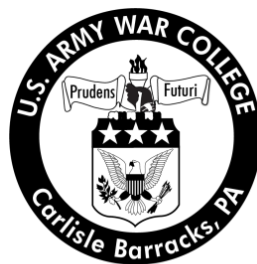


After Reset: A New Strategy for Dealing with Putin's Russia

by

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United States Army War College
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USAWC CIVILIAN RESEARCH PROJECT

AFTER RESET: A NEW STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH PUTIN'S RUSSIA

by

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The 'Reset' was intended to improve relations between the United States and Russia after they had fallen to new lows during the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict. The 'Reset' was a break from the Bush (43) administration's foreign policy, which critics claimed dealt too sternly with Russia. A policy more accommodative to Russian interests was intended to fix the dangerous drift between the two countries. 'Reset' was supposed to achieve breakthroughs in strategic arms reductions, counter-proliferation, cooperation on Iran and North Korea, garner Russian assistance in Afghanistan, and increase cooperation between the two countries. However, despite paying for 'Reset' through U.S. concessions on missile defense plans in Europe, the bilateral relationship has remained chilly. No breakthroughs have been made that could not have been made without 'Reset' and Russia continues to be a spoiler for major international initiatives. This article offers a critical assessment of the most often cited accomplishments of 'Reset,' and then gives a prescription for a new direction in United States policy towards Russia.

AFTER RESET: A NEW STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH PUTIN'S RUSSIA

The 'Reset'¹ was intended to improve relations between the United States and Russia after they had fallen to new lows during the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict. Perhaps just as important to the designers, the 'Reset' was a break from the Bush administration's foreign policy, which critics claimed dealt too sternly with Russia. The main point was that a "smart power"² strategy more accommodative to Russian interests was to fix the "dangerous drift" between the two countries and lead to more positive relations. 'Reset' was supposed to achieve breakthroughs in strategic arms reductions, counter-proliferation, cooperation on Iran and North Korea, garner Russian assistance in Afghanistan, and increase cooperation between the two countries.³ The United States paid for the 'Reset' through concessions to Russia on missile defense plans in Europe, most notably the deferral of plans to put missile defense installations in Poland and the Czech Republic.⁴ However, despite this and other costs to the United States, the bilateral relationship has remained chilly. No breakthroughs have been made that could not have been made without 'Reset' and Russia continues to be a spoiler for major international initiatives. This article offers a critical assessment of the most often cited accomplishments of 'Reset,' and then gives a prescription for a new direction in United States policy towards Russia.

New START

With the original START treaty expiring in December 2009, negotiation of a "New START" treaty was set to be one of the most important events to occur under 'Reset'—setting the tone for all other cooperation. Of course, 'Reset' proponents claim that the New START Treaty that was signed in April 2010 was a great accomplishment⁵-

-reducing strategic weapons by approximately one third, and most importantly for the U.S., reinitiating a verification regime which had ended with START. However, these claims deserve a closer look. While New START causes some reductions of Russian weapons and reinitiates verification procedures, 'Reset' was probably not a requirement for reaching this agreement. Actually, New START was just a continuation of a long tradition of U.S.-Russian cooperation on nuclear reductions that occurred throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's. In the early 1990's, the Bush and Clinton administrations negotiated the START I and II treaties to reduce deployed strategic nuclear weapons to 6,000, followed by the George W. Bush administration's Moscow Treaty in 2002 to further reduce the numbers of operationally deployed warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200.⁶ So, just achieving a nuclear reduction agreement with Moscow is no special achievement; the important thing is how effectively U.S. negotiators achieved national interests compared to what the Russian side accomplished. In the case of the New START treaty, Russia got a much better deal. Moscow got just about everything it wanted, including: significant U.S. reductions (which they wanted in order to save money on maintaining their own stockpiles), elimination of persistent U.S. surveillance at their nuclear production facility (which they found to be too intrusive), and a tie between strategic offensive and defensive systems written into the agreement (which gives them the right to protest U.S. missile defense systems in Europe). And, while U.S. negotiators honored all of these Russian "red-lines", they seemed to have none of their own--as walking away from the table was not really an option under 'Reset.'⁷

U.S. negotiators were likely hindered from getting the best possible outcome because they were under too much pressure to get an agreement that would show

