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Relations with the US from Gorbachev to Putin:
A Strategy for a Weakened Russian State

Cheryl L. Garner

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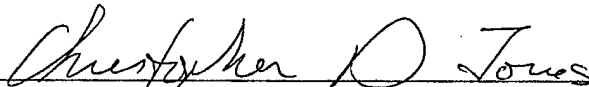
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List of Acronyms

ABM	Antiballistic Missile Treaty
CC	Central Committee
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CFE	Conventional Forces Europe
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
FSU	Former Soviet Union
FPC	Foreign Policy Concept
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GKChP	State Committee for the State Emergency
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
INF	Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KFOR	Kosovo Force
MBT	Main Battle Tank
MIRV	Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NMD	National Missile Defense
NIS	Newly Independent States
NSC	National Security Concept

OSCE	Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe
PUWP	Polish United Worker's Party
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitations
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organization World Trade Organization

Chapter One: Introduction

From Yeltsin's initial embrace of a "westernizing" foreign policy, to the cooling of relations between Russia and the United States over NATO's 1999 bombing campaign in Kosovo, Russian foreign policy has taken many twists and turns over the past decade. At times it even has appeared to be outright self-contradictory. The appearance of contradiction is by no means limited to the Yeltsin era alone though. Western scholars, who had assessed the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, as a watershed event marking the beginning of a new strategic partnership in US-Russian relations, quickly had to revise their assessments when only two years later President Putin flatly refused to support the US-led war against Iraq.

For many analysts and academics, such contradictions spoke of inconsistency and a lack of vision in Russian foreign policy. Robert Legvold, for example, makes this exact argument, maintaining that Russian foreign policy is unformed and lacking in any long-term vision or strategy. He attributes Russia's inconsistent and unformed foreign policy to an overall Russian identity crisis in which Russia, oscillating between a Western and Eastern foreign policy orientation, is unable to define its place in the international community. As Legvold so pointedly asks, with whom should Russia align to advance its

workaday interests?¹ For Legvold, the key to coherent strategy and consistency in foreign policy lies in Russia's ability to define her international role and identity and to further define her relationship to the West, in one manner or another. In short, he primarily defines Russian foreign policy strategy in terms of its orientation.

Legvold is by no means alone in his argument. James Richter also agrees that national identity serves as the crucial organizing principle justifying and providing coherence to the state's domestic order, all the while acknowledging that the boundaries defining this identity can be formulated only with reference to the external environment.² In referencing the "external environment", Richter essentially offers the same argument as Legvold; that the formation of Russian foreign policy is predicated on defining Russia's place in the international order through its foreign policy orientation. Will Russia be a country that attempts to integrate into Europe, pursuing both neo-liberal democracy and market reforms, or will it orient its policy eastward, as a Eurasian power? This question becomes a recurring theme in Western scholarly research of Russian foreign policy; invariably resulting in the conclusion that Russia's apparent inability to orient its foreign policy consistently with either the West or the East is the primary reason for the absence of strategy today.

¹ Robert Legvold, "Russia's Unformed Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 5, (September/October 2001): 62-74, p. 64.

² James Richter, "Russian Foreign Policy and the Politics of National Identity," in *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War*, ed. Celeste A. Wallander (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), 1996, p.74

But how well founded are these arguments? Is Russia's foreign policy truly as incoherent and lacking in strategy as they maintain? By restrictively equating Russia's foreign policy strategy to a choice of either a Western or Eastern orientation, Legvold and Richter seem to be analyzing the situation within a limited "either or" framework, creating a situation which would seem to not allow for other possible options in Russian foreign policy development. Nor does their framework allow for the possibility that the Russian government could feasibly pursue a foreign policy that would seek to secure its interests in both the West and the East. Therefore, when they try to analyze post-Soviet Russian foreign policy within this context of a pro-West or pro-East orientation, it sometimes quite naturally appears contradictory in nature and lacking in strategy.

Further skewing this analysis is the tendency of some Western scholars to interpret Russia's cordial relations with old Soviet allies as being completely anti-Western in nature.³ Russian Foreign Minister Igor S. Ivanov addressed this particular dilemma in his book, *The New Russian Diplomacy*. In answer to the question of whether Russia was a Western or an Eastern power, Ivanov notes that, "experience has demonstrated the futility of trying to juxtapose different supposed geographical delineations of Russian foreign policy. The unique geopolitical position of our country – not to mention the realities of world

³ This was especially true when Putin made the first diplomatic visit by any Russian or Soviet leader to North Korea in the summer of 2000, causing concern in both Washington and Tokyo.

politics and economics – dictate the necessity for Russia to cultivate cooperation equally with nations to our West, East, North, and South.”⁴ To be sure, Ivanov’s statement does provide a more balanced framework for Russia’s foreign policy, taking into consideration Russian interests throughout the world, not just in the East or the West. In truth though, Russian foreign policy is driven to a greater extent by its own weak internal situation than by an overwhelming desire to develop good diplomatic relations with all nations. During periods of past weakness, Russia has used its foreign policy to help create a non-threatening external environment conducive to internal development. For example, shortly after the Crimean War Russian diplomat Aleksandr Gorchakov wrote to Tsar Alexander II recommending that he keep Russia safe and prevent Russia from becoming involved in any kind of external complications that could divert efforts away from Russia’s own internal development.⁵ An examination of foreign policy from the late 1980’s up to today suggests that a similar strategy is being used once more during a new period of internal weakness for Russia.

This thesis therefore will examine Russia’s foreign policy within the context of its current weakness and show that despite these arguments about inconsistency, there actually has been a fairly consistent strategy in the new

⁴ Igor S. Ivanov, *The New Russian Diplomacy*, with a foreword by Henry Kissinger Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, p.15

⁵ A. M. Kantsler, *Gorchakov, 200 letie so dnya rozhdeniya*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 321-322, 334. in Igor S. Ivanov’s, *The New Russian Diplomacy*, with a foreword by Henry Kissinger, Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, p.26. According to Foreign Minister Ivanov, Gorchakov’s legacy in Russian diplomacy contributed to the development of the June 2000 Foreign Policy Concept.

Russian state's foreign policy. Furthermore, this thesis will argue that this strategy does not only apply to the post-Soviet period, but was actually developed under Gorbachev as part of his "new thinking". Yeltsin and Putin have modified this strategy somewhat to adapt it to the new post Cold War environment, but as this thesis will argue, even with these modifications neither leader lost touch with Gorbachev's original foreign policy goal of strengthening Russia's economy and diplomatic standing through international cooperation, most notably with the West.

Gorbachev's reform program of the mid 1980's represents a historical shift for Russian foreign policy. Throughout the late Soviet period the USSR had depended on overwhelming military force and nuclear parity to safeguard its interests in foreign relations. Military deterrence held a higher priority in Russian security affairs and foreign policy than did the actual art of diplomacy or use of international organizations like the United Nations (UN). Gorbachev's introduction of new thinking changed this basis and in doing so changed Soviet relations with the rest of the world and with the United States in particular.

New thinking emphasized diplomacy as the primary means of securing Soviet interests, not military deterrence. Moreover, it stressed that diplomacy should take place cooperatively through organizations like the UN, which Gorbachev described as "the most appropriate forum for seeking a balance of

interests of states.”⁶ International cooperation was a fundamental aspect of new thinking. Through it, Gorbachev sought to end the zero-sum mentality that had characterized US-Russian relations for so long and instead replace it with warmer and more congenial relations. In short, Gorbachev wished to convince the US that the Soviet Union no longer represented a threat to its security and thereby extricate the USSR from an expensive arms race, which was ruining its economy. Helping to realize this goal, new thinking advocated a strong commitment to arms control. In Gorbachev’s estimation, a nuclear war was “unwinnable” and as such arms reductions could only help to secure the USSR, and indeed the world, against the threat of possible nuclear catastrophe. In keeping with this rationale, Gorbachev’s new thinking called for drastic cuts in the Soviet military arsenal, a decision that contributed directly to the Cold War’s end.

But a less noted achievement of new thinking was its legacy, a legacy that has shaped the new Russian State’s foreign policy profoundly. At the heart of this legacy is a heavy reliance on diplomacy as the primary means of securing Russia’s interests. Given that Russia’s internal economic situation cannot support a return to pre-Gorbachev levels of defense spending, this reliance is both pragmatic and quite logical. Further supporting the idea of a smaller

⁶ Gorbachev, Mikhail, et al, edited by Ken Coates, *Perestroika: Global Challenge, Our Common Future*. (Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 1988), p. 140.

military is the observation made by Putin that “competition today has shifted from the military sphere to the economic sphere.”⁷ In keeping with this belief, both Yeltsin and Putin have sought to continue Gorbachev’s arms control legacy, negotiating further strategic reductions and working to preserve the arms control architecture inherited from the Cold War.

Incorporating another aspect of Gorbachev’s new thinking into Russian foreign policy, both have placed a strong emphasis on international organizations like the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). But unlike the Gorbachev era, international organizations in the post-Cold World era have taken on a new significance for Russia. Not only are they a forum for fostering international cooperation as they were under Gorbachev, but they are also a means for containing US dominance in an increasingly unipolar world. In this regard, both Yeltsin and Putin were faced with a new foreign policy challenge unknown to Gorbachev – Russia’s political marginalization. Consequently, the UN Security Council, in which Russia holds veto power, takes on an increasing significance in post Soviet foreign policy. Similarly, Russia’s commitment to creating a multipolar international order has increased significantly in the new Russian foreign policy. Unlike Gorbachev, who was able to formulate his initial foreign policy against

⁷ Geoffrey York and Chrystia Freeland, “‘We’re Not Looking For Enemies’, Putin Content with Smaller Russian Military, But Not with US Throwing Weight Around”, *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), 14 December, 2000, in CDI Russia Weekly #132.

the backdrop of a relatively predictable bipolar world order, the break up of the Soviet Union ushered in a period of transformation in the international order. This further complicated the already difficult task of formulating a foreign policy for the new Russian state and resulted in foreign policy shifts under both Yeltsin and Putin. But while some scholars like Legvold and Richter find these shifts to be indicative of a lack of strategy, they fail to realize that these shifts merely represent the means by which Russia wishes to attain the overall foreign policy goal of overcoming internal weakness by strengthening Russia's economy and international diplomatic standing through international cooperation.

This was the goal envisioned by Gorbachev in the mid 1980's and it is still the overriding foreign policy goal as Russia enters the new millennium. Realizing this goal entails Russia's use of diplomacy over military might in order to secure a stable international environment for Russia's internal political and economic transformation. Central to this strategy is an emphasis on arms control, international organizations, and the need for a multipolar world order. By establishing a pattern of similar and consistent strategic thought from Gorbachev through to the present day, I will provide a convincing argument that Russian foreign policy is not as unformed and directionless as Legvold and Richter would have us believe, but rather is a pragmatic strategy formed to meet Russian interests as best possible during this time of internal Russian weakness.

Chapter Two: Gorbachev's Foreign Policy

When Mikhail S. Gorbachev was elected as the new Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in March 1985, no one could have imagined the magnitude of the reforms he would introduce or that these reforms would break the political monopoly of the Communist Party, contributing eventually to the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself. At the time of Gorbachev's election, the immediate political reality facing Soviet leaders was that the USSR's economy was severely stagnating. It was understood among chief Party officials that reform was needed if economic improvement was to be achieved. Robert Donaldson and Joseph Noguee note that at the time of Gorbachev's election, the Soviet economy had experienced no real growth in over a decade, and at barely one-half the size of the US economy it was forced to support a massive military complex.⁸

Of course, limited reforms to improve the economic situation had been attempted in the past under leaders like Khrushchev, but they had met with at best partial success. At first, Gorbachev's efforts at economic reform seemed to mirror those undertaken by previous Soviet leaders. Attempting to improve Soviet production output levels, Gorbachev sought to instill worker discipline

⁸ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 91. It should be noted that levels of industrial output (oil, gas, steel, etc...) remained relatively high, yet despite these levels very little actual growth of the Soviet economy was seen. Moreover, the Soviet economic system had systemic problems in meeting consumers' need for non-industrial products. In addition to Donaldson and Noguee's analysis, Stephen White's *Gorbachev in Power* offers a very detailed chapter on the Soviet economy.

through a series of programs targeting absenteeism, corruption, and alcoholism. However, Gorbachev soon came to the realization that the stagnation affecting the USSR was a result of problems far bigger than a mere lack of worker discipline. According to Gorbachev, "problems had increased more rapidly than they were resolved, and signs of stagnation had begun to appear in the life of society."⁹

But by 1987 Gorbachev recognized that a restructuring, or *perestroika*, was required of not only Soviet economic management, but also of the political system itself. As Stephen White observes, a "retarding mechanism" had developed in the economy that had its origins in the shortcomings that existed in the political system, and that had led to the neglect of housing, the food supply, transport, and other matters of vital concern to ordinary people.¹⁰ In short, Gorbachev recognized that the biggest obstacle to economic reform was the Soviet bureaucracy itself and that in order to succeed at restructuring the command economy, government reform through socialist democratization was first needed.¹¹ Gorbachev also came to the further realization that if *perestroika* was to be truly successful, then military spending needed to be drastically reduced and the economy needed to undertake a momentous shift in its

⁹ Gorbachev, *Izbrannye rechi i stat'i*, vol. 2, p. 154 in Stephen White's, *Gorbachev in Power*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 22.

