation of a federal state within Russia's current borders; and center-periphery economic tensions.

In drafting the December constitution, Yeltsin was faced with the challenge of finding the precise balance in reigning in the separatist regions: too little, and the regions will bankrupt the center by refusing to contribute to federal coffers; too much, and regions will rebel by demanding greater independence or concessionary bilateral fiscal arrangements--with similar results. The newly adopted constitution fails in the second direction. It provides the Constitutional Court little with which to protect the subjects from the national center; on the contrary, the constitution lays the foundation for a unitary state.

To create the legal culture essential to Russia's future integrity, Yeltsin and his successors must make it clear that the law takes precedence over immediate political objectives. First, it is not enough to adopt a constitution: Russia requires a new legal code to replace the often contradictory, Communist-era laws currently on the books. Second, making federal and regional laws consistent is essential to the creation of a law-based state in Russia. Finally, the infiltration of organized crime into federal and regional government damages not only the economy, but more important, Russia's nascent legal culture. Reducing the influence of organized crime must be one of Yeltsin's paramount objectives.

Ironically, the main threats to Western security now stem

not from Russia's strength, as was the case during the cold war era, but from Russia's weakness. Two threats stand out: the danger of "loose nukes" stemming from loss of central control, and the possibility that Moscow will behave rashly in an attempt to assuage Russians' humiliating sense of loss of empire. The possible outcomes discussed in this chapter do not represent the universe of possible futures for Russia, but they would impose sufficiently grave costs and are of sufficiently high probability that the United States ignores them at its peril. Sadly, U.S. policymakers are doing just that. Analysis of Russia's internal instability has been all but ignored at a time when the most pressing item on the administration's agenda is to convince Ukraine and Kazakhstan to send their nuclear weapons back to Russia, under whose stewardship these weapons may be even more threatening to Western security interests than they are now.

There is little the U.S. Government can do to influence significantly Russia's future. Economic aid can only go so far toward fostering democracy in a country where contempt for the law is rampant. But policymakers can try to reduce the fall-out for the West from Russian decay. Economic assistance should be continued, but it should be made conditional on Moscow's behavior, including both anti-inflationary economic policies and peaceful relations with the newly independent states. And assistance should be targeted to projects that directly affect the West, such as dismantling or deactivating weapons located in politically volatile regions in Russia; reducing the influence of organized crime; and jointly developing nuclear emergency response teams.

Two possible outcomes for Russia's future seem most likely: increasing chaos or authoritarian rule, neither of which is in the interest of Western security. It is important to face the facts: Zhirinovskiy's victory in the December elections may be a harbinger of terrors to come. At the same time it is important to maximize the probability of a third, more hopeful outcome. The G7 should be ready to provide a greater amount of aid to alleviate foreign exchange shortages and to improve Russians' standard of living, but only if Russia implements policies acceptable to the West. Although the probability of a positive outcome in Russia looks much lower than it did in 1992, the West should continue to maximize that probability by supporting forces consistent with the evolution of a law-based, democratic state.

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16. "Results Analyzed by Region," *FBIS-SOV-93-242*, December 20, 1993, p. 2.

17. Ann Sheehy, "Elections and Referendum Boycotted in Tatarstan," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, December 13, 1993.

18. Ann Sheehy, "North Ossetian Reaction to Yeltsin's Decree on Ingush Refugees," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, December 15, 1993.

19. See Vera Tolz, "Russia's Kalmyk Republic Follows Its Own Course," *RFE-RL Research Report*, May 21, 1993.

20. Stephen Foye, "General Staff Chief on Bases Outside Russia," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, March 1, 1994. See also John Lloyd, "Beware the Sickly Russian Bear," *Financial Times*, March 19-20, 1994, Section II, p. 1.

21. Suzanne Crow, "Kozyrev on Maintaining Conquests," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, October 8, 1993.

22. "Kozyrev Stresses Need for Military Presence in Baltics," *FBIS-SOV-94-012*, January 19, 1994, p. 8. After strong objections from the West, Kozyrev denied that he intended his remarks to be applied to the Baltic states.

23. Aleksei Bogaturov, "If there is No National-Democratic Thinking in Russia, Somebody Had Better Come Up With it as Soon as Possible," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 29, 1993, p. 4. Cited in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLV, No. 52, 1993, p. 3.

24. See Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume. See also "Weimar on the Volga," *Economist*, December 18, 1993, p. 45; "Russian Reform: At Risk," *Economist*, December 25, 1993, p. 63; and "Composition of Zhirinovskiy Base Analyzed," *FBIS-SOV-93-246*, December 27, 1993, p. 13.

25. *Biulleten' Tsentral'noi Izbiratel'noi Kommissii Rossisiiskoi Federatsii*, No. 1, 1994.

26. "LDPR: Slagaemiye Pobedi," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, February 17, 1994.

27. Richard Pipes explains that the antecedents of this principle can be found in Imperial Law, as well in the law that prevailed among 19th century peasants. Peter I issued the following decree in 1714: "Many, as if in their self-defense, claim that [an act] was not forbidden, not considering that everything that can bring harm and loss to the state is a crime." Richard Pipes, *Legalized Lawlessness: Soviet Revolutionary Justice*, London: Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, 1986, pp. 16, 22.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Bruce L. R. Smith, "Constitutionalism in the New Russia," in Bruce L. R. Smith and Gennady M. Danilenko, eds., *Law and Democracy in the New Russia*, Washington: Brookings Institution, 1993, p. 2.

31. Vasily A. Vlasihin, "Toward a Rule of Law and a Bill of Rights" in Bruce L. R. Smith and Gennady M. Danilenko, eds., *Law and Democracy in the New Russia*, p. 46.

32. "Preliminary Analysis of the Draft Constitution of the Russian Federation," Washington: American Bar Association, December 1993.

33. Preceding paragraph based on Isaac Kramnick, "Introduction," in James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, London: Penguin, 1987. Franklin cite, p.17.

34. Dmitri V. Olshansky, "Alternative Scenarios of the Disintegration of the Soviet Union," *Potomac Papers*, McLean, VA: Potomac Foundation, 1993.

35. Ann Sheehy, "Deputy Premier Federov on Demands of Republics," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, June 4, 1993.

36. The earlier draft, which the Constitutional Assembly approved on July 12, 1993, referred to the republics as "sovereign states," infuriating other subjects. For a detailed discussion of the Federal Treaty and its ambiguities, see Ned Walker, "Moscow and the Provinces: Economic and Political Dimensions of Russian Regionalism," *Eurasian Report*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1993.

