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Managing an Unpredictable Moscow

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The Yeltsin era is ending. The new Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin, represents only a transitional figure who will yield power to someone else after next year's Russian presidential elections, if not sooner. During the next two decades, three types of regimes could rule Russia. A centrist government would continue the largely unsuccessful mixture of reform and conservatism that has characterized Russia's domestic and foreign policies since 1993. A communist-oriented government would abandon the centrists' commitment to a market economy at home and engagement abroad, pursuing instead a Marxist-flavored autarky. A nationalist regime would maintain a free market, but would conduct an ambitious foreign policy to restore Russian hegemony over the former Soviet republics and contest US influence in other areas of Eurasia.[1]

American officials thus need to decide now how to manage relations with a Russia that in the next century could pursue any of such policies as accommodation, isolation, or aggressive nationalism. No future Russian government will coincide completely with any of these neat categories. For purposes of US long-range planning, however, the three regime types do establish a sufficiently broad range of plausible scenarios for decisionmaking. Officials can assess their implications and consider what policies to adopt now in anticipation of future developments. This article first describes these scenarios in more detail. It then outlines a set of shaping and hedging strategies Washington should adopt to cope with them.

Accommodation

The policies of a future centrist government would resemble those Russia has pursued under President Boris Yeltsin since the Russian electorate unexpectedly voted heavily for nationalist and communist candidates in the December 1993 parliamentary elections. This outcome prompted Yeltsin to replace Russia's original liberal reform ministers with a diverse and continually changing mixture of liberals, moderates, and conservatives under the weak supervision of centrist Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin.[2]

It seems improbable that Putin will adopt substantially different policies from his predecessors, Chernomyrdin, Yevgeni Primakov, and Sergei Stepashin. He too has been a loyal supporter of Yeltsin for many years and held senior positions during previous administrations. Future Russian governments also could continue to pursue a centrist program as a result of genuine conviction, the dynamics of coalition politics, the influence of Russia's wealthy business oligarchy, foreign pressure, or a lack of political imagination.

The core elements of a centrist program would include a commitment to Western-style liberal democracy, limited economic reforms, and the devolution of substantial authority to regional officials.[3] A centrist government also would demonstrate a willingness to spend enough to halt the military's decline, but not reverse it.[4] Its leaders likely would seek greater influence within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), but their priority would remain Russia's own stability and prosperity. They would make only modest efforts to promote the interests of ethnic Russians living outside the Russian Federation.

A centrist government would continue to assert Russia's destiny (someday) to be a great power. It also would--partly to earn badly needed hard currency, partly because its weak state apparatus would hinder attempts to control private entrepreneurs--keep selling nuclear power technology and advanced conventional weapons to countries Washington considers unfriendly. The overarching goal of a centrist government, however, would be to maintain friendly relations

with the West despite periodic disputes over particular issues such as NATO enlargement and the use of force in regional conflicts. It would continue to try to cooperate with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and deepen Russia's involvement with the liberal global economy by joining the World Trade Organization, notwithstanding the painful restructuring of the Russian economy this would require. Largely for economic reasons, it also would seek to negotiate a follow-on START III agreement with deep cuts in strategic forces. Although a centrist government would aspire to great-power status, its activities and influence would correspond to those of other medium powers such as Britain, China, and France.

The Kosovo crisis showed the interrelationship of these elements of the centrist program. Officials in the moderate Yeltsin administration soon recognized that, whatever their personal preferences, they could not pursue a vigorous anti-NATO policy regarding Kosovo without calling into question the logic of their centrist foreign, defense, and economic policies, whose success requires continued cooperation with the West. Yeltsin appointed the centrist Chernomyrdin as Russia's chief negotiator on Kosovo and relied primarily on diplomatic measures to advance Russia's interests during the crisis. These measures included issuing protests, suspending several military cooperation programs with NATO countries, and advocating a greater role for the United Nations in resolving the crisis. The unexpected redeployment of 200 Russian troops from Bosnia into Kosovo shortly before NATO peacekeeping forces were to enter the region was aimed less at defending the Serbs than at reminding the West of the need to involve Russia in the resolution of such important European security issues.