'Reset' success. The much-hyped 'Reset' with Russia was supposed to correct the errors of the Bush administration by being more sensitive to Russian concerns. So, being eager to make any kind of deal, the United States was out-negotiated by the Russians--who had no such intention to prove the 'Reset'. The evidence of this is in the document itself and in leaked diplomatic cables from the negotiations--the New START Treaty includes almost all of the Russian negotiating demands, but represents some serious compromises by the United States. First of all, the final agreed upon number of strategic launchers (700) was significantly closer to the Russian initial negotiating position (500) than to the U.S. position (1100), which would save Russia money on maintaining its stockpiles and limit U.S. flexibility in switching from offensive to defensive systems. Second, the new verification regime was less stringent than under the original START and completely eliminated the persistent U.S. monitoring of the Russian facility at Votkinsk.⁸ Finally and most troublesome, was the Russian insistence, and U.S. agreement, to the inclusion of words in the document that tie together strategic offensive and defensive weapons. This inclusion gives one the impression that Russia can use the treaty to influence U.S. missile defense plans.⁹ Senior administration officials have adamantly assured Congress that this Treaty will have no impact on U.S. plans to develop missile defenses, but it does appear that Russia intends to use the issue to protest and at some point remove itself from the Treaty.¹⁰ Therefore, in essence, New START may turn out to be just a paper tiger with a ready-made escape clause that can't stand up to the likely actions of the participants.

Iran and North Korea

Counter-proliferation was another main cooperation objective under the rubric of 'Reset.' However, achievements in this area have been unimpressive particularly regarding North Korea and Iran. In spite of the fact that Moscow should see a very real threat from a nuclear North Korea, the Russians have not been particularly helpful in counter-proliferation. China, South Korea and Japan have played key roles in the six-party talks, but Russia has held back from using any real leverage on North Korea most likely due to fears of U.S. geopolitical gains in Northeast Asia. With regards to cooperation on Iran, Russia has been an outright spoiler in efforts to intensify international pressure on the country to prevent weaponization or to slow uranium enrichment. Admittedly, Russia approved UN sanctions on Iran and stopped the sale of S-300 missiles. However, Russia was likely just using this as a negotiating tactic to stop NATO enlargement and get U.S. concessions on missile defense. The truth is that the Russian government views Iran as a partner—appreciating Iran's assistance with the Tajik civil war and its "restrained position" regarding Chechnya, not to mention fearing Iran's ability to cause trouble in its own backyard.¹¹ Russian leaders have stated publicly on numerous occasions that they do not see a threat from Iran. Shortly after agreeing to the UN sanctions and aborting the S-300 sale, Russia announced a 30-year road map for bilateral oil and gas cooperation with Iran that includes transportation and marketing of natural gas, sales of petroleum products, and construction of a \$100 million liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant. Meanwhile, Iran has continued to defy the international community with regards to inspections of its nuclear facilities and uranium enrichment activities. Russia has been adamant about blocking any further "paralyzing

sanctions” on Iran after having used its clout in the UN Security Council to water down the previous rounds.¹² With or without ‘Reset’, Russian action on Iran has had an anti-U.S. component and has increased the likelihood of nuclear proliferation to Iran.

Northern Distribution Network

The Northern Distribution Network (NDN)¹³ is oft-cited as a product of better relations with Russia caused by ‘Reset,’ but the cause and effect between ‘Reset’ and NDN is highly questionable. Actually, the ‘Reset’ may have made negotiating the NDN harder by complicating talks with some of the Central Asian countries. This occurred because NDN relies on separately negotiated bilateral agreements between the United States and the five Central Asian countries, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Russia that provide several overland and air transport routes from Europe to Afghanistan (including a route that goes completely around Russian territory.) Therefore, transport through Russian territory is a single piece of a larger tapestry, and as with the other participants, the deal with Russia was entirely a business arrangement that needed no ‘Reset’ rubric. In fact, the U.S. had been quietly getting support in Afghanistan from Russia and Russian companies long before the ‘Reset’ came along.

By sheer coincidence, the ‘Reset’ was occurring at the same time as the U.S. was negotiating the NDN, which as it turned out, complicated negotiations with Central Asian leaders. Some of the Central Asians perceived ‘Reset’, at its best, as naïve Americans ‘sucking up’ to a cynical Russia and, at its worst, some conspiracy between the United States and Russia to encroach upon the sovereignty of the former Soviet Republics. The United States was perceived as asking for Moscow’s permission for Central Asia to participate in the NDN, which Central Asian leaders found offensive.