37. The following territories declared themselves or declared their aspiration to become republics in 1993: Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Perm, Orenburg, Kurgan, Vologda, Amur, Kaliningrad, St. Petersburg city, Primorski Krai, Stavropol, Krasnodar, Rostov, Archangelsk, Tyumen oblast, including Khanti-Mansi and Yamalo-Nenets okruga, Krasnoyarsk Krai, including Evenkiyskiy and Taymirskiy okruga, Omsk, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Kemerovo, Irkutsk, Altai Krai, Amur, and Chita.

38. See "'Ural Republic President Fired" and "Yeltsin Appoints Samara Oblast Representative," *FBIS-SOV-94-012*, January 19, 1994, p. 47; and "Yeltsin Dismisses Omsk Head for Exceeding Authority," *FBIS-SOV-94-018*, January 27, 1994, p. 31.

39. Ann Sheehy, "Sakha, Bashkortostan Presidents Want Constitution Amended," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, December 17, 1993; "Election Results Seen Bolstering Regions' Hand," *FBIS-SOV-93-245*, December 23, 1993, p. 11.

40. Ann Sheehy, "New Tuvina Parliament Elected," *RFE-RL Research Report*, December 17, 1993.

41. John Lloyd, "Moscow Devolves Power to Tatarstan Republic," *Financial Times*, February 17, 1994, p. 2.

42. These provisions appear in the following articles in the

order I have listed them: Article 59; Article 58; Article 61; Article 89.3; and Article 111.9. "Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan," *JPRS Report, FBIS-USR- 93-024*, March 4, 1993.

43. U.N. Charter articles 1 and 55; the U.N. International Covenant on Economics, Social, and Cultural Rights; U.N. Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, U.N. GA Resolution 1514, U.N. Doc A/4684 (1960); Advisory Opinion on Western Sahara (1975) International Court of Justice 12 (holding application of principle of self-determination and Resolution 1514 to Western Sahara paramount).

44. "The Logic of Secession," *Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 89, 1980, pp. 802-824.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 803.

46. *Ibid.*

47. Vedomosty RF, no. 13, item 671 (1991). Cited and discussed in Gennady M. Danilenko, "International Law and Rechtsstaat," in Smith and Danilenko, eds., *Law and Democracy in the New Russia*, p. 102.

48. In April 1992 the Declaration of the Right and Freedoms of Man and Citizen, which incorporates international norms for human rights, became part of the existing Russian constitution. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

49. Denis Shaw, "Russia's Division into 'Rich' and 'Poor' Regions," *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. 35, No. 5, 1992, pp. 323-325.

50. Elizabeth Teague, "North-South Divide: Yeltsin and Russia's Provincial Leaders," *RFE-RL Research Report 2*, No. 47, November 26, 1993, pp. 7-23.

51. Ralph S. Clem and Peter R. Craumer, "The Geography of the April 25 Referendum," *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. 34, No. 8, 1993, pp. 481-496.

52. "The World Sends NATO Back to the Drawing Board," *Economist*, December 25, 1993-January 7, 1994, p. 62.

53. Vera Tolz, "Regionalism in Russia: The Case of Siberia," *RFE-RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 9, February 1993, p. 5.

54. The material on economics above is based on conversations with Barry Eichengreen, Jeffrey Frankel, and Jaques Sapir.

55. Allen Buchanan, "Toward a Theory of Secession," *Ethics* 101, January 1991, pp. 322-342.

56. Ann Sheehy, "Yakutia to be Allowed to Retain Federal Taxes in 1994," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, October 27, 1993; Vera Tolz, "Regionalism in Russia: The Case of Siberia," *RFE-RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 9, February 1993, p. 7.

57. Edward Walker, "Moscow and the Provinces: Economic and Political Dimensions of Russian Regionalism," to appear in *Eurasian Report*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1993.

58. Peter Passell, "Economic Scene," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1994, p. C2.

59. Peter Passell, "Economic Scene," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1994, p. C2. For further discussion of industrial and agricultural regions' demands for subsidies, see Chapter 2 in this volume.

60. John Lloyd, "Russia 'Must Print Money or Face Crisis'," *Financial Times*, February 11, 1994.

61. Ann Sheehy, "Shakrai Warns Fall of Ruble Will Encourage Separatism," *RFE-RL Daily Report*, January 25, 1994.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE UNITED STATES AND A RESURGENT RUSSIA: A NEW COLD WAR OR A BALANCE OF POWER RECAST?

Ilya Prizel

John Lukacs in his controversial book *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age*,<sup>1</sup> observed that despite the fact that much of this century was consumed by a struggle between communism and pluralist democracy, the truth is that the 20th century was not a century of universalist ideas, but rather a century of nationalism. Universalist ideas, such as socialism or Marxism, perished in August 1914 when Europe's workers ignored their notions of class solidarity and took up arms against each other in the name of nationalism. Although a Bolshevik regime came to power in Russia, and in the aftermath of World War II managed to expand to Central Europe and the Balkans, the survival of all these regimes (in addition to coercion) remained heavily dependent on their ability to co-opt and harness the appeal of nationalism.

While ardent Bolsheviks, East European leaders ranging from Poland's Wladyslaw Gomulka to Romania's Nikolai Ceausescu built their legitimacy on the basis of their claims to being the embodiment of their countries' nationalist agendas, the USSR's record, given its multinational character, was far more complex.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless as the appeal of communism began to wane, Stalin during the *Zhdanovchina* (1947-53) reversed his assessment of Russian nationalism from absolute evil to absolute good,<sup>3</sup> and Brezhnev throughout his long stewardship, by tolerating publications such as *Molodaia gvardiia*, attempted to reconcile Russian nationalism with Marxist ideology, as a means to bolster the regime's legitimacy.<sup>4</sup> However, as Milovan Djilas, the Yugoslav Stalinist turned dissident, observed, "communism could strangle all anti-communist manifestations and could cope with democratic and liberal feelings, but never with nationalist ones . . ."<sup>5</sup>

While there was almost a universal attribution of the collapse of the Soviet Union to its flawed economic model, or the incompatibility of totalitarian regimes with an educated living through the "third industrial revolution,"<sup>6</sup> relatively little attention was devoted to the fact that ultimately Bolshevism's greatest failure was its inability to meet the aspirations of nationalism. In Eastern Europe, especially as the perception of the German threat receded, Soviet style communism was increasingly perceived as a foreign imposition which was an affront to these countries' dignity. In Russia itself Bolshevism increasingly was characterized by Russian nationalists as a foreign ideology which was "denationalizing" Russia. While Western scholarship focused its attention on Russia's westernizing dissidents such as Sakharov, Bukovsky, and Brodsky, and while, during the Gorbachev era, much attention was paid to



the "liberals" in Gorbachev's retinue, relatively little attention was paid to increasingly failing attempts by the Soviet regime to harness Russian nationalism, and to the growing challenge to the regime from the "Slavophile" camp. Although some outstanding pioneering studies of Russian nationalism by scholars such as Alexander Yanov, John Dunlop, Darrell Hammer, and Stephen Carter<sup>7</sup> were published in the West over the last 15 years, the focus of western attention remained concentrated on the liberal challenge to Bolshevism. Even, when a Russian nationalist such as Solzhenitsyn did manage to capture the attention of the West, his nationalist political agenda was dismissed as romantic and anachronistic.