¹⁰ Stephen White, *Gorbachev in Power*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 23

¹¹ The original intent behind Gorbachev's policy of openness (*glasnost*) and his call for partially free elections was to publicly identify problems with the Soviet bureaucracy and hopefully vote out of office those Party officials who would oppose the changes of *perestroika*. The eventual effects of *glasnost* and socialist democratic reform were not what Gorbachev had originally envisioned.

production emphasis, concentrating more on the consumer goods sector than on military production and maintenance. Such a move required both downsizing the armed forces and subsequently reallocating newly freed resources that had previously supported the military. But, as Coit D. Blacker notes, the issue, as always, was how to reduce military spending on a major scale, while also safeguarding the nation's security.¹²

Gorbachev's answer to this dilemma was to transform Soviet foreign policy, shifting its security emphasis from military power to economic power and from the zero-sum mentality of the Cold War to a new emphasis of cooperation in advancing what he called "common human interests". Referred to as "new thinking", this reform program quite literally revolutionized Soviet foreign policy, emphasizing international cooperation with the West and eschewing several ideological tenets and traditional precepts of Soviet foreign policy. More importantly, new thinking established a strategy of securing the country's national security through bilateral diplomatic agreements with the United States and cooperation in international multilateral organizations like the UN rather than relying on overwhelming military force and deterrence. Only by securing the external environment, could the government hope to concentrate on more pressing domestic concerns like the economy. As Gorbachev would later write, "our true interest was in ensuring an international atmosphere that would

¹² Coit D. Blacker, *Hostage to Revolution: Gorbachev and Soviet Security Policy, 1985-1991*. (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 1993), p. 195.

allow 'profound transformations' in the country's economy and its social and political systems."¹³ This statement cut to the heart of Gorbachev's foreign policy strategy. By introducing new thinking into Soviet foreign policy, Gorbachev hoped to achieve this stable and non-threatening international atmosphere through diplomacy rather than military deterrence. This in turn would allow an external environment conducive to internal reform.

In this regard, Gorbachev's new thinking directly linked Soviet foreign policy to the economic reforms of perestroika. This linkage was not accidental, but was a deliberate design in the conceptual architecture of Gorbachev's overall reform program. He admitted as much in his *Memoirs*, commenting how "success in one area encouraged progress in the other and set-backs slowed down progress in both."¹⁴ By 1987 though, Gorbachev realized that his earlier reforms aimed at instilling worker discipline had failed to turn around the Soviet economy and it quickly became apparent that the country's economic problems ran far deeper than first imagined. Recognizing that he had underestimated the complexity of economic reform, Gorbachev acknowledged as much during a Central Committee (CC) meeting in January 1987. Speaking before the Central Committee, he stated that "the problems that have accumulated in society are

¹³ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee's, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p.94

¹⁴ Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Memoirs*. (New York, NY: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1995), p. 401.

more deeply rooted than we first thought."¹⁵ After making this admission, Gorbachev submitted to the committee a revised economic plan calling for more comprehensive reforms. It was at this point in time that Gorbachev's initial attempts to simply make Communist central planning work more efficiently shifted to more radical measures aimed at completely reorganizing the Soviet economy.

With the introduction of perestroika there was a noticeable corresponding shift in Gorbachev's assertion of new thinking in foreign policy too, especially in the area of arms control. Rejecting the precepts of Soviet military doctrine that maintained it was possible to win a nuclear war; Gorbachev believed that reducing the nuclear arsenals of both the USSR and the US was imperative to international security. This commitment is clearly reflected in the following passage from Gorbachev's book *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*.

From the security point of view the arms race has become an absurdity because its very logic leads to the destabilization of international relations and eventually to nuclear conflict. Diverting huge resources from other priorities, the arms race is lowering the level of security, impairing it. It is in itself an enemy of peace. The only way to security is through political decisions and disarmament.¹⁶

¹⁵ Goldman, Marshall, I., *What Went Wrong With Perestroika*. (New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company), 1991, p. 95.

¹⁶ Gorbachev, Mikhail, et al, edited by Ken Coates, *Perestroika: Global Challenge, Our Common Future*. (Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 1988), p. 141.

But although Gorbachev held strong convictions concerning the arms race, US and Soviet arms negotiations were seemingly stalled. In an earlier effort to revive negotiations, both the United States and the USSR had issued a joint declaration in 1985 calling for an “interim accord on intermediate-range nuclear forces”.¹⁷ But Gorbachev’s meeting with Reagan in Reykjavik, Iceland, the following year produced very little in the way of concrete agreements in intermediate-range or strategic nuclear weapons. The Reykjavik negotiations initially had started off looking very promising. Both Reagan and Gorbachev had been considering a proposal to eliminate all strategic nuclear arms as a progression from the US proposal to eliminate all ballistic missiles.¹⁸ But Reagan refused to compromise on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and the talks deadlocked as a result. Negotiations on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) in Europe also stalled at the time due to Soviet insistence that German missiles equipped with US nuclear warheads be included in the final US count as part of INF.¹⁹

¹⁷ Arms control negotiations between the US and the Soviet Union were divided into three separate but parallel negotiations: strategic offensive arms (START), Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF), and defense and space issues. While in some cases there were instances of linking one set of talks to another, as with START and defense and space issues, other times negotiations in one area were conducted independently from the other two.

¹⁸ Thomas Graham Jr., *Disarmament Sketches: Three Decades of Arms Control and International Law*. (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2002), p. 124.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

By 1987 though, Gorbachev was no longer insisting on this inclusion as a precondition to concluding a treaty.²⁰ He also agreed to “de-link” SDI from INF talks, thereby removing a major obstacle to negotiations progress. More importantly, by July 1987 Gorbachev indicated he was prepared to accept President Reagan’s “double zero” proposal, which called for the elimination of all US and Soviet intermediate-range and short-range missiles in Europe. This resulted in accelerated negotiations and a subsequent signing of the INF Treaty in Washington in December 1987. The treaty effectively eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons in Europe. It also established one of the most intrusive on-site inspection regimes up to that point for treaty verification and monitoring.

Although the INF treaty represented a historic breakthrough in arms control, Western fears of a “Soviet threat” had by no means completely dissipated. This presented a challenge to Gorbachev, as the success of his new thinking was dependent on his ability to overcome the mutual suspicions of the Cold War and establish a cooperative relationship with the West that went beyond the brief *détente* of the 1970’s. Only by establishing this level of cooperation could Gorbachev hope to end the arms race and downsize the Soviet military benefiting the economy. But the Marxist-Leninist ideological framework of Soviet foreign policy inhibited these efforts and in a broader sense

²⁰ As it turned out, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) agreed unilaterally to dismantle their Pershing IA missiles contingent upon the removal of all INF missiles from Europe by both the US and the Soviet Union and reserving the right to restore the missiles if needed. Source: Thomas Graham’s *Disarmament Sketches*, p. 108.

inhibited the full implementation of new thinking itself. At odds with the loftier notions of new thinking were the ideological concepts of "class interests" and "international proletarian revolution", which had shaped Soviet foreign policy greatly. In this regard, Soviet foreign policy actions outside of arms control seemed to contradict Gorbachev's statements and speeches about new thinking. How could one expect the US to take seriously Gorbachev's new policy agenda and all his talk of working together to find common solutions to common problems when the Soviet government was still supporting third world Marxist revolutionaries? There seemed to be a disconnect between Gorbachev's words and the actions of his government.

By 1988 Gorbachev sought to rectify this situation, and adhering to the principles of his new thinking, he cut back Soviet aid to revolutionary movements considerably. The most significant development from this policy move was the February 1988 decision to withdraw all Soviet forces from Afghanistan.²¹ After a decade of continued conflict and high losses, the USSR still had not been able to install a secure Marxist government in Kabul. The war in Afghanistan had proved to be both socially divisive and economically draining for the Soviet Union. By adhering to the higher principles of new thinking, Gorbachev was able to extricate the country from a political and

²¹ The completion of the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan was finally completed 1 February 1989.

economic quagmire and at the same time send a message to the US that new thinking wasn't just mere rhetoric.

Aid to foreign revolutionary movements was not the only area in which Soviet support was curtailed. Four months after his decision to withdraw the Soviet military from Afghanistan, Gorbachev delivered what amounted to a repudiation of the Brezhnev Doctrine in his report to the Party Conference when he elevated each country's "freedom to choose" its sociopolitical regime to the level of "universal principle" and to being a "key concept" of the Soviet Union's new foreign policy.²² Similar to the decision to withdrawal from Afghanistan, renouncing the Brezhnev doctrine amounted to an abandonment of the ideological basis of Soviet foreign policy that called on the USSR to both defend and support Socialism the world over. No longer did the Soviet Union reserve the right to intervene militarily in Eastern Europe to help prop up unpopular communist regimes and "save socialism." Instead, Gorbachev encouraged Eastern European leaders to initiate their own reform programs as a means of securing socialism's survival in Eastern Europe, rather than rely on Soviet military might. In an effort to underscore the seriousness of his "freedom to choose" declaration, Gorbachev urged Eastern European regimes to reform, declaring that "only for those who do not react to the burning questions of life is

²² Jacques Levesque, *The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*. (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 80.

there grave danger. But those who respond to their challenges and integrate them into adequate policies need not fear any problems."²³

Wanting to leave the world in no doubt of the significant changes undertaken in Soviet foreign policy during 1988, Gorbachev used his address to the United Nations General Assembly in December as the perfect venue for articulating the rationale behind his recent decisions. During his speech, Gorbachev insisted that the "de-ideologization of interstate relations had become a demand of the new age", and that all peoples must work together to pursue the "supremacy of the common human idea".²⁴ Put simply, Gorbachev was saying that the Soviet policy of supporting and furthering Marxist class interests and the workers' struggle abroad was, in this new age, subordinate to promoting human interests in foreign policy. In practice, Gorbachev had already begun to de-emphasize Marxist ideology in Soviet foreign policy prior to his December 1988 speech. But the extremely public forum of the United Nations allowed him to announce to the world, and especially the West, the new paradigm driving Soviet foreign policy.²⁵ In a gesture designed to give his comments credibility (as well as help with the Soviet military draw down), Gorbachev also announced

²³ Ibid., p. 83. This comment was directed towards Erich Honecker, leader of the German Democratic Republic (GDR).

²⁴ *Pravda*, December 8, 1988, in FBIS December 8, 1988. (Extracted in Document No. 9, Part Two), in Sylvia Woodby's *Gorbachev and the Decline of Ideology in Soviet Foreign Policy*. (San Francisco, CA: Westview Press, 1989), p. 25.

²⁵ By selecting the UN as his venue for announcing both the Soviet abandonment of ideology in foreign policy and unilateral troop reductions, Gorbachev hoped to strengthen his envisioned role of the UN as the best international mechanism for fostering cooperation among states.

his decision to reduce unilaterally the USSR's armed forces over the next two years by half a million troops.²⁶

Accompanying this unilateral reduction was a renewed Soviet push for aggressive reductions in conventional arms by both the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The result was a set of new negotiations begun in late 1988 which focused on limiting Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Unlike previous conventional arms negotiations, which focused on military manning or hardware, the CFE talks took both factors into consideration. Not only was the comprehensive nature of the talks unique, so was the actual territorial area affected by the eventual treaty. Stretching from the Ural Mountains in the East to the Atlantic Ocean in the West, the CFE talks focused on the entire continent of Europe. Equally as impressive as the sheer area covered by the CFE negotiations was the timeline the Soviets established for negotiations. Ambassador Thomas Graham notes that when he met with Russian arms negotiator Victor Smolin in Moscow in late 1988, Smolin informed him that the "(Soviet) leadership is determined to get a conventional arms treaty in two years...."²⁷ In reality, the negotiations took just twenty months, concluding in November 1990.

²⁶ Of the 500,000 troops cut in the Soviet Army, 240,000 personnel were stationed in Europe. Outside the European theater, 200,000 were drawn down from the Far Eastern Military District (FEMD) and another 60,000 from Central Asia. Source: Lecture given by Dr. Christopher D. Jones on Soviet Security Policy, May 14, 2002.