The mere thought of eager American ‘resetters’ in Moscow discussing their sovereignty behind closed doors with Russia made them irate. The fact that, in spite of this backdrop, the United States was still able to successfully negotiate agreements is a testament to some exceptional diplomatic efforts. Probably more important though, the NDN just makes good business sense for all of the players including Russia. It is certainly in Russian and Central Asian national interests for NATO to fight with the Taliban in Afghanistan, while they collect monetary compensation and transit fees. There was no need for a ‘Reset’ in order to have NDN: NDN just made practical, economic sense for the participants.

While the Northern Distribution Network is truly a modern marvel of logistics that should be recorded in the history books, it has serious shortcomings. Most notably, the Russia government and several other participant nations did not agree to allow military items to be transported over the NDN. That means that weapons, ammunition or anything painted camouflage (and hence vital to a war effort) were precluded from passing on the NDN. Those items continue to be ferried to Afghanistan by the U.S. military either by very expensive air transport or through the risky Pakistan Ground Line of Communication (GLOC), while items like toilet paper, plywood and water bottles flow through Russia – significantly limiting usefulness of this transport leg. More disturbing for the NDN, however, was a threat made by Russia’s former NATO envoy and current Deputy Prime Minister, Dmitri Rogozin, to cut off the transport route through Russia if the U.S. goes forward with missile defense plans in Europe.¹⁴ A Russian intention to leverage the NDN as a means of negotiating concessions on missile defense are not entirely surprising, but it does not speak well of the promised better relations with

Russia under 'Reset.' U.S. policy makers should keep this in mind when considering Russia's recent offer to host a supply hub at an air base in Ulyanosk for transporting NATO troops and supplies to Afghanistan.¹⁵ Rather than seeing the offer of Russian support as some grand result of a successful 'Reset,' a more realistic appraisal would view it as a desire by Russia to have leverage over U.S. decision making in order to further key Russian strategic aims.

Other U.S.-Russia Cooperation

Of course, there have been numerous other areas of cooperation between the United States and Russia during the 'Reset.' The U.S. State Department's understandably upbeat synopsis called the "U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission 2012 Joint Report"¹⁶ names many, including agriculture, counternarcotics, health and military. What the report does not say is that many of these programs were already underway before 'Reset' and in many cases the cooperation was better under previous (Bush and Clinton) administrations. Military cooperation, for example, has gone in fits and starts over the last twenty years depending heavily on the geo-political, diplomatic temperature between the two countries, and some of the largest U.S.-Russian military cooperation exercises, called TORGAU, were conducted under the Bush administration. These exercises were subsequently discontinued and have not been restarted. Additionally, the United States and Russia have had some critically serious disagreements that have marred attempts to positively spin the relationship. For example, Russian resistance to international action on Syria likely contributed to the harsh and bloody crackdown on Syrian citizens, as Moscow continued to protect the Assad regime with its veto in the U.N. Security Council. Of course, we know why--Syria

hosts a Russian naval base and is one of Russia's most important weapons clients. In addition, Syria under the Assad regime has been fervently anti-American and pro-Russian.¹⁷ Russia clearly values its economic and military interests over atrocities in Syria and 'Reset' has not changed this a bit.

Reasons for 'Reset' Failure

As well-intended as the 'Reset' policy may have been, it has failed to produce results that could not have been accomplished with a less dramatic and public reversal from previous U.S. administration policies. One reason for failure was the false presumption that President Dmitriy Medvedev was a political player in his own right and that he would have a modernizing, moderating influence on Russian foreign policy. However, this turned out to be a naïve misunderstanding of Russian political realities in which Putin and Medvedev were colluding to continue Putin's policies.¹⁸ Medvedev's public announcement that he and Vladimir Putin had a prior agreement to return Putin to the Kremlin was quite a shock to many of Medvedev's supporters.¹⁹ It was also a surprise to those in the United States that had apparently been banking on a less provocative interlocutor than the KGB-man, Putin.