### **The CIS as Russia Writ Large.**

It is noteworthy to observe that, with the sole exception of the Baltics, it was in Russia where the question of participation in the Union was raised first, and it was Yeltsin's highly effective articulation of Russia's dissatisfaction with Russia's place within the USSR that catapulted him to political leadership. However, despite the westernizing liberals' opposition to the dictatorial methods of the communist nomenklatura, and despite the nationalist opposition to communist "denationalization" of Russia, neither group contemplated the disintegration of the Russian empire.

In fact when Russia's Boris Yeltsin, Ukraine's Leonid Kravchuk, and Belarus' Stanislau Shushkevich met outside Brest and decided to form the CIS, westernizing liberals rejoiced seeing in its formation the remaking of the Soviet state along democratic lines. As Andrei Kortunov noted, Russian liberals (knowing the depth of the economic interdependence of the former Soviet Republics and adopting Francis Fukuyama's notion of the "End of History" where liberal economic interests shape national policy) felt that the prospect of an actual disintegration of the USSR was very remote. According to the liberal vision, the Commonwealth founded in December of 1991 was going to mutate into an entity similar to a "post Maastricht" Europe in which Russia would inevitably be the senior partner. Analyzing the formation of the CIS, Len Karpinsky, editor of the liberal *Moscow News*, optimistically noted: "The treaty signed in Brest looks good because it launches, at long last, the real process of integration . . ."<sup>8</sup> Galina Staravoitova, Yeltsin's advisor on nationality affairs, echoed this view stating that "The Brest agreement gives us the hope for a future confederation."<sup>9</sup>

### **The Russian National Idea and the Empire.**

Similarly, Russian nationalists' rejection of the Soviet Union in no way constituted a rejection of the Russian empire. While there may have been "nativists" such as Igor Shafarevich<sup>10</sup> who actually celebrated the demise of the Soviet Union seeing in it an opportunity to free Russia from the burden of the empire,

others such as Solzhenitsyn welcomed the prospect of ridding Russia of Central Asia--"the folly of Alexander II." However, even Solzhenitsyn continued to assume that the fraternal links among the East Slavic peoples of the USSR would continue to exist.<sup>11</sup> In fact the complaint of Russian nationalists against the USSR was not a complaint against the empire, but rather a complaint about the status of the Russians within that empire. Since the October Revolution a substantial stream within the Russian intellectual community perceived Bolshevism as an "apocalyptic" imposition of an alien idea on Russia that reduced the Russian people to "cannon fodder" for a universalist idea with no regard for either the material or spiritual well-being of the Russians.<sup>12</sup> Thus, while the Soviet version of the Russian empire may well have been rejected by both the Russian left and right, the notion of the empire itself was far from rejected by Russia's political class. Roman Szporluk in his path breaking article, "Dilemmas of Russian Nationalism,"<sup>13</sup> observed that there is no correlation between the degree of "liberalism" and degree of commitment to the preservation of the empire. Thus, while some westernizers par excellence remained committed to the preservation of the USSR, some extreme nationalists were sufficiently Russocentric to support the idea of the dismantlement of the empire. Furthermore, even among those whom Professor Szporluk designated as "nation builders," few equated the boundaries of "Russia" with those of the Russian Federation, assuming that at the very least "Russia" would include Ukraine, Belarus, the Caucasus, and much of Kazakhstan.

The concept of the "Russian idea" covers an extremely broad specter of thinkers ranging from the moderate academician Dmitri Likhachev,<sup>14</sup> who is careful to distinguish patriotism from xenophobia, to fascists such as Dmitrii Vasil'ev who seem to be taking an ideological cue from German nazism; however, the center of gravity of Russian nationalism did not shift very much from its "slavophile" predecessors of the 19th century. The eternal question as to whether Russia is European or Asian continued to be debated on the pages of *Samizdat* and later in the open with the same vigor as in the 19th century, and the powerful link between Orthodox Christianity and Russian national identity remained intact. Beyond these rather vague notions of Russianness, Russian nationalists, much as their 19th century predecessors, continued to believe that with the exception of Poles, Finns, the Baltic peoples, and perhaps some other groups with a highly developed sense of national identity, most groups can be sufficiently Russified to create a Russian identity which transcends the borders of Russia or even the areas where ethnic Russians constitute a majority. In a sense the Russian nationalists' attempt to mold a diverse people into a single entity followed the pattern launched by France a few centuries earlier, where a rather diverse collection of people was blended into a single national entity through the centralization of a cultural policy.

Given this generally nonracial, although paradoxically

anti-Semitic notion of the Russian identity, most Russian nationalists paid scant attention to the fact that by raising Russia's national agenda they were invariably raising the entire national question of other national groups, even groups such as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians whom the Russians perceived as parochial branches of the Russian people. Most Russian nationalists, while rejecting the Soviet Union, falsely assumed that what held the polyglot people of the USSR was not the universalist ideology of Marxism which the Russian nationalists rejected, but rather the inclusionist nature of Russian nationalism.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, as Walter Laqueur pointed out, while Russian nationalist intellectuals spent their energies seeking to identify the culprits of Russia's spiritual decline, they remained oblivious to the growing separatist turmoil in the Caucasus, Ukraine, Tatarstan, and among other peoples with whom the Russians perceived their link as insoluble.