Communist Revival and Isolation

Russia most likely would adopt communist-oriented policies if centrist leaders remain unable to overcome the country's protracted economic crisis. Either the incumbent administration could abandon reform, or frustrated Russian voters could, as in several other East European countries, return the Communist Party to power.

A communist-oriented government would recentralize administrative and economic authority under a strong state apparatus. In particular, it would renationalize major industries and the banking system, reintroduce price controls for many commodities, and attempt to reduce income disparities and unemployment. It would show little interest in combating inflation or curbing the state budget deficit. A neo-communist regime would--perhaps on the pretext of fighting crime and corruption--restrict press freedoms and other liberties traditionally associated with the Western liberal democracies. It also would aspire to strengthen the Russian military, but without substantially increasing defense spending so as to avoid diverting resources from its more important economic and social goals.

Although a communist-oriented government would distrust the West and its values, it would pursue an isolationist foreign policy rather than a confrontational one. Aleksei Podberezkin, Deputy Chair of the State Duma Committee for International Affairs, explains the connection between the communists' probable domestic and foreign programs: "Russia will need to pursue a policy of isolationism, at least for a while. Our priority is to gather together our resources and restore order within the country. Our foreign policy can be considered effective to the extent that it minimizes the resources we must spend on the pursuit of external goals." [5] Communists understand that they cannot pursue an aggressive policy within or beyond the CIS without diverting resources from their more important domestic priorities.

A communist-oriented government would pursue economic self-sufficiency by introducing protectionist measures and borrowing less from the IMF and other foreign sources of capital. It would rely on inexpensive diplomatic and economic tools to encourage integration within the CIS, but would avoid adopting a neo-imperialist foreign policy that would redirect resources away from Russia's economic and social revival. Finally, it would conduct a policy of limited globalism, using primarily diplomatic means--such as formal protests and UN Security Council vetoes--to advance Russia's interests outside the CIS (including the Baltic region and central Europe).

Aggressive Nationalism

A nationalist Russian government could arise in several ways. First, an incumbent administration could adopt nationalist policies to shore up its domestic support. Second, dissatisfied elements within the Russian military could, against all expectations, seize power and introduce a nationalist program. [6] Third, Russian voters could elect a nationalist president in response to the persecution of Russian minorities in the other former Soviet republics or even in the non-Slavic areas of the Russian Federation. Prominent Russian politicians holding nationalist views include Liberal

Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, and possibly Krasnoyarsk Governor Aleksandr Lebed.[7]

Russian nationalists are above all proponents of a strong Russian state at home (*gosudarstvenniki*) and abroad (*derzhavniki*).[8] In power, they would seek to dismantle Russia's federalist system and curtail (if necessary by force) the autonomy of Russia's regions, including Chechnya. They also would intensify law enforcement operations and adopt harsh measures to fight crime, which they largely attribute to non-Russian sources. The nationalists would make it a priority to resuscitate Russia's armed forces and military-industrial complex through increased spending. A nationalist government would adopt a state capitalist development model in the hope of improving Russia's economic performance and national self-sufficiency, but it would allow the private sector a greater role than would a communist regime.

Even the centrist Yeltsin administration has sought to advance Russia's economic, political, and defense interests in the CIS by using limited economic sanctions, political intrigue, and indirect military intervention, most notably in Georgia, Moldova, and Tajikistan.[9] But a nationalist government would conduct a qualitatively more aggressive policy aimed at dominating former Soviet territory, despite its high economic costs and adverse diplomatic consequences. Rather than a sphere of influence, nationalists would seek a restored empire that, if not united in a single state, would be at least as tightly under Moscow's control as its former Warsaw Pact allies. A nationalist government might annex Belarus and other newly independent states to Russia, and probably would try to incorporate regions inhabited largely by ethnic Russians, such as the Crimean Peninsula and northern Kazakhstan.[10] But it could just as easily accept formal independence on the part of CIS members, provided they subordinated their policies to the Kremlin's direction. A nationalist regime also would more vigorously champion the interests of the approximately 25 million Russians living as minorities in the other former Soviet republics, including the Baltic states.

The Slavophilic nationalists identify Russia as a Eurasian rather than a Western country. They consider Russia a unique entity whose civilization has and will make a distinct and especially valuable contribution to human history. They believe NATO members, especially the United States and Turkey, are actively seeking to curb Russia's power and influence throughout the world. They also distrust the liberal economic principles advocated by the IMF and the World Bank.