²⁷ Thomas Graham Jr., *Disarmament Sketches: Three Decades of Arms Control and International Law*. (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2002), p. 185.

Conceptually designed to prevent any surprise “blitzkrieg” style attacks by either NATO or the WTO, the CFE Treaty established national limits on allowable military hardware and military personnel for each treaty signatory. Additionally, a “sufficiency rule” written into the treaty dictated that no one country could have more than one-third of the total conventional arms in Europe. For a country like the USSR, which maintained a large standing army, this rule mandated significant military cuts. For example, in 1988 the Soviets alone had 41,000 Main Battle Tanks (MBTs); however, under the sufficiency rule they were allowed no more than 13,300 MBTs.²⁸ CFE arms reductions coupled with the nuclear reductions under the INF treaty helped to achieve an overall demilitarization of Europe.

Comparatively, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) I negotiations required more time and were more complex than either the INF treaty or the CFE treaty. Essentially a continuation of the Strategic Arms Limitations (SALT) II negotiations, which were suspended when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, START I sought to limit both strategic delivery vehicles and warheads. Although several points of disagreement threatened to derail the negotiations (most notably the US’s Strategic Defense Initiative) both US and Soviet negotiation teams finally were able to arrive at an agreement acceptable to both of their respective governments. Signed in July of

²⁸ Ibid., p.186

1991, START I required a 50 percent decrease in the number of large or heavy Soviet Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and a reduction of ballistic missile warheads by 15 percent for the US and 25 percent for the Soviet Union, leaving them with 8,592 and 6,940 warheads respectively.

While both CFE and START I negotiations sought to contain conventional and nuclear arms races of the Cold War, events in Eastern Europe were quickly bringing about the Cold War's end. By 1989 the effects of Gorbachev's perestroika were being felt in Eastern Europe. As noted earlier, Gorbachev had encouraged the communist regimes of the Eastern Bloc to initiate their own internal reform in order to save socialism in Eastern Europe. Saving socialism with Soviet military force was no longer an option after Gorbachev's 1988 renunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine. Despite this warning, the communist regimes of Eastern Europe seemed initially reluctant to initiate reform as comprehensive and sweeping as Gorbachev's perestroika. Poland's early attempts at political reform lead quickly to an electoral triumph of the opposition group Solidarity in June 1989, just two months after Solidarity's official legalization. Smaller satellite parties within the Polish United Worker's Party (PUWP) capitalized on the election results, demanding Solidarity's participation in the new coalition government and thereby weakening Poland's communist

regime immeasurably.²⁹ This in turn seemingly disproved General Jaruzelski's earlier assertion that the ruling Polish government could cooperate with opposition forces like Solidarity without provoking "decommunization."³⁰ But not all Eastern European regimes wished to attempt reform, as Poland had done. Indeed, in the case of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the communist government went to great lengths to isolate itself from the changes of Gorbachev's reforms. As one GDR politburo member so blithely put it, "just because a neighbor refurbishes his apartment it does not mean that one should copy him."³¹ GDR leaders were less dismissive in November 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down, setting off a domino effect of bloodless revolution throughout Eastern Europe, toppling post World War II Soviet installed governments.³²

While the overthrow of Eastern Bloc communist regimes evoked feelings of jubilant amazement in the West, conservatives within the CPSU and the Soviet armed forces were far from enthusiastic over these developments. In particular, conservative members of the armed forces were not only concerned by the loss of Eastern Europe, but were also concerned by the changes being wrought at home

²⁹ The old government coalition of Communists and satellites had 65% of the seats in the Diet, but the PUWP alone had only 38%. Source: Jacques Levesque's *The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*, p. 118

³⁰ Jacques Levesque, *The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*. (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 116.

³¹ Dale R. Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 38.

³² The one exception to this statement is Romania. In December of 1989 Romanian Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown and he and his wife Elena were tried by the provisional government and executed 25 December.

by Gorbachev's perestroika. Central to Gorbachev's economic reform was the need to downsize the Soviet military. Unilateral cuts in military forces as well as those negotiated in arms treaties helped to fulfill this goal. However, arms reduction alone could not lessen the economic burden of sustaining the Soviet military. Significant budget cuts were also required. In January of 1989 Gorbachev announced a cutback in military spending of 14.2 percent, as well as a 19.2 percent drop in military production, to be carried over a two-year period.³³

However, military spending cuts and arms reductions were only part of Gorbachev's larger program of reform for the Soviet military. By shifting foreign policy away from its reliance on a massive military for deterrence, Gorbachev not only hoped to downsize the armed forces, but to change their overall role. Gorbachev understood that it was impossible to cut military assets drastically and yet still retain the traditional Soviet fighting doctrine which was predicated on quantitative superiority and offensive operations. Thus, his advisors developed a military concept around which he wanted the Soviet military to develop a new defensive doctrine. Referred to as "defense sufficiency", Gorbachev had introduced this concept back in 1986 at the 27th Party Congress. Tied to the new thinking, it emphasized diplomacy and negotiations as the primary tools for resolving problems between states and providing security to

³³ TASS report, "Gorbachev Speech at Trilateral Commission Meeting," January 18, 1989 (FBIS, Soviet Union, January 18, 1989, pp.8-10) as quoted in Coit D. Blacker's *Hostage to Revolution: Gorbachev and Soviet Security Policy, 1985-1991*. (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 1993), p. 57.

the Soviet Union, essentially relying more on détente than on military deterrence. In truth, the USSR's economic situation left Gorbachev no other choice than accepting détente over deterrence. Cutting military expenditures was imperative to economic recovery and as advocates of new thinking saw it, economic strength was proving more decisive than military strength in resolving many global issues.³⁴ That being said, Gorbachev hoped that "an accord on 'defense strategy' and 'military sufficiency' could impart a powerful impulse in the direction of détente. These notions presuppose such a structure for the armed forces of a state as would make these forces sufficient for repulsing any possible aggression but inadequate for conducting offensive operations."³⁵

But the military's frustrations with perestroika's new thinking and Gorbachev's continued military downsizing made them less inclined to accept his new vision for the Soviet Armed Forces. In a speech made at the founding congress of the Russian Communist Party, Colonel-General Albert Makashov, who commanded the military district in the Volga-Ural region and would later support the August 1991 coup attempt, lashed out at Gorbachev's perestroika stating that NATO's growing strength represented a significant threat to the USSR and that "liberals" were "trampling on such sacred concepts as patriotism

³⁴ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 94.

³⁵ Mikhail Gorbachev "The Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World", *Pravda* 17 Sept., 1987 in *Perestroika: A Global Challenge, Our Common Home*, by M. Gorbachev et al, edited by Ken Coates. (Nottingham, UK: Bertrand Russell House, 1988), p. 31

and military duty."³⁶ He also railed against the situation in Eastern Europe, accusing the government of "losing" Eastern Europe, saying that "in these confusing times for the Soviet Union and Russia, when from victory, a 'diplomatic victory', the Soviet Army is chased out of countries that our fathers had freed from fascism, the Party and the people must take care of the families of servicemen."³⁷ As emotional as Makashov's speech was, it clearly highlights the primary areas of foreign policy conflict between Gorbachev and conservative elements within the military establishment.³⁸ While displeasure with military downsizing and the new doctrine of "defense sufficiency" was fairly common, it should be noted that many officers were equally displeased with the overall results of perestroika, especially the weakening of the CPSU. For officers such as Marshal Akhromeyev, Gorbachev's former military advisor, perestroika was weakening the socialist system, not reforming and improving it. Voicing his concerns about the future of the USSR, Akhromeyev commented in a 1990 interview:

³⁶ A. Makashov, "O Chem Tokuiut Nashi Uchenye-tetereva?" *Nesokrushimaia I Legendarnaia: V Ogne Politicheskikh Batalii*, 1985-1993, ed. M.K. Gorshkov and V.V. Zhuravlev (Moscow: Terra, 1994), 123, from *Sovetskaia Rossia*, 21 June 1990.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Analysis by Nichols and Karasik cited in John P. Moran's book *From Garrison State to Nation State: Political Power and the Russian Military Under Gorbachev and Yeltsin* found that attitudes of Soviet officers toward the new defense doctrine essentially fell into main three groups. The first group still viewed the West as a threat, but felt that Gorbachev's "defensive sufficiency" could work. They also saw the need to military downsizing in the light of the country's economic situation, but felt that these cuts should not be made unilaterally as was done at the UN in 1988. The second group agreed that military reform was needed, but felt that cuts in the military budget were not needed. The last group held to the traditional doctrine of overwhelming forces with an offensive or counteroffensive strategy. For more information on this study, see Moran, p.117-118.

A political struggle is underway in the country between those who favor and those who oppose socialism. The opponents of socialism know that the main forces in their way are the Communist Party and the Armed Forces. That is why they are attacking them so virulently...There is an oath in the Armed Forces whereby every serviceman swears to defend the Soviet socialist motherland and the Constitution. The socialist system will be preserved as long as the Army and Navy are monolithic, trained, and instructed.³⁹

Such a distrust of both perestroika and the direction in which it was taking the country quite naturally brought the Soviet military establishment and Gorbachev into direct conflict in the foreign policy arena. The result was a series of attempts by the Soviet military to undermine several of Gorbachev's diplomatic achievements. Most notable among these attempts was the Soviet military's efforts to "get around" the CFE Treaty. Seeking loopholes in the agreement, they noted that restrictions on combat weapons, such as artillery and tanks, were enforced by geographical delineations covering all of Europe up to the Ural Mountains. This was intended to prevent any sizable mass of force for surprise offensive operations. Also, limits on equipment focused specifically on combat units as opposed to support units. Therefore, to "beat" the treaty, the Soviet Army moved large amounts of military equipment east of the Ural Mountains beyond the geographical limits of the treaty and in other instances reorganized units within the geographical boundaries, putting combat equipment in units tasked with combat support roles. These decisions were

³⁹ Kosarev, "Marshal of the Union S.F. Akhromeyev" quoted in Coit D. Blacker's *Hostage to Revolution: Gorbachev and Soviet Security Policy, 1985-1991*. (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 1993), p. 169.

autonomously made without the knowledge of the Gorbachev or the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze, as evidenced by his surprise and anger when he learned of the realignment from US officials during a trip to Washington.⁴⁰ Warning that "dictatorship was approaching", Shevardnadze resigned as Soviet Foreign Minister shortly thereafter.⁴¹

His words seemed to prove prophetic when just eight months later the "State Committee for the State Emergency" (GKChP), led by KGB chief Kryuchkov and supported by high ranking military members such as Defense Minister Yazov, attempted a coup against Gorbachev. The conspirators hoped to prevent the planned 20 August signing of a newly revised union treaty which would have given increased amounts of autonomy to the individual Soviet republics, something they feared would mean the end of the USSR. Despite Yazov's initial support for the coup, he seemed to waiver at the decision to employ troops against the regime. Several subordinate commanders refused to follow the orders of the committee, but when news reached Yazov that large crowds of civilians had gathered in front of the White House to defend it, he ordered the troops to halt, ensuring the collapse of the coup.⁴²

⁴⁰ John P Moran, *From Garrison State to Nation-State: Political Power and the Russian Military under Gorbachev and Yeltsin*. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002), p. 121.

⁴¹ Shevardnadze was despised by many officers in the Soviet Army because of his enthusiastic support for the new thinking as well as his support of Gorbachev's non-intervention in Eastern Europe and his agreement to German reunification. A full chronology of the rivalry between the Soviet Foreign Minister and those within the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff is beyond the scope of this paper, but suffice to know that one existed and at times it impacted Soviet foreign relations greatly.

⁴² James H. Brusstar and Ellen Jones, "The Russian Military's Role in Politics", The Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, January 1995, McNair Paper No. 34, p. 15.

Although he physically survived the coup attempt, politically it was a deathblow for Gorbachev's career. The coup attempt had given rise to a new Russian political star, Boris Yeltsin, who would succeed Gorbachev not as the leader of the Soviet Union, but as the leader of a newly independent Russian Federation. On December 25, 1991 Gorbachev resigned his position and six days later, under the terms negotiated earlier by Yeltsin with the leaders of Belorussia and Ukraine at Belovezhskaia, the Soviet Union itself ceased to exist.

For almost seven years, Gorbachev had been the Soviet Union's leader, reformer, and eventual contributor to its demise. He had undertaken revolutionary change and reforms both domestically and in foreign policy. These reforms did not achieve his envisioned goal of renewing and restructuring socialism, nor had perestroika resulted in economic transformation as he had hoped. At the time of his departure from office, the Soviet economy was severely depressed, civil-military relations were at an all time low, and there was a political institutional void that the Communist Party had once filled.