Alain Besancon's prophetic observation that in the absence of an "ideological magic" the colonial legitimacy of the Russian empire will evaporate and the Russian empire will break up<sup>16</sup> was ignored by Russia's nationalist thinkers. Thus, the breakup of the USSR was an event which the Russian nationalists, let alone the *Narod*, had neither anticipated nor were psychologically prepared to face. Even the various referenda in Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltics, and other republics where Russians voted with convincing majorities in favor of independence were presumed (wrongly) by many Russians as a step to dismantle the hated sclerotic Brezhnevism rather than a fundamental breakup of the "lands of Rus'." Russia's political elite continued to treat the overwhelming Ukrainian vote in December 1991 in favor of independence as a "misunderstanding." Even after the December 1991 Minsk summit, where the three leaders agreed to dissolve the USSR and replace it with the CIS, upon his return to Moscow Yeltsin construed this accord as an act of preservation of a single "economic and strategic space" rather than an act of dissolution. Although Russia's nationalists despised the role of Russia within the Soviet Union, it was the Russian philosopher (of Ukrainian origin) Alexander Tsipko who encapsulated the inherent limitations even of a nonimperial Russian "nation builder" when he noted that without Ukraine, "there can be no Russia in the old, real sense of the word."<sup>17</sup>

In short, while Russian nationalists decried what they perceived as Russia's inferior position vis-a-vis both the "exterior" and the "core" of the Soviet empire, they did not really question the fundamental legitimacy of the empire; therefore the collapse of the USSR, and especially the "loss" of what most nationalists perceived as the historic "lands of Rus" was an event for which the Russian body politic was not psychologically prepared, and initially could not internalize its full implications. Much as their predecessors in the 19th century, Russian liberals, while bitterly opposed to the autocratic nature of the empire, never really questioned the validity of the empire as such. As Roman Szporluk noted, for many

Russians it was the mighty Russian state that was the embodiment of the Russian national idea.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, when it became clear that the Brest agreement was not a step toward a "more perfect union" but rather a return of Russia to a position it occupied in Europe before the reign of Peter I ("the Great"), a profound crisis of national identity befell Russia--a process which is yet to be resolved.

Liberals, while stunned by the disintegration of the USSR and, indeed, finding it hard to accept Ukraine, Belarus, or Kazakhstan as foreign countries, nevertheless, were resigned. Despite the patent unfairness resulting from Stalin's truncation of the territories of Russia, the process of disintegration could not be reversed and Russia's national interest would be best served by rapidly "returning Russia to the West" via a continuation of Gorbachev's conciliatory policy. At the same time, by pursuing a friendly policy toward the "Near Abroad," the minority rights of the 25 million Russians "abroad" could be secured. Even among the liberals, only a minority felt that the disintegration of the USSR would finally free the Russians from what John Dunlop called "the mentality of an oppressed minority." Others saw in the breakup of the USSR the opportunity for Russia finally to mature into a normal country which pursues its own national interest.<sup>19</sup>

#### **The New Russia and the CIS.**

The speed and the depth of the change that occurred in December 1991 forced Russia's foreign policy invariably by sheer inertia not to change very much from that of the former Soviet Union. The Gorbachev doctrines from the era of "New Thinking" continued to be the official dogma of the Russian state. Asserting itself as the successor of the USSR and operating under the assumption that Russia was not threatened by the West, while the new states were far too weak to be taken seriously, Moscow continued to champion "universal human values," nuclear disarmament, and possible rapprochement with Japan as the main foreign policy goals of Russia. The foreign policy dominated by westernizing liberals argued strenuously that Russia, shorn of its empire had finally become a normal country that would readily take its place among the civilized nations of the West. This policy of strong affiliation with the West resulted in a very rapid disassociation of Russia from its troublesome Third World clients, as well as a reorientation of policy in favor of supporting the existing international order.<sup>20</sup> Kozyrev's initial policy was strongly derived from a firm belief in economic determinism and universal values, with historic and geostrategic considerations playing a far more secondary role.

In terms of its relationship with the CIS, Russia's initial policy toward the "near abroad" can be best described as denial.<sup>21</sup> The foreign ministry was slow in developing a coherent attitude toward the new neighbors, while other political

institutions acted as if the change in the relationship between Russia and its former empire was more apparent than real. Given this state of mind, long after Ukraine and other republics established their own armed forces, the Kremlin continued to cling to the fiction of a common "defense space," refusing to establish a Russian defense ministry or distinct Russian armed forces. In economic terms Moscow continued to supply grossly subsidized energy and minerals to the republics, even though according to the Swedish economist Anders Aslund this subsidy cost Russia between 10 and 15 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP). Even more significantly Russia continued to allow republican central banks to issue ruble denominated credits, which allowed Ukraine and other republics to avoid the economic contraction imposed on Russia following Yegor Gaidar's freeing of prices in Russia, which contributed mightily to fueling inflation in the Russian Federation. In fact, despite the growing violence along the periphery of the Russian Federation and the growing acrimony between Russia and the Baltic States and between Russia and Ukraine, the Russian foreign ministry did not establish a "near abroad" bureau within the ministry until May 1992.

This twilight relationship between Russia and its CIS partners, whereby the newly independent states simultaneously continued to draw heavily on Russia's meager resources while assertively insisting on their independence, was soon challenged from both the left and the right. To the liberal economists clustered around Gaidar the situation where Russia allowed other countries to issue ruble denominated credits meant that Russia abdicated control over the sources of its money supply making any anti-inflationary policy unattainable. To the nationalist right-wing camp, the breakup of the Soviet army; squabbles over the future of the Black Sea fleet; the loss of Crimea with its historic symbolism to Russia; and the real as well as perceived discrimination against Russian speakers in the Baltics, Western Ukraine, and Central Asia; fueled a sense of resentment and humiliation which will have to be redressed.

While both Russia's liberals and nationalists realized that the current relationship with the CIS states is unsustainable, the solutions offered by the two camps were radically different. Liberals, many of whom by now mutated to a more statist-pragmatic orientation, asserted that Russia cannot reverse the breakup of the Soviet Union; however, it must retain very close and intimate links to the CIS. To regain a position of centrality within the CIS, liberal pragmatists argued that Russia must become a political, cultural, and economic magnet which will draw the other republics into the orbit of Russia. However, unlike the initial policy where Moscow attempted to preserve the link with its CIS partners via continued mass subsidies and insistence on the fiction of "common economic and defense space," the new approach of the liberals turned pragmatists was substantially different. Led by people such as Deputy Foreign Minister Fedor Shelov-Kovedayev, Alexander Shokhin, and others, this group asserted that the only way that Russia can become a centerpiece

of the CIS is if it would manage to become a leader within the group in economic and political terms by restructuring Russia. To attain the needed restructuring, Russia must cut all its costly links with other CIS states which, while impoverishing Russia, do little to enhance its position within the Commonwealth. It was under the influence of this group that Russia first ejected Ukraine from the ruble zone and then proceeded to create a financial system which is exclusively under Russia's control; demanding that any other state that wants to participate in the system abdicate its financial independence to Russia. Russia's deliveries of subsidized energy, other minerals, and industrial components were phased out and CIS states were required by Moscow to pay nearly world prices. Russia's foreign policy doctrine published in late 1992 overtly stated that Russia does not intend to "pay for the development of relations (with the CIS states) with unilateral concessions to the detriment of its own state interest."<sup>22</sup>

As Sergei Karaganov, director of Russia's Council for Foreign and Defense Policy, asserted, by following an unpatronizing and enlightened policy toward the CIS countries Russia will help both parties to identify their mutual interests which is a prerequisite to any normal relationship. The notion of "Russia first" among this group was so deeply ingrained that they opposed integrative steps with such palliative countries as Kazakhstan and Belarus, believing that integration of any sort will result yet again in the transfer of resources from Russia to the periphery.