In office, the nationalists would curtail Russia's involvement in NATO's Partnership for Peace program and vigorously contest the alliance's further expansion. They also would downplay arms control in favor of unilateral defensive measures, refuse to curb sales of ballistic missiles and nuclear technology to anti-Western governments, and support Iran, Iraq, India, Serbia, China, and other states in their disputes with the United States. Although even an aggressively nationalist Russia likely would lack the means to challenge the West as energetically as its Soviet predecessor, it could threaten important US interests in Eurasia. The surprising last-minute entry of Russian troops into Kosovo demonstrated that Russia can still complicate US policies on important issues.

Shaping Strategies

The Clinton Administration, as well as the Bush Administration before it, has correctly pursued three broad goals in the CIS countries: political democracy, economic reform, and foreign policy moderation.[11] In considering how to continue to promote these objectives under the three possible scenarios, US decisionmakers need to distinguish between two broad but complementary types of policies--shaping strategies and hedging strategies. The first group consists of strategies that attempt to mold Russian developments in ways favorable to the United States. These shaping strategies, described below, aim either to prevent the emergence of threats to US interests or to protect such interests no matter who governs Russia. The second group, described later, consists of hedging strategies, whose content would differ depending on the nature of the future Russian regime.

Since any Russian government probably will maintain a nuclear arsenal to deter aggression against Russia itself if not its future allies, the United States will need to retain adequate nuclear forces. Nuclear weapons provide one of the few remaining foundations of Russia's claim to great power status. In addition, Russia's weak conventional forces and its grave economic problems, two factors unlikely to change soon, will dispose any government to rely on relatively inexpensive nuclear weapons to guarantee Russia's external security.[12] The United States should continue to seek

modest reductions in both countries' strategic arsenals, mindful of potential nuclear threats posed by others. It also should pursue agreements that promote military transparency and crisis stability. The Open Skies Treaty (which awaits Russian ratification) and the September 1998 agreement to share missile launch data exemplify such useful operational arms control measures. Both sides also should expand their joint efforts to shore up Russia's deteriorating nuclear command, control, communications, and early-warning systems to reduce the risks of an accidental or mistaken missile launch.[13]

The United States should keep pressing for the conversion of Russia's arms industry. Conversion through such means as joint projects with Western firms weakens Russia's military potential and reduces the ability and incentives of Russian defense enterprises to sell sophisticated weapons to rogue states or parties to regional conflict.[14] Washington also should continue the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, which aims to dismantle and enhance the security of Russia's nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons material.[15] This program, which was just renewed, should be extended or supplemented to help Russia improve safety standards at its civilian nuclear power plants and properly dispose of spent fuel and other radioactive waste from its more than 100 decommissioned nuclear submarines. (Existing CTR programs can assist Russia to dismantle its strategic missile submarines, but not help in managing its nuclear wastes or destroying its attack submarines.)

American officials should continue to cooperate with Russian authorities against Russian crime since organized criminal groups regularly transship narcotics through Russia to the West. Such groups could also traffic in Russia's nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons material. International law enforcement authorities have only recently recovered from the unexpectedly rapid growth of Russian-related transnational crime that followed the removal of Cold War barriers. US policymakers should balance any support for improved Russian crime enforcement with further assistance designed to strengthen the rule of law in Russia. Such aid should aim to counter government corruption, regulate business practices, and clarify property rights.[16]

The US Defense Department should energetically engage the Russian military both within the Partnership for Peace program and through separate bilateral or multilateral activities. Such ties, including those developed during the unprecedented joint Russian-American military operation to enforce the Bosnia peace accords, help dispel Russian anxieties about NATO's intentions while inculcating Western views of proper civil-military relations in democratic societies. Russian reactions to NATO's recent military involvement in Kosovo highlighted a disturbing tendency, especially within the Russian military, to continue to see NATO as an aggressive military bloc hostile to Moscow's interests. The influential head of the Main Department for International Military Cooperation at the Russian Ministry of Defense, Colonel General Leonid Ivashov, warned:

I don't claim to be able to see the future, but unless we learn the lessons from what has just happened, it could well be that the bombing of Yugoslavia was only the beginning--the beginning of a new re-division of the world through the use of force. If force can be used to make peace between Serbs and Albanians, then where's the guarantee that NATO, acting with the noblest of intentions, won't decide to use force to reconcile North and South Korea, Taiwan and China, to bring democracy to Belarus, Iraq, and Syria, or to intervene in Kashmir or Nagorny Karabakh?[17]

Even civilian Russian foreign policy analysts express alarm that the expansion of NATO's influence in the former Soviet Union could destabilize Moscow's neighbors, perhaps requiring additional Russian peacekeeping operations there. They also fear that such instability could lead NATO itself to intervene militarily in these regions.[18]

Russian concerns have manifested themselves through more than just words. After the Kosovo conflict began, Russian military forces increased their exercise programs, and Russian policymakers began to discuss revising Russian tactical nuclear weapons doctrine and the December 1997 National Security Concept, which downplays external military threats to Russia.[19] Besides military-to-military contacts, the United States needs through its information diplomacy to increase the Russians' understanding of American foreign policy goals and policies. Even well-educated Russians often show surprising ignorance of US capabilities and intentions.

One area requiring better NATO-Russian consultations is the alliance's exercise program in the former Soviet Union. Even before Kosovo heightened Moscow's concerns about NATO, Russian representatives had objected to past alliance

exercises in nearby countries that they believed had anti-Russian overtones. For example, Russian Ministry of Defense analysts said NATO's Cooperative Partner 98 exercises posed "a potential threat to Russian security." [20] The Russians also boycotted Sea Breeze 97 (a multinational Partnership for Peace naval exercise in the Black Sea) because they considered the original scenario--NATO forces assisting Ukraine to counter armed separatists--to be provocative. The alliance often has had to restructure past exercises to accommodate Moscow. As it proceeds to design future exercises in the Black Sea region, including the planned first Partnership for Peace exercises in Georgia next year, NATO needs to establish mechanisms to incorporate Russian views earlier in its exercise planning process.

Should the communists or nationalists assume power, they probably will want to curtail Russia's involvement in some of the cooperative programs mentioned above. US financial or other concessions might persuade these regimes to continue them, but one should not be too optimistic on this score.

In any case, Washington should not encourage the further disintegration of the Russian Federation along regional or ethnic lines. Russia's breakup, which has become less likely during the last few years, probably would work against US efforts to promote democracy, economic reform, and human rights in the former Soviet Union. It would certainly complicate efforts to safeguard Russia's nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons arsenals. [21] More generally, it would raise the same kinds of difficulties--such as who should control these weapons of mass destruction and how to discourage their proliferation--that preoccupied American policymakers after the USSR's breakup in 1991. [22] Those who argue that Russia's further fragmentation would enhance international security by weakening its military potential and imperialist ambitions neglect to consider that nationalists could exploit the Russians' anxiety about their country's disintegration to gain power and boost defense spending. [23] In addition, failed attempts at separatism could lead to more human catastrophes like the war in Chechnya. Rather than risk a nationalist backlash or an arms control nightmare, the United States should merely discourage a reversal of the extensive decentralization of power to Russia's regions that has already occurred. This development, along with economic privatization and the advent of political democracy, has severely weakened any central government's ability to mobilize resources for aggressive purposes.

For similar reasons, US officials can only discourage, not openly resist, voluntary integration among Russia and other CIS states. Although it would somewhat worsen the West's geopolitical position should Belarus, Kazakhstan, or even Ukraine decide to unite with the Russian Federation, their absorption would take many difficult years and probably would never be as complete as under the Soviet Union. Besides, US policies directly aimed at resisting genuine, popularly supported integration processes would likely prove counterproductive. The nations involved would interpret such activities as confirming nationalist claims that the United States pursues a divide and rule policy toward the former USSR. [24] US attempts to promote the formation of anti-Russian coalitions among CIS members or to back other CIS countries in their disputes with Moscow would likewise risk triggering a nationalist-imperialist backlash. [25] In addition, Russia's opponents might expect a degree of assistance that the United States, given its limited capabilities and interests in the region, would not provide. [26] Washington instead should try to ensure through diplomatic and other preventive measures--including military cooperation under the rubric of the Partnership for Peace and the US National Guard's State Partnership programs--that these countries remain economically and politically viable. [27] Such measured support would reduce their incentives to merge with Russia while diminishing other countries' opportunities to exploit their weaknesses for aggressive purposes. Some forms of integration should even be encouraged. The removal of barriers limiting migration and communication among CIS residents, for example, would help undermine aggressive nationalist demands to alter national boundaries along ethnic lines. Fortunately, the passage of time promotes CIS members' independence. The longer these states remain autonomous entities, the less Russians will consider them a natural component of a revived Russian Empire.