There were positive outcomes from the Gorbachev era, though. The Soviet Union had experienced its first taste of limited democracy and got an even greater taste of free speech and press. More importantly, Gorbachev's new thinking helped to end the Cold War and introduced an overall Russian foreign policy strategy that emphasized arms control, the use of diplomacy over military deterrence, and a reliance on organizations like the UN for fostering

international cooperation. Although I firmly believe that Gorbachev was genuine and sincere in his more lofty goals for international cooperation, eventual total disarmament, and increasing the role of the UN in global relations, underneath the idealism was a foreign policy strategy that was equally pragmatic and designed to address Soviet concerns and interests. Gorbachev was quick to identify the internal weakness wrought by poor economic performance as the biggest threat to the USSR and as such he structured his entire reform strategy around this issue. In this regard, the domestic situation drove foreign policy strategy, a common occurrence in the foreign relations of many nations. In the Soviet Union's case, Gorbachev was swift to recognize that the key to economic reform was to reform the political system and to dramatically decrease military spending, all the while securing the USSR's external environment through international cooperation and diplomacy. In short, he sought to negate the threat of external attack in order to concentrate on more pressing domestic concerns. As we will see in the next chapter, this strategy was continued and modified throughout the Yeltsin years under a new set of challenges and met with limited success.

Chapter Three: Yeltsin's Foreign Policy

Following the break up of the Soviet Union the Yeltsin government was faced with the mammoth task of creating a foreign policy strategy for the new Russian state. This task fell against a backdrop of turbulent domestic reform, both economic and political, high public expectations for democratization, and a changing international order. Despite these enormous challenges, Yeltsin and his foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, were able to fashion a foreign policy strategy similar in many respects to that of Gorbachev's.

Like Gorbachev, Yeltsin encouraged both the preeminence of diplomacy in foreign policy and the need for international cooperation, most notably with the West. But his motives for doing so were far different from those of his predecessor. Gorbachev had sought international cooperation and stability as a means of facilitating internal reform designed to transform socialism. Inextricably linked to this strategy was the need to extricate the USSR from a costly arms race that in Gorbachev's opinion was undermining true Soviet economic potential. Therefore for Gorbachev, cooperation with the West was a means of renewing Soviet socialism. Yeltsin, on the other hand, had no interest in renewing socialism whatsoever. For him, cooperation with the West was also imperative, but for reasons of ensuring Russia's democratic transformation, not renewing socialism. His foreign policy strategy reflected this, seeking full and equal integration into Western economic and security organizations and

continuing to capitalize on advances already made in East-West relations by underscoring the need for international cooperation in Russian foreign policy.

With Russia's military slowly collapsing and the internal economic situation growing increasingly grim, Yeltsin understood that he could not afford to return to the pre-Gorbachev levels of defense spending. He also understood that if Russia's democratic transformation were to be successful, it required an international environment that was stable and benign and free from the threat of external attack. The best way to secure this, in light of Russia's weakness, was through international cooperation and diplomacy. Yeltsin publicly expressed such sentiments in early February 1992, when during a news conference with President George Bush at Camp David he said that Russia was "calling for cooperation, cooperation for the whole world because if the reform in Russia goes under, that means there will be a cold war".⁴³ This strategy of international cooperation as a means of creating conditions favorable for Russia's transformation to democracy does appear indeed to be soundly logical, but as Russian political analyst Alexei Arbatov points out "this (strategy) doesn't take us very far, since the means to these ends are interpreted in many different ways...."⁴⁴

⁴³ Transcript of the US President's News Conference with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (February 1992), available online at http://www.bits.de/NRANEU/US-Russia/Bush-Yeltsin_CampDavid.html

⁴⁴ Alexei G. Arbatov, "Russian Foreign Policy Priorities for the 1990's", as quoted in *Russian Security After the Cold War: Seven Views from Moscow*, edited by Teresas Pelton Johnson and Steven E. Miller, (Washington DC: Brassey's, 1994), p.10.

In fact, there was an intense debate over this very question of how to define the "means" in foreign policy strategy. The debate centered on the emergence of three different schools of thought - the Atlanticists, or "Westernizers" as they were more commonly known; the Eurasianists, also referred to as the "Pragmatic Nationalists"; and the Fundamentalist Nationalists. Initially Yeltsin and other liberal minded reformers within his government adopted the Atlanticist or "Westernizing" approach to foreign policy. Stressing the need to base foreign policy on the universal values held in international law, Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev placed a heavy policy emphasis on international organizations in Russian foreign policy and on Russia's need to join the developed democracies of the West.⁴⁵ This reflected the Atlanticist view that relations with the West were of paramount importance to Russia's democratic development and that as such they should take precedence over relations with other non-Western nations. In Atlanticist terms, the long term benefit of fostering close economic and political ties with the West would eventually prove far more valuable to Russia than assuming an aggressive leadership role in consolidating and strengthening the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Therefore, for both Yeltsin and Kozyrev short-term political concessions were an acceptable price to be paid for admittance into the Western "club".

⁴⁵ This heavy reliance on international organizations also reflects Kozyrev's 16 years of work experience in the Department of International Organizations in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The other side of the debate was represented by a group of thinkers referred to as the "Eurasianists". More nationalistic in tone and outlook than the Atlanticists, the Eurasianists advocated Russia forming a foreign policy that was uniquely Russian and not overly reliant on Western ties. The common argument among Eurasianists was that Russia's unique geographic location destined her to act internationally as a "bridge" between East and West. These sentiments are echoed in Vladimir P. Lukin's comments that "Russia simply cannot allow itself to adopt an exclusively 'Atlantic' or 'Asian' orientation in foreign policy."⁴⁶ While not an outright rejection of the West, the Eurasianist viewpoint tends to emphasize a more balanced approach to foreign policy and rejects the Atlanticist path as one in which subjugation of Russian interests to Western ones would condemn Russia to the status of a Western "junior partner".

Finally the Fundamentalist Nationalists represented the far right's foreign policy outlook. Comprised of more radical nationalist elements, this group attracted both fascists and neo-communists alike. They are described by Celeste Wallander as "exclusivist and xenophobic" and hold expansionist aims for the Russian Federation.⁴⁷ Openly anti-Western in outlook, the Fundamentalist Nationalists advocate the restoration of former Soviet borders and support the use of military might over diplomacy in securing Russia's interests.

⁴⁶ Vladimir P. Lukin, "Russia and Its Interests", in *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, edited by Stephen Sestanovich, Vol. XVI, *Significant Issues Series*, (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994), p.109.

⁴⁷ Celeste A. Wallander, "The Russian National Security Concept: A Liberal-Statist Synthesis", PONARS Policy Memo 30, (Harvard University), July 1998, p. 2.

Despite the anti-Western sentiments felt by some, Yeltsin initially embarked on a Western oriented foreign policy. Like Gorbachev he wished to prove his good intentions to the West and convince the US in particular that Russia did not view it as an adversary and that both he and Russia had broken with Communist ideology completely. Addressing the UN Security Council in January of 1992, Yeltsin proclaimed that "Russia sees the US, the West, and the countries of the East not merely as partners but as allies. We rule out any subordination of foreign policy to ideological doctrines. Our principles are the supremacy of democracy, human rights and liberties, legality, and morality."⁴⁸

The first test of this pledge of cooperative partnership was the dilemma surrounding the ratification of the START I Treaty, signed by the US and Russia in July 1991. The break up of the Soviet Union just five months after the signing of START I, called into question both its ratification and its very legality. Emerging from the old Soviet order were the newly independent states (NIS) of Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine, all of which inherited portions of the Soviet nuclear arsenal at the time of their independence. At the heart of the legal dilemma was the question of whether these successor states were bound by law to abide by START I, a treaty which had been signed by a now nonexistent Soviet Union, or whether they could retain as their own the nuclear forces stationed within their borders. Moscow demanded that all nuclear inventories be

⁴⁸ Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 190.

consolidated under Russian control and the US, fearful of proliferation, strongly supported Russia in its demand. Working together, both Russia and the US were able to exert enough diplomatic pressure and provide enough financial incentives that all three countries agreed to transfer their nuclear inventories to Russia. This arrangement was formalized in the Lisbon Protocol, signed 23 May 1992. According to the Protocol, all three successor states not only agreed to the aforementioned transfer of nuclear inventories, but they also agreed to become members of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). By 1993 all of the new states, including Russia, had ratified START I with the exception of Ukraine. Ukraine remained the only hold out, citing both economic and domestic political reasons for wanting to retain their nuclear assets. However, Ukraine finally agreed to ratify the START I Treaty as a result of both diplomatic pressure by Washington and the promise of substantial monetary compensation. In addition to financial incentives, Ukraine also received official security assurances from the United States, Great Britain, and Russia.

Encouraged by joint US-Russian efforts on the START I ratification issue, Yeltsin quickly pushed for a new arms treaty designed to further reduce US and Russian nuclear inventories from the levels established in START I. START II negotiations therefore began in July 1993 and concluded just a mere five months later. The terms of the treaty significantly reduced the number of allowed land based Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), the backbone of the Russian

nuclear arsenal, permitting no more than 3,000-3,500 strategic warheads for each country and no more than 1,700-1,750 of this number allowed on Sea Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs), which played a significant role in US strategic doctrine. START II also mandated the elimination of all "heavy" ICBMs, to include those with Multiple Independently targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRV), although this MIRV ban did not extend to SLBMs.⁴⁹ Seen by many conservatives in Russia as making too many concessions, the treaty faced a significant uphill battle for ratification.⁵⁰ But for Yeltsin, START II confirmed that even though Russia was not yet part of the Western system, it still retained status as a member of the "nuclear club". More importantly, Yeltsin believed START II held the promise of economic benefit for Russia, noting that nuclear reductions "would make it possible to save substantial amounts of money" and then channel it toward "civilian objectives" and "towards the implementation of reform."⁵¹

Market reform had begun earlier in 1992 and by 1993 Russia's economy was reeling from the effects of Yeltsin's "shock therapy". Western governments and financial institutions sought to help Russia's transition to a market economy through debt restructuring, infusions of financial aid, and advice on how best to proceed with shock therapy. As part of this reform, rapid price liberalization

⁴⁹ Source: The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) Website, available at <http://www.nti.org> Heavy ICBMs are defined as having launch weight greater than 106t or a throw-weight greater than 4,350kg

⁵⁰ The US government in September 1997 finally ratified the START II Treaty. Three years later the Russian government ratified it in April of 2000.

⁵¹ Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press 44, no. 5 (1992), p.7, as quoted in Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 191.

was introduced and this in turn produced runaway inflation. In response, the Russian Central Bank began to print more currency, thereby exacerbating the economic situation further. The close association between shock therapy and Western financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank added to already growing suspicions of Western intentions. By late 1993, polls showed that Russians were convinced by a two-to-one margin that the West's economic advice represented a deliberate effort to weaken Russia.⁵²

This perception, combined with an ongoing internal power struggle between President Yeltsin and the self-proclaimed "irreconcilable opposition" within the Russian Parliament, led to increasing political attacks on the Kremlin's foreign policy. The opposition, comprised primarily of Russian communists and nationalists, believed that the primary focus of Russian foreign policy should be cultivating ties with the NIS in the "near abroad."⁵³ In their estimation, securing the rights of Russian minorities abroad and resolving ethnic and political conflicts in the Caucasus and Central Asia were of more importance in foreign policy than trying to curry favor with the West. Therefore, in an effort to find common ground with the opposition, Yeltsin was forced to shift foreign policy away from its Atlanticist orientation and adopt a new foreign policy that was

⁵² Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee. *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems and Enduring Interests*. (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 198.

⁵³ The Near Abroad, or *Blizhnee Zarubezhe*, is a term used commonly to refer to the geopolitical space of the former Soviet republics.

more "Pragmatic Nationalist" in nature. Even liberal reformers like Foreign Minister Kozyrev recognized the need for such a compromise, later conceding that "as a democrat he felt constrained to take into account public opinion on foreign policy matters".⁵⁴

This shift to the right is reflected in the Russian Foreign Policy Concept approved by President Yeltsin in April 1993. Within the concept are nine "Key Tenets" that serve as an attempt to define Russian policy interests. Most notably, only one of the nine tenets concerns relations outside the Former Soviet Union (FSU). The remaining eight attempt to define Russian relations to the former republics and stress the need to establish the near abroad as Russia's exclusive "sphere of influence". Specifically, the concept states that "all of the territory of the former Soviet Union constitutes a vital sphere within which Russia's interests cannot be denied or ignored". It further states that "the post-Soviet space is a unique, sui generis geopolitical space, in which no one but Russia can bring peace."⁵⁵ Clearly, the foremost priority in foreign policy was no longer the West, but those countries comprising the near abroad. More importantly, the emphasis on both the near abroad and Russia's own internal situation point to a continued focus on Russia's domestic situation and internal weakness as well as the

⁵⁴ Jeffery Checkel, "Structure, Institutions and Process: Russia's Changing Foreign Policy", Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha, eds. *The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*. Vol. 4, *The International Politics of Eurasia*, edited by Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot, (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), p.56.