A second reason for 'Reset' failure has been Vladimir Putin's policies themselves, which are—at their most basic—an attempt to restore Russian national pride in the aftermath of the downfall of the Soviet Union, resulting in a foreign policy based, to a significant extent, on paranoia towards the West. Starting from Boris Yeltsin's resignation on 31 December 1999, Putin has set out to boost Russian national pride by cleaning up some of the disorderliness of the 1990s and restoring Russia's influence in the world. The fortuitous rise in oil prices, which accompanied Putin to the

Kremlin, filled the Russian coffers and gave him the political breathing space needed to pursue his longer term agenda. Putin's goal in foreign relations has been to flex Russia's diplomatic muscles and resist its falling influence in the world. His statement in April 2005 that "the collapse of the Soviet Union was the biggest geopolitical disaster of the century" is instructive—not because he actually wants to wave the flag of the Soviet Union at the Olympics, but because he longs to return Russia to the powerful place that the Soviet Union once held in the world.²⁰ Improving Russia's relative power compared to the United States has been an important yardstick for Putin—even more important than the specter of Iran building nuclear weapons in the South or a rising China in the East.²¹ This Russian recalcitrance often baffles Western observers because the Russian position often seems illogical. For example, why does Russia oppose sanctions on Iran, Syria, Libya or other dangerous regimes? Notwithstanding the desire to protect some questionable Russian arms sales and commercial interests in these places, Putin sees these as bargaining chips to play against the West or alternatively as useful distractions.²²

After 'Reset'

The 'Reset' was an attempt to transcend a transactional bilateral relationship by making a connection with the Russian leadership. Unfortunately, Russia under Putin is not ready for that kind of a breakthrough. That's not to say that a productive relationship between the two countries cannot or should not exist. On the contrary, there is no reason that U.S. engagement with Russia based on mutually beneficial interests (and a healthy dose of 'realpolitik') cannot continue or even expand along well prepared and well planned tracks. The United States has to remain realistic in outlook

and businesslike in approach, always ready to negotiate hard and hold out firmly for U.S. interests in the face of what will sometimes be an onslaught of Russian diplomatic protests. In moving forward, key to dealing with Putin's government is to always negotiate from a position of strength and be ready to walk away without agreement, if necessary.

Negotiating from strength can be reasonably achieved by the United States considering the relative geo-political weakness of Russia at the present. Although high oil prices are filling the Kremlin's coffers, Russia has some serious issues to deal with. Outside of Moscow, St. Petersburg and a few other large cities, Russia remains a fairly backward country with much of the citizenry disconnected from the world economy. Demographically, Russia is hurting; the population is declining, while the lifespan of Russian men is among the lowest in the world. The hydrocarbon-based economy has made some Russians rich, but it is also driving up the demand for government entitlement spending which may become difficult to sustain if oil prices ever dip.²³ Furthermore, many of the extreme inefficiencies of the Soviet command economy have yet to be corrected; towns established in out of the way locations and based on failed industries still exist, while much of the rural population ekes out a meager existence. The solution may be on the way with a more robust free market economy expanding out from Moscow, but the small business climate is not ideal. While many Moscovites are becoming adept at free-market capitalism and entrepreneurship, their efforts are often stifled by the looting of bureaucrats and everyday criminals. In response to uncertainty caused by overbearing government, criminality, as well as lack of political freedom,

some young Russians have left the country to pursue education or career opportunities in Europe or the United States.

Given the situation described above, Russia's strength in energy could be a long term Achilles heel as high oil prices may prevent some of the hard choices that could bring about real political and economic reform; it is also making some of Russia's neighbors very nervous. For the moment, Putin's political strength resides in his ability to bring in oil revenue in order to pay off key members of the government and security apparatus who in turn help him control the political process, eliminate political competition and manage the economy. But, the resultant oil-driven economy hinders the type of innovation and entrepreneurship necessary to compete on the world stage in other areas. Additionally, the Putin government has shown itself willing to use Russia's energy strength to bully surrounding countries; many Europeans and Asians have become concerned about the consistency of Russian gas and oil supplies. The best counter for this, of course, is energy independence through either development of domestic energy or finding alternative energy sources. Central Asians and Caucasus countries may be able to turn entirely to domestic sources, but Europe is somewhat more vulnerable and could use American assistance. If the United States were to fully develop domestic oil and natural gas resources, and then export these commodities to Europe, it would do much to eliminate the Russian near-monopoly over European energy markets. Reducing Russian ability to use its energy superposition to negatively affect Europe would improve the U.S. negotiating position vis-à-vis Russia considerably.