The United States, for both humanitarian and geopolitical reasons, should continue to work with its European allies and the relevant international institutions to prevent abuses against ethnic minorities in the former Soviet republics. Washington must consistently uphold both the principle of the CIS members' territorial integrity--which permits border changes only by mutual consent and peaceful means, and prohibits the use of force to defend ethnic minorities abroad--and the principle that these governments cannot violate their inhabitants' basic rights. The West must not give the impression of pursuing a double standard by overlooking discrimination against ethnic Russians in the former Soviet republics, who now constitute one of the largest diasporas in the world. Any Russian government legitimately will worry about their fate. The United States and its allies should seek to channel these concerns within peaceful modes of expression. If necessary, Western policymakers should employ economic and diplomatic measures against

governments that infringe on minority or individual rights. Aggressive ethnic nationalism among non-Russians will promote militant Russian chauvinism. Russian nationalists could easily exploit for political gain ethnic conflicts involving Russian minorities or perceived discrimination against Russians, especially if they lead to the mass exodus of embittered Russian refugees. Ethnic conflicts within or between Russia's neighbors also weaken their ability to counterbalance Moscow.[28]

At the same time, Washington should encourage the European Union to expand and deepen its ties with the Baltic and CIS states. The continued integration of the former Soviet republics into a Western-dominated multinational institution that even Russians consider nonthreatening helps promote political stability and economic prosperity in Eurasia. The prospect of increasing their involvement with the European Union also gives CIS governments another incentive to pursue liberal political, economic, and human-rights policies that keep them in good standing with the West.

Given the dismal condition of the Russian military, NATO need not at present offer membership to the Baltic states or the other former Soviet republics. In fact, US security interests probably would not warrant extending alliance security guarantees of dubious credibility to these countries should they actually come under threat from a belligerent and nuclear-armed Russia. For purposes of shaping Moscow's behavior, however, the member governments should give the impression that Russian actions of a threatening nature could encourage NATO's further enlargement. Russian fears that Ukraine might move closer to the West resulted in Moscow's moderating its policies toward that country after NATO announced its intention to expand. The possibility of joining NATO (and the European Union) also gives east European governments a strong incentive to observe democratic principles and pursue pro-Western foreign policies. Furthermore, both they and Moscow could interpret an explicit NATO decision to cease expanding as a signal of Western indifference regarding their security. Although the member governments should continue to engage with Russia through the joint Russian-NATO council and other structures, they must prevent Russian representatives from using these platforms to impede alliance decisionmaking. The United States also will need to keep substantial US military forces in Europe to ensure, among other things, that the West retains a vigorous political-military alliance to cope with unfavorable developments in the CIS.

Hedging Strategies

American decisionmakers also need to consider a set of hedging strategies for use in case the shaping strategies described above fail to prevent the emergence of a threatening communist or nationalist-oriented government. The content of these policies would vary depending on the Russian regime.

The extent to which the United States and its allies provide economic assistance to Russia and promote economic integration within the CIS constitutes an obvious issue that should reflect the composition and policies of the Russian government. Washington would not want either a communist or a nationalist-oriented government to have a robust economy or control over its neighbors' well-being. These developments would only enhance their domestic position and remove an obstacle to their conducting an anti-Western foreign policy. They also would make these regimes attractive models for emulation by other CIS states, contributing to the spread of communism or nationalism in Eurasia. As long as centrists govern Moscow, however, Washington has an interest in Russia's prosperity since it enhances the centrists' political prospects and bolsters the economies of neighboring CIS countries. The United States should, in the case of a centrist regime, encourage the IMF and other multilateral economic institutions to help Russia, and should reinforce its bilateral efforts in this area. It also should continue to work with Moscow and the various regional authorities to promote direct foreign investment in Russia, especially in the stagnating energy production sector. One fourth of the world's oil reserves lie within the former USSR, but Russian companies cannot help exploit them without billions of dollars of investment capital that can come only from private foreign investors.[29]