⁵⁵ Alvin Z. Rubinstein and Nicolai N. Petro, *Russian Foreign Policy: From Empire To Nation-State*. (New York, NY: Longman Inc., 1997), p. 100.

importance that a stable international environment plays in aiding Russian reform.

Taking a tone similar to that found in the Foreign Policy Concept, the 1993 National Security Concept focused heavily on the near abroad as well. It also emphasized the fact that Russia holds its own unique national interests.⁵⁶ As one Russian Foreign Ministry official noted, "(Russia) is seeking normal civilized cooperation implying discussion on an equal footing and taking into account the existence of interests that do not necessarily coincide."⁵⁷ Like the Foreign Policy Concept, the National Security Concept broke with Atlanticism and recognized that Russia's true interests lay closer to home in the near abroad. Moreover, it clearly delineated Russian interests as distinct and not always coinciding with those of the West.

Yet despite this shift, Russian foreign policy still retained diplomacy as its centerpiece, as evidenced in Russia's 1993 "Provisions for Military Doctrine". Although the document devotes a substantial amount of its content to outlining possible internal threats to the Russian Federation, it also touches on foreign policy as a means of safeguarding Russian security. Most notably, it calls for "the development of a system of bilateral and multilateral accords among states on renouncing power politics and precluding the use or threat of military force"

⁵⁶ The National Security Concept also focused heavily on internal threats to Russia, specifically addressing separatist movements, especially in the Caucasus.

⁵⁷ Ednan Agayev, "Foreign Policy Aspects of Russia's National Security", *Moscow International Affairs*, vol. 39, no. 10, 1993, p.4

and recommends “the inclusion of the Russian Federation in collective security structures....”⁵⁸ Interestingly enough, despite nationalist rhetoric and misgivings about NATO’s post Cold War role and the use of NATO troops in the Balkans, the 1993 Provisions have an overall tone of moderation, proclaiming that Russia “regards no state as its enemy”.⁵⁹

But while Yeltsin envisioned inclusion in regional multilateral organizations of the West, Russia’s new Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov saw different possibilities for Russian foreign policy. Replacing Andrei Kozyrev as foreign minister in January 1996, Primakov’s appointment marks an even more pronounced shift to the right than that undertaken in 1993. It is under Primakov’s tenure that Russia’s foreign policy begins to concurrently pursue tacit diplomatic cooperation with the West, while at the same time working to contain the US by introducing the concept of “multipolarity” into the Russian foreign policy lexicon. Distrusted by the West because of his rumored connections to the KGB, Primakov was alarmed by the growing tendency toward US hegemony in international affairs. As an unmistakable “Pragmatic Nationalist”, he sought to diversify Russia’s diplomatic ties, building what seen by many Western politicians and scholars as anti-Western coalitions and

⁵⁸ *Rossiiskie Vesti*, 18 Nov 1993 pp. 1,2 in FBIS-SOV-93-222-S 19 November 1993, pp. 1-11, available online at: <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/security/russia/russia-mil-doc.html>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

deepening ties with old Soviet allies like Iraq, Cuba, North Korea, and especially China.

But Russia's increasingly close ties with these nations allowed Primakov to develop a role for Russia as "international mediator", a role he seemingly validated with his successful diplomatic intervention in the 1997 Iraq crisis.⁶⁰ Apparently, multipolarity had opened a new dimension to Russian foreign policy. It should therefore come as no surprise that when Russia revised its National Security Concept in 1997, included was a section that characterized the international system as having "more pronounced tendencies leading to the formation of a multi-polar world."⁶¹ The "Joint Russian-Chinese Declaration About a Multipolar World and the Formation of a New International Order", signed in Moscow in April 1997, exemplifies this new concept in Russian foreign policy. The declaration notes the importance of "numerous developing countries and the Non-Aligned movement" as an "important force assisting the formation of a multipolar world".⁶²

But what on paper looked like a viable counterweight to US influence, eventually proved incapable of constraining or influencing US foreign policy.

⁶⁰ Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein expelled UN weapons inspectors in November 1997. Primakov intervened diplomatically and convinced Saddam to readmit inspectors, thereby avoiding a potential military strike against Iraq by the US and Great Britain.

⁶¹ Jakub M Godzimirski, "Russian National Security Concepts 1997-2000: A Comparative Analysis", Security Policy Library No. 8-2000. Flekkefjord, Norway: The Norwegian Atlantic Committee, 2000, p. 8.

⁶² *Reuters*, 8 October 1997, as quoted in Chandler Rosenberger, "Moscow's Multipolar Mission", *Perspective*, vol. 8, no. 2 (November - December 1997).

In the fall of 1998, tensions between the US and Iraq began to build once more when Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein refused cooperate fully with UN weapons inspectors. The crisis came to a head in December when Richard Butler, the UN Chief Weapons Inspector, ordered weapons inspectors to leave Iraq, claiming that Iraq had once more reneged on its promises to the UN to cooperate with inspection teams and allow them unfettered and unimpeded access to suspected Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) sites. In response, Russian Foreign Minister, Yevgeni Primakov flew to Baghdad to hand deliver a letter from Boris Yeltsin to Saddam Hussein, reportedly urging that he cooperate fully with the UN and work to resolve the crisis diplomatically. Upon leaving Baghdad, Primakov also met with US Secretary of State Madeline Albright to discuss the continued use of diplomacy. But unlike the 1997 Iraq crisis, these new efforts at mediation by Russia proved fruitless. Despite Russian claims to the contrary, the US government continued to maintain that all diplomatic options had been exhausted and on December 16th both the US and the UK launched a combined missile and air attack on Iraq. In his address from the oval office, President Clinton justified the attack, warning Saddam Hussein that reckless action would warrant a heavy price.⁶³ The Russian response was swift and reflective of their anger. Prime Minister Primakov called the US-

⁶³ Source: ABC News 1998 Attack Iraq Timeline, available online at: <http://more.abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/iraqtimeline981216.html>

UK military action a violation of the UN Charter and more directly condemned the American action, warning against attempts to “resolve problems unilaterally from a position of strength.”⁶⁴ More significantly, Russia recalled its ambassadors to both the United States and Great Britain as a clear sign of its displeasure and of its growing concern about US hegemony.

Even though the Iraqi crisis of 1998 strained US-Russian relations considerably, it did so less significantly than NATO’s 1999 intervention in the Kosovo crisis. Without a doubt, the Kosovo conflict represents the most critical point in US-Russian relations during both of Yeltsin’s terms in office. As Yugoslavia began to fall apart in the early 1990’s, ethnic Albanians in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo began increasingly to call for independence.⁶⁵ Accompanying these demands was an increase in the level of activity of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), an Albanian insurgent group fighting for Kosovo’s independence. As a result, Serbian President Slobadon Milosevic deployed Serbian Security Forces to Kosovo to “restore order”. In actuality, security forces introduced repressive measures against the local Albanian populace, designed to end their calls for independence.

⁶⁴ *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 18 December 1998, p. 3, as quoted in Stephen White’s *Russia’s New Politics: The Management of a Postcommunist Society*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.235. Note: In September 1998 Primakov left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to accept his appointment as Yeltsin’s Prime Minister. Despite the change in position, Primakov still remained heavily involved in the Iraq crisis of Aug.-Dec. 1998 due to his extensive knowledge of the region as a Middle Eastern expert and his personal ties with Saddam Hussein.

⁶⁵ The province of Kosovo is estimated to be 90 percent Albanian.

In response, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe established a verification mission in Kosovo in October 1998 to ensure that the security forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) were complying with UNSCR 1160 and 1199.⁶⁶ However, the situation continued to deteriorate and by March 1999 OSCE verification mission personnel were withdrawn from Kosovo due to the increasingly volatile security situation and an overall lack of cooperation from the Serbian security forces in Kosovo.

After the OSCE withdrawal, Albanian refugees began to leave Kosovo, typically headed for refugee camps in Macedonia and Albania. Those refugees who remained in Kosovo, dubbed internally displaced persons (IDPs), were oftentimes subjected to worse conditions than those that chose to leave the province. Reports of detention camps, summary executions, and dedicated rape camps, such as the one at the Hotel Karagac in Pec, dominated international headlines and magnified the need for decisive action. The international community made one last attempt at resolution by dispatching US ambassador Richard Holbrooke to Belgrade. Unfortunately, this last diplomatic effort proved fruitless and on 24 March

⁶⁶ UNSCR 1160 and 1199 called for political solution to the situation in Kosovo. Both resolutions also stressed the need for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid in Kosovo. To read the actual resolutions online, go to <http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1998/scres98.htm> For further information on the OSCE mission in Kosovo, go to <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/overview/>

1999, the United States and its NATO allies turned from a path of diplomacy backed by the threat of force to a military campaign of air strikes.

Throughout the crisis the Russian government continually tried to mediate a diplomatic initiative, both as an OSCE member and as a member of the UN Security Council. Repeatedly Russia warned against the use of force before all possible diplomatic avenues were exhausted. It even warned that it would veto any resolution put before the UNSC calling for the use of military force against the FRY.⁶⁷ This may explain why NATO acted without UN sanction, a fact that greatly alarmed the Russian government. President Yeltsin condemned the US-UK military action as “undisguised aggression” and Primakov, hearing of the US-led strikes while enroute to Washington D.C., ordered his plane to turn back to Moscow.⁶⁸

There have been several explanations posited in academic works as to why the Russian government so virulently opposed NATO intervention in the Kosovo conflict. Most common among these explanations is the feeling of “pan Slavism” on the part of Russia. Less emotional explanations draw a parallel between Kosovo and Chechnya, purposing that Russia worried about a precedent being set for NATO intervention in internal

⁶⁷ *Izvestiya*, 6 October 1998, p.2.

⁶⁸ Stephen White, *Russia's New Politics: The Management of a Postcommunist Society*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 235.

Russian conflicts. In this regard, the Kosovo conflict can be seen in a larger context as being directly linked to Russian fears of NATO expansion.

Ekaterina Stepanova offers a similar argument in her analysis of Russian foreign policy during the Kosovo crisis. According to Stepanova, the New Strategic Concept adopted by NATO at the 50th Anniversary Summit not only introduced the possibility of future operations without a UN mandate, but it called for actions beyond its territory. This only served to further Russian fears and suspicions about NATO expansion. As Stepanova so candidly states, "NATO's decision to undertake a direct assault against the territory of a sovereign state, that has not attacked a NATO member, without a UN mandate, was viewed in Russia as a logical progression of NATO's drive to become the dominant security organization in Europe...."⁶⁹

In light of earlier OSCE failures to rectify the situation in Kosovo, the possibility of a new role for NATO as the guarantor of European security threatened to marginalize Russia significantly and more importantly, threatened to exclude Russia from the emerging post Cold War European security structure. This possibility is addressed in current Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov's book *The New Russian Diplomacy*. In his book,

⁶⁹ Ekaterina Stepanova, "Explaining Russia's Dissention on Kosovo", PONARS Policy Memo no. 57, March 1999. Available at: http://www.csis.org/ruseura/ponars/policymemos/pm_0057.pdf

Ivanov dedicates an entire chapter to he calls the "formation of a new international system". He speaks of two fundamentally opposed approaches to a new international security system in which one of them "advocates a one-size-fits-all model. In this model, the international arena is dominated by a group of more-developed countries, enjoying the military and economic support of the United States and NATO, while the rest of the world community must live according to the rules established and, occasionally, enforced by this elite club. An example of this model in action was the fate of Yugoslavia, particularly in 1999."⁷⁰ In short, Kosovo proved to be so damaging to US-Russian relations because it threatened to undermine the entire Russian policy of relying first and foremost on international multilateral organizations like the UN and the OSCE for its external security and it further threatened to undermine the multipolar world system envisioned in the 1997 National Security Concept. This would explain the severe opposition by Moscow to NATO military action in Kosovo without the clear consent of the UN more so than any particular emotional or historical attachments for fellow Slavs.⁷¹ This argument also helps to explain the Russian Army's "dash" to Pristina Airport, which had

⁷⁰ Igor Ivanov, *The New Russian Diplomacy*, with a foreword by Henry Kissinger, Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, p. 43

⁷¹ Recall that although the Russian government opposed the use of military force in Bosnia in the early 1990's the opposition was not of the same intensity as that given to the use of military force in Kosovo. This is because in Bosnia, unlike in Kosovo, NATO worked to support UN operations and did not act unilaterally.

less to do with securing a Russian part in Kosovo Force (KFOR) for peacekeeping and more to do with Russia stopping its marginalization by NATO, which it saw as not only a threat to itself, but to any nation not a member of the elite Western "club".