The United States can expect continued discord with Russia on the issues of NATO expansion and NATO basing in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Putin's government has deemed that these are threats to Russian security and will counter any moves in these areas with diplomatic ferocity. The hard line is related to a historically-based Russian paranoia about encirclement, but more importantly it is about maintaining Russian freedom of military action in surrounding territories without provoking a direct military fight with the United States. To understand the latter reason, it is instructive to examine the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict—Russian actions were calculated to bloody the eye of a recalcitrant Georgia, while discouraging the United States from intervening militarily on Georgia's behalf. Regardless of who provoked the conflict, the Russian military offensive into Georgian territory which followed the outbreak of hostilities was ordered by the Russian government based on the confidence that the United States would not interfere. The U.S. decision not to intervene directly was, of course, a cost benefit analysis that weighed going to war with Russia against helping a newly democratic, but non-NATO ally. If Georgia had been a member of NATO, or if a large contingent of American or NATO forces had been stationed in Georgia, the decision could well have come out very differently. Putin knows that a entrance into the NATO alliance or permanent basing of NATO troops and equipment would significantly increase the likelihood that the United States would feel obligated to counter any Russian intervention in its neighboring countries. By eliminating, in advance, the potential U.S. investments that would need to be defended or a defensive treaty that would have to be honored, Putin gives himself more freedom to act militarily without ever having to fight the United States directly. U.S. diplomatic efforts should, of course, counter this Russian effort. Decisions on U.S. defensive basing and NATO membership should not be based on Russian demands for some inherent right to

invade its neighbors when it deems necessary. A bilateral offer to host a U.S. or NATO base by an Eastern European nation should be evaluated on its merits without consideration for a Russian veto.

As with NATO expansion, U.S. missile defense systems should be a negotiating red line with Russia, i.e. where and when missile defenses are emplaced should not be decided by Russia. Putin's concern about U.S. missile defense, of course, is that it will reduce Russia's strategic nuclear deterrent vis-à-vis the United States.²⁴ However, this concern is based on the same misguided Cold War calculus that causes Putin to view almost every U.S. action as a geo-political chess move to be countered. Only a firm U.S. position on missile defenses will cause Russia to eventually deal with reality—first, that the United States does not intend to attack Russia, and second, that the United States will defend its friends and allies. A weak U.S. position on missile defenses would have a detrimental effect on relations with all of the European nations that are counting on U.S. defensive assistance, and would represent appeasement of Putin's stance on competing geo-politically with the United States in all other areas.

Regarding the wide range of other possible cooperation areas between the United States and Russia, the value of each has to be judged on its merits with a critical eye towards U.S. interests. Unfortunately, with the Putin government's tendency to view U.S.-Russia negotiations as a zero-sum game, all official government cooperation areas are subject to arbitrary intervention and restriction from the Russian side. Additionally, Putin's lack of respect for genuine democratic principles, rule of law, and individual liberty make development of a government relationship based on trust, as the United States has with many European nations, much more difficult. The result is likely

to be a continuation of a slow, methodical, transactional government-to-government relationship. Therefore, U.S. policy should be aimed at expanding access beyond government to the private sector, and expanding individual-to-individual cooperation activities. This is already an area of huge growth over the last twenty years, as Russian family, cultural, educational and business ties to the West have increased exponentially since the Soviet Union came apart. Some Russians, individually speaking, already feel like they are a part of the West and are beginning to question their own government's positions. A technology-fueled, awakening of the Russian people could be difficult for Putin to control in the long run, and could lead to the next real watershed in Russian relations with the West.²⁵

While a transactional U.S.-Russian relationship based on great power politics is the most likely scenario of U.S.-Russian cooperation for the time being, it could be just a matter of time before Russia makes a post-Putin transition to something very different. Perhaps, Russia will at some point become a true democratic nation, more friendly to the general ideas supported by Western democracies--the seedlings of that have certainly sprung. Russians are strong, resilient and talented people who are becoming more technically and politically savvy by the day. Based on the recent uptick in their desire for political activism, they may not wait for two more Putin presidential terms before demanding different leadership and a new U.S-Russian relationship could be the result. However, for the time being, the United States needs to stick to realistic cooperation objectives that are based on clearly defined national interests when dealing with Putin's Russia. Transcendent, overly-optimistic, U.S. policies like the 'Reset' are

harmful to the interests of the United States and its partners--helpful only in further entrenching Putin's political power and encouraging Moscow's intransigence.