The degree to which American officials give the impression of treating Russia as a global partner also should depend on Moscow's future policies. To lessen the frustration of Russians at their humiliating lack of influence in world affairs, US representatives should show that they consider a centrist government a deserving ally that warrants consultation on most important international issues, and not just because of its nuclear arsenal. Designating Russia, despite its severe economic and military weaknesses, as a full member of the G-8 group of the advanced Western industrial nations, and involving it in various regional peace processes, is symbolically important. To avoid embittering or embarrassing their Russian counterparts, and as a sign of respect for Russia's nominal great-power status, American

officials should make it a standard operating procedure to consult with any centrist Russian government when employing force in regional conflicts.[30] During the recent Kosovo conflict, the Clinton Administration correctly praised Russian efforts to help resolve the crisis, and stressed the desirability of having Russian troops participate in NATO's peacekeeping and stabilization effort in Kosovo. Russia's diplomatic and military assistance was not essential, but involving Moscow in joint Western-Russian endeavors helps lessen the Russians' feeling of isolation and dampens their anti-Western sentiments.

The United States should be more wary about according enhanced status to a communist or nationalist-oriented government. For example, Western efforts to grant them a prominent international position could be exploited by such regimes to justify asserting a Russian sphere of influence in the CIS or Russia's right to participate in (and possibly hinder) the resolution of vital international issues. Cooperation with such regimes might prove useful on some international issues, but the immediate benefits would need to be compelling and the risks would need to be carefully weighed.

Any decision to build a major national ballistic missile defense system designed to shield Americans from a large-scale nuclear attack should depend on future developments in Russia (and China). Such a program would require the amendment or abrogation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and would likely wreck the existing US-Russian arms control regime. Most seriously, it could undermine the security policy of a centrist Russian government, which would have to confront an American program that in theory could render Russia's nuclear deterrent impotent. In response, Russian officials probably would face irresistible pressure to revitalize their offensive strategic forces to prevent Russia's becoming vulnerable to nuclear blackmail. This would jeopardize the centrist economic reform program. Given a communist or nationalist-oriented government, however, a major US ballistic missile defense program could prove useful as a core component of a "full court press" strategy designed to overtax Russia's military capacity and prompt the regime to alter its policies.

Concluding Observations

When the USSR first collapsed, some Americans and many Russians thought that Russia could become another strategic partner of the United States, like Great Britain. The waning of British power during this century has led British leaders to conclude they can best promote British interests in tight alliance with Washington. British policymakers identify a strong America as essential to their security, and actively promote US initiatives throughout the world. Americans hoped that Russians too would come to support a strong US global presence. Russians initially anticipated that, in return for backing US policies in Europe and elsewhere, Americans would shower Russia with financial aid and investments, and treat Moscow as a privileged partner in world affairs.

Russia's unanticipated weaknesses and the West's shortsighted stinginess dashed these hopes. After mutual disillusionment set in around 1993, Russian and American policymakers came to see US-French ties as the model most applicable to their relationship. Unlike London, Paris does not believe that American power invariably promotes European interests. Indeed, French leaders at times have sought to build counterweights to US economic and political influence. But France's limited resources, and the core values Americans and the French nation share, circumscribe their rivalry. French policymakers routinely criticize US policies, but they do not normally try to thwart them.

Influential Russian and American leaders likewise assumed that Russia's need for at least minimal US economic support, and Washington's desire for Moscow's help in curbing weapons proliferation and regional conflicts, required the two countries to work together despite their growing differences. For example, Russians grudgingly accepted NATO's limited enlargement in return for pledges of enhanced cooperation with the alliance through its Partnership for Peace program.

The two countries' intense differences over Kosovo have raised the specter of a third model to govern their relationship. Some Russians implicitly draw parallels between the troubled relations of China and the United States, and Moscow's own problematic relationship with Washington. Influential figures in both China and Russia speak of the need for closer mutual ties to counter a hostile US-led coalition aiming to isolate and weaken their countries. Americans for their part increasingly lump Russia and China together as the two important governments least likely to support US security policies on such topics as ballistic missile defense and nuclear, biological, and chemical

nonproliferation.