The Kosovo conflict represented the lowest point in post Soviet US-Russian relations. Although the arguments about Russian allegiance to fellow Slavs and Russian fears of setting a precedent for NATO intervention elsewhere in Europe, most notably within Russian borders, in the reality the larger issue focused on NATO expansion and in particular the possibility of NATO supplanting other organizations like the OSCE as the post Cold War security organization for Europe. Just as Ivanov alluded, the international system was seemingly becoming a two-tiered system – those in the Western club and those countries which were not. Russia's failure to realize President Yeltsin's original foreign policy goal of gaining admittance to this first tier by way of cooperation with the West and instituting rapid domestic reform had seemingly failed by 1999.

At the beginning of the 1990's Yeltsin had hoped to join the West as an equal partner by transforming Russia into a truly democratic society with a newly reformed market economy. Unfortunately, the grand transformation to democracy and a market economy so hoped for by Yeltsin failed to materialize for a variety of combined reasons; not least among them the domestic political

infighting which often spilled over into the international arena. Yielding to internal pressures, Yeltsin gradually shifted his foreign policy more to the right and adopted a policy less Western in orientation. Yevgeni Primakov's appointment as Foreign Minister in early 1996 shift policy even further right and established multipolarity as a crucial concept in Russian foreign policy. US-led military strikes against Iraq and NATO actions in the Balkans would seemingly discredit this idea and would lead to Yeltsin's eventual disenchantment with the West. Ironically, the same multilateral institutions he had originally seen as a means to gain acceptance to the West club, slowly became the means by which he sought to contain the US and thereby protect against Russia's political marginalization

It should be noted though that despite the cooling of relations by the late 1990's, Yeltsin never broke with the West entirely. He recognized that ignoring the West or attempting to create an alternative axis to Western power would prove detrimental to an already weak Russia. Most notably, Yeltsin's disappointment and anger over the Kosovo conflict did not preclude him from negotiating G-7 debt assistance to Russia in June 1999, barely one month after Kosovo. Simply put, Yeltsin understood that Russia could not ignore the West, nor could it stop what he saw as the US's increasingly hegemonic attitude. Therefore he opted for a pragmatic approach in which Russia relied more heavily on international organizations like the UN to ensure its input and participation in international

affairs, while at the same time it attempted to focus on areas of “common ground” with the US, such as arms control. As we shall see in the next chapter, Putin continued this strategy, developing and refining it further, and adjusting it to the new global paradigm wrought by the terrorist attacks of September 11th.

Chapter Four: Putin's Foreign Policy

At the time of Vladimir Putin's election in March of 2000, US-Russian relations were frostier than they had ever been since the break up of the Soviet Union nine years earlier and Russian economic growth, described by Putin as "unsuitable" in his State of the Nation address, had begun to slow.⁷² A political realist, Putin understood that if Russia were to have an active role in international affairs and advance its international economic interests, then mending relations with the US would be imperative. But while Putin sought to improve relations with Washington, he concurrently pursued relations with other non-Western nations such as China, North Korea, and Iran. What is more, he actively opposed the United States' plan to withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, thereby allowing it to pursue the development of a National Missile Defense (NMD) system. For many Western scholars, such seemingly contradictory positions were the first indications of a lack of overall strategy in Putin's foreign policy.

It is more likely, though, that Putin has been pursuing what amounts to a "dual-track" foreign policy, advancing US-Russian relations in areas of shared interests and seeking to resolve or minimize diplomatic differences in areas of divergent interests. This policy is by no means uncomplicated and requires that

⁷² English translation of Putin's State of the Nation address available at: http://www.ncsj.org/AuxPages/051903Putin_SOTN_address.shtml

“pragmatic” balance-of-power approach for which Putin is so well noted. Yet, it is not without strategy. Putin holds the same overall foreign policy goal or vision for Russia that both Gorbachev and Yeltsin did – fostering close ties and cooperation with the West in the hopes of strengthening and bettering Russia. But like his predecessors, Putin’s foreign policy goal is often limited by the policy means available to him. Even though Russia’s economy and political system have stabilized under Putin, they are still weak. Indeed, as we shall see, it is Russia’s current weakness that forces Putin to rely on this dual-track strategy.

Shortly after entering office, Putin set about formalizing his foreign policy strategy by revising Russia’s 1993 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) and signing it into law on June 28th, 2000. From the outset, the new concept acknowledges that while military power is still significant, even more significant to foreign policy is economic and political power. Along the same vein, it emphasizes the importance of multilateral organizations and international law, calling for the “intensification of the role of international institutions and mechanisms in world economics and politics” and the “strengthening of international law in strict accordance with the UN Charter.”⁷¹ Interestingly enough, the Foreign Policy Concept, released almost a year and a half before the attacks of 9/11, identified terrorism as one of its most important policy priorities, calling for further measures to intensify cooperation among states in this area.⁷³ Multipolarity is

⁷³ Ibid. This most likely refers to the threat of radical Islamic terrorists in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

stressed as the most desirable structure for the international order and concerns are voiced over what is seen as an increasingly unipolar world dominated by the United States. In a clear reference to the Kosovo conflict, the Foreign Policy Concept states specifically that "attempts to introduce into the international parlance such concepts as 'humanitarian intervention' and 'limited sovereignty' in order to justify unilateral power actions bypassing the UN Security Council are not acceptable."⁷⁴ Yet despite these worries and concerns, Putin acknowledges that Russia's policy options for preventing these "power actions" are limited by her own weakness. On this matter of weakness, the Foreign Policy Concept is once more explicit; Russia's foreign policy must be based on maintaining observance of a reasonable balance between its objectives and the possibilities for attaining these objectives.⁷⁵ Or as Dale Herspring more bluntly puts it, "He (Putin) understands better than most that Russia is playing with a very weak hand."⁷⁶

Weak hand or not, Putin set out to pursue his envisioned active constructivist foreign policy almost immediately. His first big opportunity to strengthen Western ties for the betterment of Russia came just four months after his election, at the Group of Eight (G-8) summit in Okinawa. Prior to the summit, Putin was sure to lay the diplomatic groundwork in order to get the

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Dale R. Herspring, ed., *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), p. 225.

most out of his meeting with the G-8. Meeting that March with British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London, Putin sought to increase trade between Russia and Great Britain. At the end of their meeting, both men announced a proposal by which increased cooperation with over 30 different British companies would hopefully generate another \$2 billion worth of trade between Russia and Great Britain, an increase of almost 50 percent.⁷⁷ Likewise, Putin's visit to Germany later that June sought a "new start" to economic relations with the Schroeder government. Specifically, Russia wished to persuade Germany, the single largest creditor of the Paris Club, to restructure Russia's debt, which stood at approximately 100 billion marks for loans that dated as far back as the Soviet period.⁷⁸ Also in June, Putin hosted a US-Russian summit in Moscow as a farewell meeting with President Clinton. While the summit produced little in the way of concrete results, it did include a surprise offer by Putin for a possible joint US-Russian NMD.⁷⁹

On the eve of the Okinawa summit, Putin made state visits with both China (PRC) and North Korea. Meeting with Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Putin discussed a wide range of international issues covering trade, economy, politics, and cross-regional cooperation. A memorandum of understanding

⁷⁷ Online chronology of Russian foreign policy events for 2000, available at: http://utenti.lycos.it/Delenda_Carthago/putin_1_year.html

⁷⁸ Patrick Richter, "Putin's Visit to Germany and the Redefinition of International Relations", 28 June 2000, available online at: <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2000/jun2000/put-j28.shtml>

⁷⁹ Clinton refused the offer, which was almost certainly made in an effort to keep the US from pulling out of the ABM treaty.

(MOA) was signed between the two countries in which both leaders pledged to fund a feasibility study of an oil pipeline project between China and Russia. In addition to the MOA, a Sales and Purchase contract was also signed for 300,000 tons of West Siberian light oil. But economics aside, the topic that dominated discussions between the two leaders was NMD. Issuing a joint statement, both Putin and Zemin warned that US development of NMD posed “the most grave adverse consequences not only to the national security of Russia, China and other countries, but also to the security and international strategic stability of the United States.”⁸⁰ Putin’s follow on visit to North Korea focused once more on NMD and on the perceived threat that Pyongyang’s missile program represented to Washington.

In fact NMD was Putin’s top policy priority at the July G-8 summit. True, while topics on the G-8 agenda like debt relief and the need to stabilize international crude oil prices were of particular interest to Putin, arms control and the survival of the ABM Treaty were of paramount importance to him. Interestingly, Putin engaged in a dual track of diplomacy at the G-8 concerning US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and the possible development of a NMD system. On one hand he proposed a suggestion made by Kim Chong Il during his visit to the North Korea in which North Korea would abandon its intercontinental missile program if other states would provide it with technology

⁸⁰ David Rennie, “Russia and China Vow to Defy US Dominance”, *The Telegraph*, 19 July 2000. Available online at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2000/07/19/wndm19.xml>

for peaceful space research.⁸¹ Yet at the same time, Putin was lobbying European leaders such as Jacques Chirac to support an official summit communiqué calling for the “preservation of the ABM Treaty as the cornerstone of strategic stability.”⁸² In this way, Putin could ensure some measure of diplomatic progress on the issue if the United States rejected his North Korean proposal (which it did). More significantly, this initiative can be seen as an attempt by Putin to drive a wedge between the US and its European allies over the NMD issue, which had lukewarm European support at best.

But why was Putin so desperate to preserve a treaty that in Washington’s estimation was an outdated relic of the Cold War? Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov provides an answer in his comments on the G-8 summit communiqué:

All of the treaties and agreements helped to create today’s architecture for international security and their significance as mutual agreements must be emphasized. If their mutual foundation is destroyed, the entire framework threatens to collapse and take with it the results of the international community’s thirty-year effort at disarmament.⁸³

In addition to concerns about undermining the entire international arms control architecture, Russia had more specific concerns about possible US abrogation of the ABM Treaty. Given its economic situation and the fact that it had only just

⁸¹ Later Kim would dismiss the supposed offer, saying that he had only made it “jokingly” and that he was not serious. Despite this, Putin apparently took his suggestion quite seriously at the time.

⁸² ABM Homepage on the Nuclear Threat Initiative Website, available at:

<http://www.nti.org/db/nisprofs/russia/treaties/abm.htm>

⁸³ Igor S. Ivanov, *The New Russian Diplomacy*, with a foreword by Henry Kissinger (Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2002), p. 60.

begun to show signs of positive economic growth, Russia feared that should the US development of a NMD system spawn a new wave of proliferation and arms races, Russia would not be able to keep up.⁸⁴ More importantly, if the US were actually able to develop a NMD system successfully, it would be in a position of unquestioned global strategic dominance with a potent combination of offensive and defensive forces.⁸⁵ Putin therefore found it imperative that the US not withdraw from the ABM Treaty.

But by late 2000 it looked highly unlikely that any common ground would be found between the US and Russia on the issue of ABM and NMD. In a November interview with *Interfax*, Strategic Rocket Forces Commander Army General Vladimir Yakovlev expressed concern for the preservation of the ABM Treaty, stating that given the "large investments" already made by the US government in the project, preserving the treaty would indeed be difficult.⁸⁶ The lack of progress during ABM consultations with the new Bush administration in May 2001 seemed to validate Yakovlev's pessimism.

Further complicating both ABM talks and US-Russian relations in general was the overall attitude with which the new Bush administration was treating Russia. Herspring notes that "the new administration seemed to look upon

⁸⁴ Rising prices in the international oil market helped contributed to Russia's economic growth in 2000 and 2001.

⁸⁵ Dale R. Herspring, ed., *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), p. 232.

⁸⁶ "Confusion Over Russian Missile Chief's Remarks," *Disarmament Diplomacy*, November 2000, p. 55.

Russia as an economical, political, and social basket case.”⁸⁷ In a now famous interview with *Le Figaro* in February 2001, US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was quoted as saying that she believed Russia to be a threat to the West in general and to US European allies in particular.⁸⁸ Such statements did little to improve relations. The first meeting between President Putin and President Bush took place in Slovenia in June 2001 and seemed to smooth over relations. The meeting was described as candid and warm and President Putin emerged from the summit saying that “the reality was better than the expectations.”⁸⁹ For his part President Bush told reporters his meeting with Putin had been genuinely comfortable and that he had been able to get a sense of Putin’s soul and found him to be straightforward and trustworthy.⁹⁰ Likewise, Putin commented that he and President Bush had found a “good basis” to start building on cooperation.⁹¹ At the end of the summit Bush invited Putin to meet with him at his ranch in Crawford, Texas that coming November. Overall the two men seemed to have made a significant personal connection that many hoped would translate into better US-Russian relations.