This shift of policy by Moscow in spring 1992 had a profound effect on the "correlation of forces" between Russia and its "near abroad." All of the former republics of the USSR (with the exception of the Baltics) started to run huge deficits in their trade with Russia with the Russian ruble easily emerging as by far the strongest currency. Republics of the former Soviet Union, which initially sought to minimize the importance of their relationship with Russia, soon discovered that Russia remains vital to the new states' well-being. Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk, who, in May 1992 predicted that Poland would soon surpass Russia as Ukraine's trade partner,<sup>23</sup> by early 1993 emphatically noted that Russia is vital to the survival of Ukraine.

Despite the fact that Russia's foreign ministry by mid-1992 was finally developing a coherent foreign policy toward the republics of the former Soviet Union, by that time other players within the Russian body politic emerged with vastly different agendas toward the "near abroad." On the one hand Soviet-era industrialists led by the "Red director" Arkady Vol'skii insistently argued for an economic reunification of the former USSR as the means of salvation for the ailing CIS economy. The Russian army, while withdrawing from the former Warsaw Pact countries, undertook an increasingly aggressive (and at times seemingly autonomous) policy in the former USSR. Russia's

Fourteenth Army led by General Alexander Lebed' defied the government of Moldova and threw its weight behind the separatist republic of Transdniester. In the deepening civil war in Georgia, elements of the Russian army supplied the Abkhaz side with arms and other means of support making the secession of Abkhazia possible. In the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russia's army skillfully managed to play both sides against the other, thereby installing a pro-Russian government in Baku while making both sides depend on Russia as an arbiter.

Finally, Russia's right, which initially was too shell-shocked to react forcefully to the Brest accords, regrouped by challenging the validity of the CIS accord altogether. The nationalist leaders of Russia, many of whom were former nomenklatura apparatchiks, felt that the price of their effort to come to terms with the West led to the demise of the USSR, a price that turned out to be far too high. Along with traditional Russian imperialists who made no secret of their desire to reestablish "one and indivisible Russia" even if the means necessary were to require violence, even moderate Russians became increasingly responsive to what Fritz Stern referred to as the "politics of despair." As Alexei Pushkov, currently deputy editor of *Moskovskiy Novosti*, observed:

Russia inherited not only the USSR's seat in the UN Security Council and the internal treaties signed by Moscow--but the frustration and bitterness as well. Russia alone gained nothing from the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It lost lands joined to it by czars dating to Peter the Great. The fall of the USSR left Russia with shattered self esteem and a feeling of humiliation. *A fallen empire syndrome haunts Russia.*<sup>24</sup>  
(Emphasis in original)

Right wing politicians were quick to capitalize on this sentiment. Nikolai Travkin, a founder of Yeltsin's *Democratic Russia* who since joined the nationalists, observed that the demise of the USSR was the worst calamity in Russia's millennium-long history and that the birth of the CIS was a defeat of Russia and a victory for Ukraine. Sergei Baburin went further asserting that: "Either Ukraine will reunite with Russia or there will be war."<sup>25</sup> Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Liberal-Democratic party, expanded his irredentist agenda to include all territories controlled by the Russian empire in 1867.

Even Yeltsin's close associate, Sergei Shakhrai, sensing the popular reaction to the breakup of the USSR conceded: "Our national identity does not coincide with Russia's borders . . . We have grown used to thinking on a union scale. With the breakup of the Soviet Union our great nation feels cheated."<sup>26</sup>

In strict economic terms the policy advocated by Yeltsin's young associates was the most suitable for Russia, given the fact that any deepening of the relationship between Russia and other

former Soviet republics would entail an economic transfer from Russia which Moscow could not afford; however, as liberal Russian journalist Dmitrii Furman observed, Russia's policy toward the CIS has by now attained a far larger symbolism, where a tolerant policy toward the CIS versus an expansionist policy has become an arena for struggle between liberalism and authoritarianism. Furman noted that: "The fate of Russia's democracy will be determined in the near abroad."<sup>27</sup>

### **Towards a Policy of Russian Self-Assertion.**

The Russian elections of December 1993, which saw a sharp swing toward the communists and nationalists, confirmed a trend which was visible in Russia, as well as in the rest of Eastern Europe, for more than a year. In economic terms Gaidar's "shock therapy," which was never fully implemented in any event, saw the collapse of Russian industrial output and rapid impoverishment of much of the Russian population. Western aid, which was heralded by the Yeltsin-Kozyrev team as the fruit of their pro-Western policy, never approached the amounts of transfers promised by President George Bush and the "Group of Seven," let alone the amount to which the Russians assumed they were entitled. In terms of foreign policy the accommodation with Washington increasingly was perceived by ever larger segments of the Russian population as one of capitulation to Western patronization and arrogance. The West's insistence on sanctions against the pro-Russian Serbs, while refusing to impose similar sanctions against the pro-German Croats whose intrusion into Bosnia is no less blatant than that of the Serbs, was perceived by Moscow's nationalists as a symptom of orchestrated "Russophobia." The high-handed manner in which Washington forced Moscow to cancel its rocket engine export deal to India, at a time when the United States's own arms exports were capturing an unprecedented share of the world arms market, was seized by the opponents of Kozyrev's policy as yet another proof of the West's duplicity when it came to dealing with Russia. Yet perhaps nothing undercut more the West's credibility in the Russian polity than the suspicion of Western acquiescence to a policy of discrimination against Russian speakers in Estonia and Latvia.