The relationship between America and Russia will not soon approximate that between the United States and Britain. The mutual suspicion and historical divide between Russians and Americans are too great. But ties between Washington and Moscow can certainly be better than those between Washington and Beijing. Russia is a democracy, with a free press and a multiparty political system. Its stagnating economy has undermined its ability and inclination to play a major role in world affairs. In many respects, the prospect of Russia's further decline presents more of a threat to the United States than does the possibility of Russia's resurgence. The inability of the Russian government to pay its nuclear scientists or to purchase weapons from its domestic arms producers, for instance, encourages them to sell their goods and services to countries hostile to the United States.

Americans and Russians genuinely desire better relations. Opportunities for profitable cooperation exist. For example, changes in Russian legislation restricting foreign investment in Russia's oil and gas sector could lead to a revival of Russian energy exports. French and American policymakers often distrust each other, but they recognize that their core interests overlap more than they differ. Similarly, Russian-American relations should reflect an appreciation that the two countries can best promote their prosperity and security through cooperation rather than confrontation or aloofness.

NOTES

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3. The deviations of Russia's current political system from the kind of liberal democratic polities found in Western Europe and the United States are discussed in Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Will Russia Pass the Democratic Test in 2000?" *The Washington Quarterly*, 22 (Summer 1999), 55-66.
4. For reviews of the appallingly weak state of the Russian military see Alexei G. Arbatov, "Military Reform in Russia: Dilemmas, Obstacles, and Prospects," *International Security*, 22 (Spring 1998), 83-134; Dale R. Herspring, "Russia's Crumbling Military," *Current History*, 97 (October 1998), 325-28; Harold Kennedy, "Russia's Military Decaying Rapidly," *National Defense*, 83 (May/June 1999), 26-28; Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Russia's Wounded Military," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (March/April 1995), 86-98; and Anatol Lieven, "Russia's Military Nadir: The Meaning of the Chechen Debacle," *The National Interest*, No. 44 (Summer 1996), pp. 24-33.
5. Aleksei Podberezkin, *Russia's New Path*, ed. and tr. Richard Weitz (Cambridge, Mass.: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, July 1998), p. 19.
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7. For more on Zhirinovskiy see Jacob W. Kipp, "The Zhirinovskiy Threat," *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (May/June 1994), 72-86.
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9. For conflicting interpretations of recent Russian policies in the so-called "near abroad," see Zbigniew Brzezinski,

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10. On the prospects of Russian-Belarusian military relations, see Sherman W. Garnett, "Russia and its Borderlands: A Geography of Violence," *Parameters*, 27 (Spring 1997), 17-18.

11. In the words of the Clinton Administration's 1997 *National Security Strategy*, "Our economic and political support for the Russian government depends on its commitment to reform, including democratization, market economics, and a foreign policy of comity, especially with respect to other former Soviet republics" (Washington: The White House, May 1997, p. 30).

12. For evidence that Russian policymakers have already allotted an increased role to their nuclear forces see Alexei Arbatov, pp. 87, 90, 123; and Dean A. Wilkening, "The Future of Russia's Nuclear Force," *Survival*, 40 (August 1998), 90.

13. Alexei G. Arbatov and Dag Hartelius, *Russia and the World: A New Deal* (New York: EastWest Institute, March 1999), p. 17.

14. For a review of the conversion issue and past US efforts in this area, see Michael J. Costigan and William C. Martel, "Our Failure to Convert Russia's Arms Industry," *Orbis*, 43 (Summer 1999), 461-78.

15. Analyses of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program appear in Jason Ellis, "Nunn-Lugar's Mid-Life Crisis," *Survival*, 39 (Spring 1997), 84-110; and Judith Miller, "U.S. and Russia Extend Deal Reducing Threat from Arms," *The New York Times*, 17 June 1999, p. A7. Some of the dimensions of the problem facing Nunn-Lugar are discussed in Joseph Cirincione, "Nuclear Free-Fall," *The Washington Quarterly*, 22 (Winter 1999), 17-22.