Endnotes:

¹ See photo of Secretary Clinton presenting a symbolic 'Reset' button to Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at http://www.sfexaminer.com/files/blog_images/op_0.jpg (accessed 5 March 2012).

² Hillary Clinton used the term "Smart Power" extensively during her confirmation hearing as Secretary of State. "Transcript of Hillary Clinton's Confirmation Hearing," *Council on Foreign Relations Online* (13 January 2009), <http://www.cfr.org/us-election-2008/transcript-hillary-clintons-confirmation-hearing/p18225> (accessed 27 March 2012).

³ "US Russia Relations: Reset Fact Sheet," *The White House - Office of the Press Secretary Online*, (24 June 2010), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/us-russia-relations-reset-fact-sheet> (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁴ "Obama's Slip Won't Let Russia Veto Missile Defense," *Bloomberg Online*, (26 March 2012), <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-26/obama-s-slip-won-t-let-russia-veto-europe-missile-defense.html> (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁵ William Burns, "The United States and Russia in a New Era: One Year After Reset," *U.S. Department of State Online*, (14 April 2010), <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/2010/140179.htm> (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁶ Rose Gottemoeller, "Remarks at New START Treaty Discussion at the Brookings Institution," *U.S. Department of State Online*, (7 December 2010), <http://www.state.gov/t/avc/rls/152658.htm> (Accessed 27 March 2012).

⁷ James Woolsey, "Old Problems with New START," *The Wall Street Journal*, (15 November 2010), <http://hnn.us/node/133633> (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁸ "The {New START} Treaty limits each side to 1550 deployed strategic warheads, 700 deployed strategic delivery vehicles, and 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers and heavy bombers equipped with nuclear armaments." "US Russia Relations: Reset Fact Sheet," The White House.

⁹ Courtesy of Wikileaks, the Swiss newspaper *Le Temps* has posted three diplomatic cables from the New START negotiations online. They can be viewed at: <http://www.letemps.ch/cables?id=09GENEVA1019> <http://www.letemps.ch/cables?id=09GENEVA1085> and <http://www.letemps.ch/cables?id=09GENEVA1106> (accessed 28 March 2012).

¹⁰ Josh Rogin, "Medvedev announces failure of U.S.-Russia missile defense talks; threatens to withdraw from New START," *Foreign Policy Online*, (23 November 2011), http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/11/23/medvedev_announces_failure_of_us_russia_missile_defense_talks_threatens_to_withdraw (Accessed 28 March 2012).

¹¹ Mark N. Katz, "Russia, Iran sanctions, and the China factor," *The Daily Star*, (15 March 2012), <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=226281> (accessed 29 March 2012).

¹² Stephen Blank, "Assessing the Russia Reset Policy," *inFocus Quarterly Online*, (Winter 2010), <http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/2134/russian-reset-policy> (Accessed 29 March 2012).

¹³ The Northern Distribution Network supplies immense quantities of material to support coalition troops to landlocked Afghanistan from halfway around the world and avoids the often violently contested and unreliable routes through Pakistan, while at the same time avoiding the huge cost of air transport. The Northern Distribution Network is coordinated by U.S. Transportation Command and U.S. Central Command, and they are the best sources for NDN related information. The author participated in NDN planning and negotiations at U.S. Central Command. The following source provides some unofficial background information on NDN. Tom Sanderson and Andrew Kuchins, "Northern Distribution Network," Center for Strategic and International Studies Online, (31 March 2011), <http://csis.org/program/northern-distribution-network-ndn> (accessed 31 March 2012).

¹⁴ Amanda Hodge, "U.S. Faces Russian Threat to Cut Access to Afghanistan," *The Australian News Online*, (1 December 2011), <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/us-faces-russian-threat-to-cut-access-to-afghanistan/story-e6frg6so-1226210602851> (accessed 9 April 2012).

¹⁵ Vladimir Isachenkov, "Russia to Offer Air Base to US for Afghan Transit," *Denverpost.com*, (14 March 2012), http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci_20170488/fm-russia-offers-airbase-us-afghan-transit (accessed 9 April 2012).

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