Economic hardship, along with a perception that the foreign policy pursued by the Kremlin since 1988 had resulted in the continuous marginalization of Russia with no visible benefits whatsoever, led to an erosion of the meager political base which the policy had enjoyed since August 1991. Several traditional Russian notions which initially were the preserve of the Russian right have become popularized to the point that they embody today the consensus of the Russian polity. The traditional Slavophile notion that Russia is a "civilization" rather than an ethnic nation, and therefore not bound by the territories of the Russian Federation, has become commonplace even among people who in the past were considered liberals. While there are those among Russia's nationalists such as Ksenia Mayalo who insist that



Russia is neither "Atlantist" nor "Eurasian"; the intellectual center of gravity is shifting yet again to the "Eurasian" camp. These thinkers consider themselves the moral heirs to the "Slavophile" thinkers of the 19th century, and the Asia-oriented intellectuals, who during the 1920s popularized the "Eurasian" idea in emigration. The Eurasian idea is based on the following principles:

- That Russia is a distinct multi-ethnic civilization--any attempts to try to westernize Russia will at best reduce Russia to a "poor relative" of the West, "another Romania albeit larger," or at worst accentuate the fissures within that civilization and lead to the breakup of Russia's cultural space and possibly cause a civil war. Furthermore, Russia by virtue of being a great power will receive the international recognition that is its due. Elgiz Pozdnyakov writing in the Foreign Ministry's publication, *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, emphatically stated that "westernizers" are people to whom Russian traditions mean nothing, and that Russia's role as a great power is "genetic" and "inborn," and that only by retaining a strong centralized state will Russia avoid becoming "an object of history."<sup>28</sup>

- That an attempt to impose from above yet another western model (this time liberal capitalism) will be no less disastrous than the imposition of Marxism. Russia's historic power was based on its being an "organic polity" to whom western individualist traditions are alien and dangerous.

In terms of foreign affairs, the consensus appears to be that it would be folly for Russia to attempt to play a global role, and thus compete with maritime powers; however, Russia must retain its status as a great power and that can be accomplished if Russia will continue to insist upon a Great Power presence in both Central Europe and the heart of Asia. To accomplish the goal of remaining a great continental power, most "Eurasians" favor retaining a tight grip on the territories of the former Soviet Union as well as a substantial degree of influence in countries littoral to the former Soviet Union: namely, Central Europe, Turkey, Iran, the Subcontinent and China. Some exponents of the "Eurasian" idea, such as Petr Savitsky and Shamil Sultanov, argue that there is a fundamental incompatibility between "Eurasian Spirituality" and "Atlantist Consumerism." Given this fundamental schism, and their belief that the current world economic order is structured to serve the insatiable appetite of "Atlantic Consumerism," Russia ought not to side with the West in the imminent clash between the West and Islam. In general "Eurasians" seem to embrace Nikolai Karamzin's feeling that "By becoming citizens of the world, Russians will cease being Russians." It is noteworthy to observe that according to a sociological study published by *Obshchaya Gazeta*, the foundation for Zhirinovskiy's support was frustrated Russian nationalism rather than a reaction to impoverishment.<sup>29</sup>

While the views of the extremist "Eurasians" do not represent the view of the majority of the Russian public, we are clearly witnessing a mutation of Russian nationalism similar to the three phase process envisioned by Alexander Yanov whereby Russian nationalism moved from the first phase which was a struggle against the Soviet Union, to a second phase of "isolationism," and now is embarking once again on supporting imperialist-militarism.<sup>30</sup>

### **Russia's New Objectives.**

Zhirinovskiy's geopolitical ideas of expansion to the Indian Ocean continue to be rejected by the overwhelming majority of Russia's political elite;<sup>31</sup> however, after nearly 2 years of turmoil and disorientation, Russian foreign policy has ceased to be the purview of liberal "Atlantists" and has passed to the hands of so-called *Statist-Democrats (Demokraty- Derzhavniki)*. Dominated by men such as Lukin, Sobchak, Stankovich, Arbatov, Karaganov, and others, the underlying foundations of their orientation are the following:

- While not anti-American, their belief is that Russia can enter an intimate relationship with the United States only as a client, therefore such a relationship is not acceptable to Russia. Therefore, Russia will not be interested in membership in either the European Union or NATO since such membership will only accentuate Russian economic weakness and blunt its military strength.

- Russia must insist on complete parity of rights with the United States.

- It is not beyond the United States to try to utilize Europe and the near abroad as leverage against Russia. Therefore, Moscow must retain its sphere of influence.

- Russia's sole means to retain its status as a great continental power is to reestablish a strong sphere of influence in the CIS and its littoral countries.

- The independence of Eastern Europe and the new CIS states can be accepted by Russia only if these states become bridges for Russia to engage with the rest of the world, rather than an anti-Russian *cordon sanitaire* moving from the banks of the Elbe to the banks of the Bug (the Polish-Ukrainian border) or even the Don (Ukrainian-Russian border). Therefore, any expansion of Western security or economic multinational organizations is counter to Russian interests.

- Russia is the sole power able (and willing) to maintain order along its periphery. Russia will assert that right, with or without the West's blessing.

- Russia's eagerness to accommodate the West led to the loss of its external empire, the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the threatened integrity of the Russian Federation; only Russia's willingness to assert itself again will preserve Russia's integrity.

- Russia's borders consist of three layers: a) the current political borders of the Russian Federation; b) the lands outside the Russian Federation where ethnic Russians and Russian speakers predominate; and, c) the Russian cultural sphere which essentially covers the entire former USSR--in all these areas Russia has an enduring right to assert its interests.

Even, Russian liberals such as Dmitrii Furman have now accepted the notion that Russia will have to live through an "authoritarian spasm" if it is to arrest the process of continuous disintegration.

Given these new values, since the spring of 1993 Moscow's foreign policy has undergone a profound reorientation in its policy toward the rest of the Commonwealth and its former outer empire. Russian foreign policy today reflects two doctrines in terms of Russia's relationship with the former republics of the USSR: Russia has adopted a notion of a "manifest destiny" whereby Russia has a natural right to expand and reacquire the lost "lands of Rus"; in terms of its policy toward its former satellites in East Central Europe, the Kremlin had revived the *Kvitisnisky Doctrine* under which Moscow, during the last days of the Soviet Union, insisted as a price for a Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborliness, a commitment by the Central European countries not to enter into any alliance which Moscow might perceive as "unfriendly" to the USSR. With the exception of Romania, all other former Warsaw Pact countries spurned this demand and signed treaties with the Russian Federation which omitted this clause. Nevertheless, despite the scuttling of the clause stating the *Kvitsinsky Doctrine* by Moscow following the August coup, the same position was resurrected by the Kremlin when the Visegrad group attempted to join NATO this winter. Russia aborted that application by direct pressure on the NATO states themselves. While the Russian Foreign Ministry was engaged in a campaign to discourage NATO members from admitting the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Hungarians, Russia's Defense Ministry published its own new doctrine which clearly placed the former Warsaw Pact states within Russia's sphere, threatening to use nuclear weapons against any state that possesses nuclear weapons or is allied with states which possess such weapons.<sup>32</sup>

If there was a metamorphosis in the Kremlin's policy toward Eastern Europe, a far more pronounced metamorphosis occurred in Moscow's policy toward the former CIS states. During 1993 the Kremlin moved from declaring unqualified recognition of sovereignty of the CIS states to overt proclamation of a "Russian Monroe Doctrine." Yeltsin's spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov openly declared that all members of the CIS will reintegrate with Russia

"once the prickly nationalist weeds are uprooted." Russia's "westernizing" foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev reasserted that Russia should cease to fear the words "sphere of influence" and reassert its geopolitical interests in the former Soviet Union, apparently including the Baltics.<sup>33</sup>

Even Yeltsin, who during the first year as the president of the Russian Federation argued that Russia "does not want to be anyone's older brother," reversed himself demanding that Russia become "first among equals" within the CIS.