16. The influence of Russian crime is discussed in Stephen Handelman, "The Russian `Mafiya,'" *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (March/April 1994), 83-96; and Fritz W. Ermarth, "Seeing Russia Plain," *The National Interest*, No. 55 (Spring 1999), pp. 5-14.

17. Interview in "After These Barbaric Bombings," *The Russia Journal* (14-20 June 1999), reproduced in David Johnson, *The CDI Russia Weekly*, 18 June 1999, p. 14, at <http://www.cdi.org>.

18. See for example the comments of a panel of Russian scholars at Harvard University in May 1999, as summarized in Celeste A. Wallander, "Russian Views on Kosovo: Synopsis of May 6 Panel Discussion," *Program on New Approaches to Russian Security Policy Memo No. 62* (Cambridge, Mass.: Davis Center for Russian Studies, Harvard University, May 1999), p. 3.

19. Deborah Yarsike Ball, "Spurred by Kosovo, the Russian Military is Down but Not Out," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 11 (June 1999), 16-18.

20. Cited in Yuriy Golotyuk, "Russia Starts Building Novorossiysk Stronghold," *Russkij telegraf*, 8 July 1998, p. 2, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) document FTS19980710000148.

21. The past and current status of Russia's biological and chemical weapons programs are discussed in Rebecca K. Graeves, "Russia's Biological Weapons Threat," *Orbis*, 43 (Summer 1999), 479-92; and Igor Khripunov and Derek Averre, "Russia's CBW Closet Poses Ongoing Threat," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 11 (May 1999), 20-23.

22. On this point see Jessica Eve Stern, "Moscow Meltdown: Can Russia Survive?" *International Security*, 18 (Spring 1994), 41.
23. For an opposing point of view arguing that Russia's transformation into a loose confederation would best promote both Russian and foreign interests, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, "A Geostrategy for Eurasia," *Foreign Affairs*, 76 (September/October 1997), 56.
24. For evidence that some Russians already believe the United States is working to incite conflicts between Russia and its neighbors and weaken Moscow's influence in the other CIS states, see Gennady I. Chufirin and Harold H. Saunders, "The Politics of Conflict Prevention in Russia and the Near Abroad," *The Washington Quarterly*, 20 (Autumn 1997), 38-40; and Sergo A. Mikoyan, "Russia, the US, and Regional Conflict in Eurasia," *Survival*, 40 (Autumn 1998), 112-26. The factors that could promote voluntary regional reintegration are outlined in Paul H. Herbert, "Considerations for US Strategy in Post-Communist Eurasia," *Parameters*, 27 (Spring 1997), 28.
25. On the risks of this happening in the Caucasus and Central Asia, see Amy Myers Jaffe and Robert A. Manning, "The Myth of the Caspian 'Great Game': The Real Geopolitics of Energy," *Survival*, 40 (Winter 1998-99), 121, 127.
26. Such US behavior in Eastern Europe during World War II inadvertently contributed to the origins of the Cold War. For example, American professions of support for Poland's independence erroneously convinced the Polish government in exile that it did not need to compromise with Moscow about Poland's postwar borders or the composition of the postwar Polish government because the United States would stand up to the Soviets on their behalf.
27. For a description of these two programs, see John R. Groves, Jr., "PfP and the State Partnership Program: Fostering Engagement and Progress," *Parameters*, 29 (Spring 1999), 43-53.
28. Some of the reasons for the surprising lack of ethnic conflicts involving Russians in the former USSR are discussed in Anatol Lieven, "The Weakness of Russian Nationalism," *Survival*, 41 (Summer 1999), 53-70. For a more detailed discussion of why the West should for reasons of national security promote human rights in the CIS states, see Ted Hopf, "Managing Soviet Disintegration: A Demand for Behavioral Regimes," *International Security*, 17 (Summer 1992), 44-75.
29. For a discussion of Russia's economic ties with the other CIS states, see Abraham S. Becker, "Russia and Economic Integration in the CIS," *Survival*, 38 (Winter 1996-97), 117-36.
30. On Moscow's irritation at what it sees as Washington's failure to consult with Russia on important international issues, see Victor Israelyan, "Russia at the Crossroads: Don't Tease a Wounded Bear," *The Washington Quarterly*, 21 (Winter 1998), 49.

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