⁸⁷ Dale R. Herspring, ed., *Putin’s Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*, (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), p. 234.

⁸⁸ *Pravda Online*, “USA National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice Speaks Out Against Russia in Interview to ‘Figaro’ Magazine”, 12 February 2001, at: <http://english.pravda.ru/main/2001/02/12/2463.html>

⁸⁹ Major Garret, “Bush Hails ‘New Era’ in Relations with Russia”, *CNN online*, June 16, 2001.

⁹⁰ Major Garrett, *CNN online*, “Bush Hails ‘New Era’ in Relations with Russia”, 16 June 2001, available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/06/16/bush.putin.03/>

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Serious political differences still remained though, despite the amiability established between the two leaders. No consensus or agreement was reached in Slovenia concerning the ABM Treaty, nor was there any progress on the issue of NATO expansion. For many Russians, the combination of Washington's desire to expand NATO eastward and to withdraw from the ABM Treaty was cause for concern. Exacerbating this concern was Western condemnation of Russia's second war in Chechnya, begun the year before. Given the precedent of humanitarian intervention in Kosovo, comments made by Bush during the US election campaign that Russian actions in Chechnya had gone "beyond the bounds of decency" only heightened this sense of hostility. All in all, while the summit meeting in Slovenia had helped to set the tone for future cooperative dialogue, it did little to resolve many of the major issues confronting US-Russian relations. Newfound cordiality aside, Putin seemed to be falling far short of his goal of mending US-Russian relations. He hoped the upcoming November meeting in Crawford, Texas, might bring further progress, but the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, provided him with an unforeseen opportunity to further US-Russian relations.

The attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by nineteen Al Qaeda terrorists was a watershed event in world politics. Not only did it clearly demonstrate the seriousness of the growing international terrorist threat, but it also shattered the image of the United States as an invincible nation. As the first

foreign leader to call President Bush following the attacks, Putin extended his deepest sympathies and expressed his outrage and indignation, calling the attacks "barbaric". Later that day in a nationally televised address, he stated that "there is not doubt that such an inhuman act must not go unpunished" and called on the international community to "unite in the struggle against terrorism."⁹² He also addressed the American public directly, saying "We (Russians) know from our own experience what terrorism is and we understand the feelings of the American people better than anyone. We fully and wholeheartedly share your pain and we are with you and support you."⁹³

With Putin's decision to support the US in its antiterrorist campaign, Russian foreign policy shifted towards unprecedented levels of cooperation with the West. Putin announced that he was prepared to open Russian airspace for US humanitarian flights and offered the use of Russian search and rescue forces should the US attack Afghanistan.⁹⁴ He also made it clear to Washington that Russia was prepared to share intelligence information. Most amazing to Westerners though was Putin's tacit approval to allow US access to military bases in Central Asia, an area commonly viewed as Russia's "backyard". Realistically of course, the decision to allow US troops in Central Asia rested with each of the newly independent states, but Putin's acquiescence removed several possible

⁹² *Reuters*, "Russia's Putin Offers Sympathy to American People", 12 September 2001, in Johnson's Russia List, #5438.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Putin took great care not to commit Russian combat troops to any US involvement in Afghanistan, as Russian public opinion understandably was against any new involvement in Afghanistan.

diplomatic impediments to the process. This decision, more than any other, represents Putin's sincere desire to cooperate with the West and redefine US-Russian relations. By November 2001 US-Russian relations seemed at an all time high. Putin's successful meeting with Bush in Crawford, Texas, helped further this perception.

In the months that followed the meeting in Crawford, Putin was able to point to two definite gains made from his support in the War on Terrorism. In June 2002 both the European Union (EU) and United States granted Russia market economy status, thereby improving Russian chances for membership in the World Trade Organization. Russia was also rewarded with full G-8 membership, which Putin saw as significantly improving the quality of relations with the West. But despite these economic gains, overall the post 9/11 rapprochement with the West eventually proved to be a considerable diplomatic disappointment for Russia. Although Putin had set no specific preconditions for Russian support, there was the general expectation that the US would reciprocate. From the outset Putin had drawn parallels between the 9/11 attacks and Russia's own efforts at battling terrorism in the Caucasus. He reminded the US that "Chechen developments ought not to be regarded outside the context of efforts against international terrorism."⁹⁵ But although Washington's rhetoric concerning the war in Chechnya was more muted post 9/11, militant groups like

⁹⁵ *RIA Novosti*, "Putin Determines Russian Stance on Anti-Terror Cause", 25 September 2001 in Johnson's Russia List #5458.

the Supreme Military Mejlis-ul-Shura-United Force of the Caucasian Mujahadeen still had not been added to the US State Department's official list of terrorist organizations. Nor had Russia's "antiterrorist" operations in Chechnya been incorporated into the overall war on terrorism as Putin had hoped. In fact, Russia's overall role in the antiterrorist campaign was a rather minor one.

US-Russian relations were dealt another setback in December 2001 when President Bush announced the United States' formal intent to withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. Across Russia headlines like "One-Sided Bush" and "Partnership Questioned" questioned the US commitment to a newfound partnership with Russia.⁹⁶ In an apparent attempt to soften the blow of the US decision, Bush agreed to sign a treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (later known as the Moscow treaty) during a summit meeting with Putin in May 2002. But at a mere three pages, the treaty was seen by Putin as an insufficient replacement for the ABM Treaty. Unlike the previous strategic arms control treaties, the Moscow Treaty did not require any new verification procedures, nor did it require either country to actually eliminate any nuclear warheads or delivery vehicles.⁹⁷

Overall the summit was high on rhetoric, but short on substance. President Bush failed to deliver on a promise made six months earlier in

⁹⁶ US Department of State, "Foreign Media Reaction: US Scraps ABM Treaty and Post-Sept. 11th Cooperative Spirit As Well?" 19 December 2001, in *CDI Russia Weekly* #185.

⁹⁷ Originally Russian negotiators pushed to make cuts under the Moscow Treaty irreversible.

Crawford, Texas, to convince Congress to repeal the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, which required that Russia vet its emigration policies if it wished to maintain normal trade relations with the United States. Moreover, the issue of Russia's nuclear cooperation with Iran was the source of tension during meetings between the two men. The post 9/11 cooperation which had been heralded just eight months earlier as a new age for US-Russian cooperation proved to be short lived. Although President Bush still described Putin as a "good friend", by summit's end he qualified the remark to reporters saying that "like other good friends I've had throughout my life, we don't agree 100 percent of the time."⁹⁸

One subject on which neither could agree was the growing issue of possible US military action against Iraq. Early on the Bush administration had made it clear that it saw Iraq's dismantlement of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program as being tied directly to Washington's war on terrorism. In a July 2002 meeting with Congressional leaders, Bush warned that "The danger to our country is grave. The Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons (and) has long-standing and continuing ties to terrorist organizations."⁹⁹ As US rhetoric grew increasingly bellicose, Saddam Hussein agreed to readmit UN weapons inspectors unconditionally in late September 2002. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov hailed the return of inspectors as a

⁹⁸ White House press release available at: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021122-2.html

⁹⁹ White House press release available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020926-7.html>

diplomatic breakthrough, telling journalists in New York that “Thanks to our joint efforts, we managed to avert the threat of a war scenario and go back to political means of solving the Iraqi problem.”¹⁰⁰

Ivanov’s statement reflected Russia’s consistent emphasis throughout the Iraqi crisis of the need to use political means over military ones in resolving the situation. However, as during Kosovo, Russia and the US differed greatly in their interpretation of determining at what point diplomatic efforts had been truly exhausted. Shortly after the reintroduction of UN weapons inspectors, both the US and Britain were considering a UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) which would give Baghdad seven days to declare all of its weapons of mass programs or face military action.¹⁰¹ But Russia rejected this proposal outright. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Saltanov stressed once more the need for diplomacy, noting that “any military solution will have negative consequences for Russia’s interests. We think we have to continue doing all we can to search for a political solution. A military solution, especially one that comes without a UN resolution, will not resolve the Iraqi problem.”¹⁰²

As Saltanov’s statement suggests, there were indeed a number of Russian interests tied to the Iraqi crisis. As one of the world’s largest energy exporters, the Russian economy was vulnerable to price fluctuations in the international oil

¹⁰⁰ *APF (Moscow)*, “Russia Hails Iraqi Decision on Inspectors, Refuses New UN Resolution”, 17 September 2002, in Johnson’s Russia List #6441.

¹⁰¹ *AFP*, “Russia Against UN Resolution Threatening Iraq With Force”, October 3, 2002, in *CDI’s Russia Weekly* #225.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

market. Andrei Illarionov, one of President Putin's economic advisors, warned that a war in Iraq might have an adverse medium-term effect on the Russian economy. While noting that damage to oil fields during US-led operations was a possibility, Illarionov's greater fear was that the post war situation might cause political instability leading to the replacement of ruling governments in Middle Eastern countries that are major oil exporters.¹⁰³

In addition to the ramifications a war might have on Russia's energy based economy, there was also the worry that Iraqi oil contracts held by Russian companies would not be honored after Saddam was gone. Likewise, Russia also worried that regime change in Baghdad would mean that Iraqi's debt owed to Russia, estimated at \$8 billion, would never be repaid. Gone also would be potential future Russian profits from the UN's "Food for Oil" program, which would almost undoubtedly come to an end after Saddam Hussein was deposed.¹⁰⁴ Given its considerable economic interests in Iraq and the potential impact war might bring to its economy, it is understandable that Russia would be hesitant to support the US coalition.

Further complicating Russian interests, though, was the growing divide between the US and France and Germany over the Bush administration's position on Iraq. Having allied himself with what was dubbed the "anti-war

¹⁰³ *Interfax*, "Putin Aide Says Iraq War Damaging to Russian Economy in Longer Term", 20 March 2003, in *CDI Russia Weekly* #249.

¹⁰⁴ It is estimated that Russia held approximately 1/3rd of all the Food for Oil Contracts.

coalition", Putin worked with both Gerhard Schröder and Jacques Chirac to try and convince President Bush to find a diplomatic solution to the question of Iraqi disarmament. Issuing a joint declaration, all three leaders stated that "The use of force must be only a last resort. Russia, Germany and France are determined to give every chance to the peaceful disarmament of Iraq."¹⁰⁵ The declaration did little to deter the Bush administration, but it did underscore the difficulty the United States was encountering in effectively building a coalition supporting the invasion of Iraq.

For Western policy analysts and scholars, Putin's alliance with the anti-war coalition seemed perplexing and contradictory in light of his policy shift Westward after 9/11. As Jeremy Bransten so pointedly asks, "Does Putin's signing of a joint declaration on Iraq with both France and Germany signal Moscow is drawing away from its post-9/11 ties with the United States?"¹⁰⁶ Accused of inconsistency, his foreign policy was declared devoid of any discernable strategy. Of course there are several factors in addition to those already mentioned which help to explain Putin's decision to ally with France and Germany in their opposition to a US-led war against Iraq. Geopolitical considerations were first and foremost. Although Russian political and economic ties to the United States are significant, almost two thirds of its trade is

¹⁰⁵ John Lichfield and Anne Penketh, *The Independent*, "France, Germany, and Russia Defy the US by Declaring That War is Unjustified." 11 February 2003.

¹⁰⁶ Jeremy Bransten, *RFE/RL*, "Russia: Cozy Talks In Paris, But Putin Still Aiming To Strike Delicate Balance On Iraq", 13 February 2003, in Johnson's Russia List #7060.

with Europe. When the EU expands, that is set to grow to more than 70 percent.¹⁰⁷ Trade ties between Germany and Russia are especially strong, with Russia satisfying 35 percent of Germany's natural gas demand and 28 percent of its oil requirements.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, German imports make up slightly over 25 percent of Russia's total imports.¹⁰⁹

But beyond the economic ties lay a larger and more strategic reason for allying with the France and Germany. Shortly after issuing the joint declaration with Chirac and Schroeder, Putin sought to explain further its purpose in the overall larger context at a French press conference. He stated that the alliance between Russia, France, and Germany was not done "to build an axis or bloc" but to "resolve a bitter world crisis in a peaceful way" and that by issuing the joint declaration all three nations hoped very much that their opinions would be heard.¹¹⁰ At the same time he talked about the larger context of the Iraqi crisis, stating that "this is not just about Iraq...the important question is what sort of world do we want to build. If you look at the problems this way we understand that if the world is to be more predictable, more understandable and safer then it must be multipolar."¹¹¹ For Putin, the Iraqi crisis was not just about weapons of mass destruction and international security, it was about international order and more importantly how the leading world power would choose to conduct itself

¹⁰⁷ *Moscow Times*, "Putin's Delicate Balancing Game", 13 March 2003, in CDI Russia Weekly #248

¹⁰⁸ *Pravda.Ru: Economics*. "Successful Trade Between Russia and Germany", 7 February 2003.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Reuters*, "Putin Defends Stand with France on Iraq", 12 February 2003 in Johnson's Russia List #7058.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*

within that order. Foreign Minister Ivanov, like President Putin, also felt that the new alliance held a "significance which goes beyond the Iraqi crisis".¹¹² Overall, it promised the opportunity for a multipolar world, an order which is strongly advocated in the new Russian foreign policy. As Alexander Rahr notes, "It's not about Iraq, it's about limiting the scope of US action, so that America alone cannot unilaterally decide what to do."¹¹³ This was the same concern that Russia had held during the Kosovo crisis and during smaller scale attacks on Iraq by the United States and Great Britain, only this time it seemed that by working in cooperation with the French and the Germans there was something Russia could do about it. This possibility, combined with the aforementioned economic concerns helps to explain Putin's decision.