The watershed of Russia's CIS policy could be dated to the December 1993 elections in Russia and the subsequent CIS meeting in Ashgabad. Even before the meeting in late December, Yeltsin's spokesman Kostikov made it clear that Russia's first foreign policy priority is the Russian Diaspora. Kostikov told ITAR-TASS that "Undisputed emphasis in foreign policy will be given to protection of Russia's national interests and the rights of Russian and Russian speaking people . . . on the basis of pan-national solidarity."<sup>34</sup> Presidential counselor Sergei Stankevich declared that ". . . a process of bridging gaps is clearly visible. Russia's historic task is the gradual historic task of cultural and economic expansion into the new foreign countries."<sup>35</sup> It is noteworthy that Russia's new assertiveness is not limited to the "new countries." The government of Finland was startled this January when the Russian embassy in Helsinki handed a note to the Finnish foreign ministry stating that the participation of extreme right-wing parties in the Finnish presidential elections violates the 1947 Paris Peace Agreement between the USSR and Finland, an accord which strictly limited Finland's independence. Moscow was clearly reminding Finland that Russia has no intention of abandoning its sphere of influence. Similarly, Russia let it be known that it would oppose Turkish efforts to create a "Turkic Bloc" out of former Soviet republics in Central Asia.

The emerging new relationship between Russia and other member states of the CIS was formulated at the Ashgabad summit conference convened in late December of 1993. Not only was Yeltsin elected unanimously as the Chairman of the CIS, but Russia managed to sign defense accords with several CIS members and even traditionally reluctant Ukraine resumed military contacts with Moscow.

Turkmenistan became the first CIS member to capitulate to the Kremlin's demand that its ethnic Russian population be granted dual citizenship, that of the Russian Federation as well as that of the host country, while Belarus became the first CIS state to agree to abandon its independent currency making the Russian ruble the sole legal tender of that republic. It is noteworthy that the Kremlin made no secret that the Byelorussian-Russian relationship was a model for Russia's relationship with the other CIS members.<sup>36</sup> In the case of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, Russia forced the local governments to

turn over 20-30 percent of the shares in joint petroleum exploration ventures with Western oil companies.<sup>37</sup> As *Izvestia* observed, the elections in Russia and the Kremlin's new hegemonic policies in the "near abroad" have induced two parallel reactions within the CIS: on the one hand all CIS leaders, fearing the resurgence of aggressive Russian nationalism, have rallied around Yeltsin; on the other, to check Russia's seemingly insatiable expansionary appetite,<sup>38</sup> the leaders of the CIS scrambled to arrange more bilateral deals to check the growing power of Moscow. Thus, Kazakhstan's Nursultan Nazarbayev traveled to Kiev to establish firmer links with Ukraine, while at the same time raised the pursuing of an economic pact with Uzbekistan.

However, despite these efforts, few of the Commonwealth leaders entertained many illusions about the new phase in Russian-Commonwealth relations. In New Year's messages broadcast on Moscow's Radio Mayak, one CIS leader after another declared his fidelity to the CIS and to a closer relationship with Russia.<sup>39</sup>

The reemerging links between Russia and the former republics of the USSR led 22 percent of the Muscovites polled to believe that *all 15* republics of the USSR will reintegrate, while an additional 39 percent expected "most" to reintegrate.<sup>40</sup>

#### **Towards a New Relationship with the West.**

Although the Russian leadership is aware that its expansionism along its periphery will not go unnoticed by the West, the prospect of a major western response thus far draws a nonchalant response in Moscow. Foreign minister Kozyrev overtly stated in an interview in *Moskovskiye Novosti* that if the West thought that it would be better off dealing with a weak Russia, it was in fact ignoring realities since pushing Russia to the wall would merely hasten the rise of Russian nationalist xenophobic reaction.<sup>41</sup> Although Kozyrev did not say so explicitly, it was clear from the tenor of his remarks that the West will have to either accommodate Yeltsin's assertive foreign policy or face the risk of dealing with a far more difficult Russia. Another reason that the Russian leadership paid scant attention to a possible Western reaction is the enduring Russian belief that the areas in which Russia is expanding are of little interest to the West, and given the inability (and more important, unwillingness) of the West to fill the vacuum created by the defunct USSR; the West actually tacitly supports Russian reassertion along its littoral. As Alexei Pushkov of *Moscow News* noted, the West needs Russia to remain a part of the "North" rather than see it joining the "South," hence the West will not object to Moscow's policy of confronting and checking the tidal wave of instability emanating from the Islamic world.<sup>42</sup>

Clearly Russia has returned to its traditional policy of asserting certain hegemonic rights on the Eurasian mainland. In a

sense 19th century history has repeated itself much as after the Crimean War (1854-1855) when Russia reduced its global presence yet continued to expand its influence along its periphery, seeing in such expansion its sole means to preserve its status as a great power and believing that the area of its sphere of influence will serve as a vital outlet to Russia's antiquated industry. Should the Western response to this wave of expansion be similar to that of Victorian Britain, which through a combination of alliances with regional powers and direct presence managed to contain the Russian march to the south? Or, should the West resign itself to Russian expansionism as a historic inevitability?

First, it is obvious that Moscow's renewed expansion is an adverse process for the world as well as for Russia itself. In global terms Russian expansion is bound to renew tensions with Pakistan, Iran, and most important, Turkey, where some Russian nationalists advocate adopting the cause of the Kurds as a means to tame Turkey's expansionist ambitions in what used to be Soviet Central Asia.

In Central Europe, growing Russian ambition along with regional ethnic turmoil is ultimately bound to induce a German reaction. Whether this reaction takes the form of a Russo-German "Cold War" or a Russo-German "condominium," the impact on these Central European states will be adverse, since it will stymie their transformation to normal post-industrial polities and accentuate again the forces of ethnic tribalism in the region.

Finally, the reemergence of Russian expansion portends dire consequences to Russia itself. Much of this expansion can be accomplished only through the coaptation of the old "nomenklatura" elites, and can only be done through the resumption of resource transfers from Russia to its former empire. To sustain this process will be possible only at the price of aborting the process of democratization of Russia, thus setting the stage for the reemergence of a Russian-led empire which is inherently at odds with the international status quo, and with the national interests of Russia's masses.

### **The Western Response.**

The West's ability to respond to these developments is limited but not insignificant. It is true that there is no clear American interest in Central Asia and the Caucasus which will sustain public support for a major economic, let alone military commitment. Equally true is the idea that bringing Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak states into NATO is not feasible given the certainty that the U.S. Congress will not endorse deployment of U.S. troops east of the Elbe; without such a deployment NATO's protection of these countries would be of dubious credibility. Nevertheless, historic lessons should not be ignored. Although Russia's statecraft is based on centuries of

relentless expansion against its neighbors, Russian imperialism is qualitatively different than that of France in the 19th or Germany in the 20th centuries. Russia always expanded against political vacuums, and rarely challenged the existing international order. Thus Russian expansion east was almost always against weak and disorganized entities in the sparsely populated areas of Siberia and Central Asia. In the case of Europe, the core of the international system, Russia limited its expansion to times when major vacuums occurred and even then in the context of a coalition with other great powers, as it did in 1815 and 1945. In situations where it encountered major resistance or approbation of other great powers, Russia historically tended to avoid confrontation. Thus when faced with Europe-wide opposition to its ambitions in the Balkans as manifested in the San Stefano accord with Turkey, Russia swallowed its pride and accepted the humbling terms of the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Similarly, in 1944 when Finland sued for peace with the USSR, the Finns were in no position to resist any Soviet demand; however, the mere fact that the Finnish polity exhibited a certain degree of cohesion and the knowledge that the fate of Finland was of interest to the West persuaded Stalin not to force upon that country the status of a satellite.

While the imperial urge will continue to dominate the foreign policy formation of Russia, Moscow will continue to temper that urge if it knows that it will run into a solid polity on the ground and the approbation of the West. Thus, the response of the West should follow a twin-track approach. First, the West should make it clear to Moscow that it cannot have both acceptance into the international community and imperial expansion. The Munich declaration of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry warning Russia not to resume its imperial drive will no doubt slow the momentum of Russia's imperial assertiveness.<sup>43</sup> A more important element of Western policy to rein in the resurgence of Russian imperialism must be a far bolder initiative to prevent countries along the periphery of Russia from turning into "vacuums." While it is doubtful whether the West can do much about highly Russified countries where the old nomenklatura is deeply entrenched, such as Belarus or parts of Central Asia, the situation is very different when it comes to the Visegrad group, the Baltic States, Kazakhstan, and possibly Ukraine. If these countries are to become "vacuums," this will happen not because of an imminent Russian military threat but because of inordinate economic turmoil which will delegitimize the independent regimes and therefore permit Moscow to fish in the turbulent political waters of economic collapse. We should bear in mind that even in the "successful" economies of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech lands, if the current IMF-inspired policies are to be carried out to their logical conclusion, unemployment will soar by the mid-1990s to 20 percent of the labor force. In the absence of a social safety net it will be difficult for these young democracies to survive such turbulence without offering Moscow irresistible opportunities to meddle in the internal politics of its neighbors. If the West is serious in

its desire to prevent the resurgence of Russian imperialism (and thus spare itself enormous defense expenditures), the oppression of the smaller states along Russia's rim, and the imposition of an imperial cross on the backs of the long-suffering Russian people, the course is clear. Instead of continuing with its intellectual acrobatics about possible membership in NATO for Central Europe, the West should adopt a genuinely stabilizing economic policy for the region. This policy will have to entail the following:

- As in the Marshall Plan, a significant economic transfer must be made to enable these economies to upgrade their infrastructure and establish a modicum of economic security. Although such a policy might contribute to the region's inflationary problem, I believe that the region's politics can tolerate inflation far more easily than deepening unemployment.

- The region's economic problems will not show any significant improvement unless the wealthy economies of the West dramatically ease access to their markets. Again it is noteworthy that the "German economic miracle" as well as the "Italian economic miracle" were accomplished to a significant degree because of the U.S. willingness to tolerate an overvalued dollar and a massive inflow of European goods.

The United States should not, as Paul Wolfowitz noted, "make its Central and European policy hostage to Yeltsin's success."<sup>44</sup> However, the West, with the United States at the lead, should make substantial investment in Russia's grass root organizations, supporting small business, private agriculture, etc., while eschewing Moscow's corrupt bureaucracy, if indeed our interest is not to leave Russia's political arena to the "Red-Brown" alliance capitalizing on the growing demoralization of Russian society.

The industrial West has basically two options, either to make the economic investment to create a string of solid political entities in the Baltics, Central Europe, and perhaps Central Asia, or be prepared to face a new Russian resurgence to the chagrin of the West, the littoral countries, and the Russian people themselves.

A complacent reaction of "victor" in the cold war will condemn us to the fate of post-World War II Britain, where former glory blinded the polity to the challenges of the future.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

STEPHEN J. BLANK is Associate Professor of Russian and East European Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute. He is the author of numerous studies of Soviet/Russian nationality, foreign, and military policies. He is the editor, along with Jacob Kipp, of *The Soviet Military and the Future*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992, and of *The Sorcerer as Apprentice: Stalin as Commissar of Nationalities, 1917-1924*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1994.

JACOB W. KIPP is Research Coordinator at the Foreign Military Studies Office of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He has edited and written numerous works on Tsarist, Soviet, and Russian military history, thought, and policies. Most recently he coedited *The Soviet Military and the Future*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992, with Stephen Blank, and is the author of a forthcoming article on Zhirinovskiy that will appear in *Foreign Affairs*. Dr. Kipp is also the editor of the journal, *European Security*.

THOMAS M. NICHOLS is Assistant Professor of Government at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. He is the author of several works on the Soviet and Russian military, the most recent being, *The Sacred Cause: Civil-Military Conflict over Soviet National Security, 1917-1992*, Cornell University Press, 1993.

ILYA PRIZEL is Associate Professor of Government at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University. He has written many articles and books on Soviet foreign policy in Latin America and Eastern Europe after Communism (co-authored with Andrew Michta of Rhodes College), and is currently working on a study of the development of national identities and self-consciousness in Russia, Ukraine and Poland.

JESSICA EVE STERN is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Center for Security and Technology Studies, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California. Her most recent publication is "Moscow Meltdown: Can Russia Survive?" in the Spring 1994 issue of *International Security*.

EARL H. TILFORD, JR., is the Director of Research at the Strategic Studies Institute. A former Air Force officer and professor at the Air Command and Staff College and Airpower Research Institute, Dr. Tilford has written many works on U.S. military history and is the author of *Crosswinds: The Air Force's Setup in Vietnam*, Texas A&M University Press, 1993.

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