Less easily explained is Putin's complicated diplomatic balancing act of supporting his new alliance without causing a serious fissure in US-Russian relations. Make no mistake, Russia's alignment with France and Germany concerning the Iraqi crisis in no way meant that Moscow wished to isolate itself from Washington. Although Putin and Ivanov's comments concerning the US position on Iraq were highly critical, both men were pragmatic enough to realize that, differences over Iraq aside, keeping good US relations was imperative for Russia. So, Moscow's position needed to be just strong enough in anti-war rhetoric to get its point across to Washington, but not so fervently anti-American

¹¹² *Moscow Times*, "Putin's Delicate Balancing Game", 13 March 2003, in CDI Russia Weekly #248

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

as to risk an outright break with the Bush administration. Alexander Voloshin's visit to Washington D.C. in February of 2003 illustrates this balancing act in particular, with Putin's Chief of Staff reportedly looking to further Russian oil industry interests in a possible post war Iraq, while at the same time trying to explain Russia's recent alliance with France and Germany. This "dual track" policy may explain further why it is that Foreign Minister Ivanov made a number of contradictory statements about whether Russia would veto any UNSCR calling for the use of military force against Iraq, while Putin remained silent, giving no indication as to which way the vote would go. It also helps to explain why Putin's comments during his televised address the day the war started in Iraq were surprisingly less harsh than expected, given the economic implications war could have for Russia. Expressing Russia's desire that the war end quickly, Putin cautioned that the world must "be governed by international law, not the 'rule of fist'."¹¹⁴ In general, Moscow's rhetoric became more subdued and muted after the war began, with two notable exceptions; when US forces accidentally fired on a Russian diplomatic convoy on the outskirts of Baghdad in early April and later when US officials accused Russia of selling military equipment to Iraq, in violation of UN sanctions. The rhetoric concerning

¹¹⁴ BBC Monitoring, "Putin Says World Must Be Governed By International Law, Not 'Rule of Fist'", 20 March 2003, in CDI Russia Weekly #249.

both of these actions was noticeably sharper, but in the end, both Russia and the US were able to work through what amounted to initial misunderstandings.¹¹⁵

By April 9th, all coherent resistance in Baghdad had crumbled. With US assistance Iraqis were pulling down statues of Saddam Hussein and as Washington looked to have UN sanctions lifted and to begin rebuilding Iraq, it sought to mend relations with Russia. As an olive branch gesture, Congress promised to terminate the application of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to Russia, thereby fulfilling a request made by Putin just a few short months after the 9/11 attacks.¹¹⁶ National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice also visited Moscow in early April, carrying a message from President Bush that “stressed the importance of working to keep the relationship on track and to contain the disagreement.”¹¹⁷ Apparently the Bush administration did not want to face the same level of opposition from Russia in rebuilding Iraq that it did in its decision to go to war against Iraq. This would seem to indicate a degree of moderate success for Putin’s dual track policy of supporting the French-German coalition while at the same time trying not to damage US-Russian relations irreparably.

¹¹⁵ An American investigation determined that the diplomatic convoy unexpectedly changed its route from the one the US commander had approved. This was confirmed by a Russia television reporter who was traveling with the convoy. Concerning Russian arms sales to Iraq, both Bush and Powell had publicly accused the Russian government of selling GPS jamming equipment and anti-tank missiles to Iraq in violation of UN sanctions. These accusations were based upon battlefield reports collected during the campaign. Russia denied knowledge of the sales and faulted poor export controls as the cause for the equipment transfer, furnishing evidence in support of its findings.

¹¹⁶ The amendment still has yet to be terminated for Russia. In an earlier effort to win Russian support for the war against Iraq, the US State Department added three Chechen militant groups to their official list of terrorist organizations.

¹¹⁷ Michael Wines, “Rice Visits Moscow To Repair Relations”, *The New York Times*, 8 April 2003.

The balancing act, while complex and not without risks, is not without strategy. This strategy however, does not fit easily into a pro-West or pro-East context, as some would try to view it. Recognizing the powerful position of the United States, Putin seeks to improve US-Russian relations within the context of this system. When the opportunity to align US and Russian interests presents itself, he works to capitalize on it for the betterment of Russia. Likewise, when US and Russian interests diverge, he works to "disagree agreeably". The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, represent an instance in which Putin felt he could not only align US and Russian interests concerning terrorism, but also further the cause of multipolarity in the context of an antiterrorist coalition. Unfortunately, the US proved to be unresponsive to his efforts. Multipolarity, as well as economic considerations, was one of the driving factors in Putin's decision in to ally Russia with Germany and France in their opposition to a US-led war against Iraq. Of course, this emphasis on multipolarity serves the more pragmatic purpose of containing the US, which is increasingly dominating world affairs. Since Russia is significantly weaker military and economically than the United States, there is a heavy Russian emphasis on the role of international law in foreign affairs and especially on the UN Security Council, where Russia holds veto power. By working within the UN framework, Putin hopes to avoid being sidelined politically as Yeltsin was during Kosovo. A reliance on diplomacy, international organizations, and the concept of multipolarity help to define

Putin's overall foreign policy strategy. His end goal remains the same though – safeguarding the interests of Russia and contributing to her betterment through international cooperation.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

As one looks back on the recent history of Russian foreign policy, the introduction of Gorbachev's new thinking marks a decided shift in policy away from the military realm to the realm of the economic and political. Diplomacy became the primary tool for defending then Soviet interests. More specifically, diplomacy in the form of arms control was used as a means of demilitarizing the bipolar order of the Cold War and freeing the Soviet Union from the heavy economic burdens of the arms race. Driven by what Gorbachev himself called "an awareness that the potential of socialism had been underutilized", he sought cooperation with the West, and with the US in particular, as a means of reforming and revitalizing the socialist system.¹¹⁸

Yeltsin continued Gorbachev's emphasis on diplomacy as part of Russia's new foreign policy and continued the cuts in nuclear arms that Gorbachev had begun. Unlike his predecessor though, he actually sought to integrate Russia into Western institutions, not simply cooperate with them in the name of reviving socialism. Instead, Yeltsin's early cooperation with the West was specifically designed to gain admittance in the Western "club" of democracies as an equal partner. But the precondition for admittance was market reform and democratization, challenging processes that continually plagued Yeltsin

¹¹⁸ Gorbachev, Mikhail, et al, edited by Ken Coates, *Perestroika: Global Challenge, Our Common Future*. (Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 1988), p. 10.

throughout his Presidency. Growing opposition among Russian nationalists and neo-communists to Yeltsin's shock therapy and new "westernizing" foreign policy reached a fever pitch in October of 1993, when Russia's constitutional crisis turned violent. While 1993 marks Yeltsin's initial shift away from a western oriented foreign policy, Yevgeni Primakov's appointment as Russia's new Foreign Minister just two years later signals a decidedly more conservative turn to the right. Eschewing the former policies of Kozyrev, Primakov looked instead to the near abroad and to old Soviet allies in his realignment of Russian foreign policy priorities. He sought to counter growing US international influence by strengthening relations with powers like China, Iraq, and North Korea. In effect, Primakov's efforts to counterbalance the United States represents a departure from the type of cooperation advocated as part of Gorbachev's new thinking and Yeltsin's initial policy. His insistence on the need for a multipolar world combined with his frequent anti-American remarks, helped to revive a Cold War zero-sum attitude in US-Russian relations that had been noticeably absent during the Kozyrev years. But Russia's weak internal situation precluded the success of Primakov's strategy departure.

Vladimir Putin's foreign policy represents a pragmatic return to the cooperative diplomacy of the Gorbachev era and early Yeltsin years. Having inherited strained US-Russian relations as a result of the Kosovo crisis, Putin sought to mend the breach with Washington. But unlike Yeltsin, he was more

realistic in his expectations of the West and the results that Russian cooperation would yield. Therefore he embarked on a pragmatic dual track policy of advancing relations with the US and Europe when their interests aligned, and “agreeing to disagree” when they did not. Like Yeltsin and Primakov, he was concerned about the emergence of a unipolar world dominated by the US and sought, like his predecessor before him, to use organizations like the UN to constrain the US politically and militarily. When events like the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, presented the opportunity to further US-Russian relations by incorporating Russian into a US-led international coalition, Putin seized upon it as both an opportunity to further relations with the US and as an opportunity to further Russia’s own specific interests, most notably concerning Chechnya. Similarly, when the fissure in US-European relations over the war in Iraq occurred Putin was able to advance the idea of multipolarity far more successfully than Primakov by aligning with other Western powers and focusing his remarks on the adherence to international law as opposed to anti-American sentiments. In this manner, we see the slow evolution of the multipolar concept in Russian foreign policy from Yeltsin onward.

But regardless of the post Cold War development of multipolarity, Russia has fairly consistently anchored its foreign policy to the precepts introduced with Gorbachev’s new thinking: diplomacy as the primary tool of international relations, an emphasis on the importance of arms control and international

organizations, and undertaking cooperative efforts with the international community for the bettering of Russia. While shifts in policy and minor strategy departures like Primakov's may be interpreted by scholars like Legvold, Richter, and others as proof of inconsistency in Russian foreign policy, an examination of the strategic thought behind the policies from Gorbachev up to Putin reveals that there is indeed an overall goal and vision for Russia. Cooperation with the West, both the US and Europe, is inextricably linked to this vision. But the need for this cooperation should not necessarily be interpreted to mean that Russia would subjugate her interests to those of the US. Russia's natural pursuit of her own interests should not be confused for a lack of overall strategy or vision in foreign policy.

And while the emerging concepts in post Soviet Russian foreign policy of multilateralism and multipolarity might seem contradictory as well, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Since the fall of communism twelve years ago Russia has become a member of the G-8 and has been awarded "market status" by both the US and EU, thereby making entrance into the World Trade Organization a more immediate possibility. In this case, Russia has been able to integrate into Western economic multilateral organizations with much less controversy than attempts to integrate into Western multilateral security organizations like NATO. But the question of Europe's post Cold War security architecture still remains a vitally important one to Russian foreign policy. At

best, Russia wishes to integrate into this architecture on beneficial terms. But since this has proven to be nearly impossible, multipolarity seems to be Russia's answer to the situation. The concept of multipolarity helps to protect against Russia's political marginalization and promises to give her increased input in international affairs. Yet it is not so ingrained as part of policy that it cannot be discarded or resurrected as needed. This is evident by Putin's increased rhetoric about multipolarity as the US stood poised to attack Iraq, in comparison to the lack of such rhetoric following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This points to an interesting dichotomy in which Russia is able to pursue economic multilateral integration in an amiable manner, but at the same time feels compelled to contain US efforts to develop NATO as the primary post Cold War security organization in Europe. This dichotomy is reflective of both the actions taken under Yeltsin to both further Russia's economic interests and yet at the same time prevent her political marginalization in the Balkans. Likewise, Putin has developed this strategy even further, giving rise to a pragmatic "dual track" Russian foreign policy.

But if one believes the argument put forth in this thesis, that there is indeed a strategy in Russian foreign policy driven by internal weakness, does it stand to reason then that this strategy would be abandoned by a stronger Russia? While it is impossible to say for sure, the option is quite possible. The tendency of stronger nations to feel more constrained and hindered by international law

and multilateral organizations is evident by Bush administration's recent frustrations with the UN during the Iraq crisis. Given this example, there is no reason not to suppose that should Russia overcome her present weakness that she too might find international law and multilateral organizations just as confining. A shift to the far right in which Russia would abandon diplomacy and its support of multilateral organizations is a possibility, although impossible to predict. For the medium term, we can only hope such a shift does not occur and that the current strategy will indeed help Russia overcome her present weakness thereby benefiting the Russian people and validating the supremacy of diplomacy over deterrence in Russian foreign policy.

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