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MASTERS OF DEFENCE STUDIES

**INTO THE STORM: THE NEW COLD WAR**

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## ABSTRACT

The years 1989 to 2001 showed great promise for world security and coexistence. Despite this decade of possibilities and the changing of global circumstances, the political rhetoric is returning in the ferocity of the period before the fall of the Berlin Wall. As NATO has expanded and focused on operations outside of continental Europe, there has been a growing resurgence of Russian nationalism.

The maturation and evolution of former Russian President Vladimir Putin has signaled significant changes in the political landscape. Through actions, such as, a return to greater state control of the economy and the restriction of media freedoms, he is methodically bringing Russia closer to the Soviet era of restrictive Kremlin control over all aspects of society. Above all, it is obvious that Putin and his government realize that the energy sector is key to Russia's influence in the international arena. The centralized control of oil and gas offers the Kremlin enormous influence in an energy-driven world.

The resurgence of Russian power is re-igniting the past East-West tensions of the Cold War (1945 - 1989). The contemporary Cold War is as precarious and unpredictable today as it was during the height of the Brezhnev – Reagan regimes. From 'sovereign democracy' to aggressive foreign policy, from the deployment of short-range missiles in Kaliningrad to the rebuilding of the Russian military, the emerging features of today's East-West interaction bears a striking resemblance to the past period of Cold War tension. The emerging autocratic government in Russia seems to fit well with the population's fabric and its distaste for democracy. Russia is slowly reinventing itself into a more placid form of the Soviet Union and is poised to wage a New Cold War on the West.

## INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things, because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those that may do well under the new way.<sup>1</sup>

-Machiavelli

NATO enlargement, democracy promotion, and greater freedoms in the former Eastern Bloc countries have done little to reduce the divide between Russia and the Western World. In fact, considering recent tensions between the United States (U.S.) and Russia, it is argued that the world has returned to a pre-1989 posture.

Several recent events including the Ukrainian natural gas crisis, Russian angst over a proposed U.S. missile system deployment to both Poland and the Czech Republic, and the conflict in South Ossetia and Georgia have heightened tensions between Russia and America. If this trend continues, times reminiscent of the Cold War of the twentieth century are being replayed as we press forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The years 1989 to 2001 showed great promise for world security and coexistence. Despite this decade of possibilities and the changing of global circumstances, the political rhetoric is returning in the ferocity of the period before the fall of the Berlin Wall. As NATO has expanded and focused on operations outside of continental Europe, there has been a growing resurgence of Russian nationalism.

One might argue that things have gradually shifted and attitudes manifested such that we have slipped into a new Cold War immediately following the 2000 Russian presidential elections. The maturation and evolution of Vladimir Putin during this time signaled significant changes in the political landscape. His performance while in office

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<sup>1</sup> Philip R. Theibert, *How to Give a Damn Good Speech* (Edison, Castle Books, 1997), 152.

has been the subject of many concerns. In particular, national political opposition, foreign governments and human rights organizations have strongly condemned his record with respect to human rights and freedoms, and for his perceived bullying of the former Soviet Republics. From relative obscurity to the authoritarian president of Russia, Putin has significantly changed the way in which Russia interacts with the rest of the globe.

The former KGB officer has seized power for a public desperate for strong leadership and he has reacted aggressively to NATO expansion and rebellion within several former loyal states. Through actions, such as, a return to greater state control of the economy and the restriction of media freedoms, he is methodically bringing Russia closer to the Soviet era of restrictive Kremlin control over all aspects of society. For certain, nothing has had a greater influence on Russia's recent resurgence than the economic boom created by inflated oil and natural gas prices.

One could postulate that had oil and gas prices been consistently high during the 1990s (as they are today) that the historic Soviet state could have easily survived, despite the Gorbachev/Yeltsin reforms. It must be recalled that Gorbachev took control of a resource rich country in 1985. Unfortunately, his ascension to power was at a time when there was a glut of oil and declining prices. At the same time, the Eastern European states were demanding financial support from the Kremlin. The dogma of central planning, however, encumbered the USSR so greatly that the grand attempts of reform met resistance and, eventually led to total failure of the state.

The centrally planned economy, introduced by Leonid Brezhnev in the 1960s, shielded the USSR from the remainder of the world, but provided the ideal environment for authoritarian rule. Today, reminiscent of Soviet times, the Kremlin's ferocity in

renationalizing many oil and gas companies has created a huge state-run energy conglomerate making the state both profitable and powerful.<sup>2</sup> This is seen as one of the most overt steps by the present Russian government to reassert control over the national economy.

It is obvious that Putin and his government realize that the energy sector is key to Russia's influence in the international arena. No where is this understanding more evident than in central Europe, where the European Union (EU) is dependant on Russia for about a quarter of its natural gas supplies.<sup>3</sup> The centralized control of oil and gas offers the Kremlin enormous influence in an energy-driven world. Consequently, the former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe have been strong-armed by their former Soviet masters.

These interactions and manipulations are not unique; they are nothing more than the most recent attempt by Russia to reassert itself as a world power. Although, there is no suggestion that there is a threat of imminent nuclear war, there is a clear renaissance of Cold War rhetoric and rekindling of pre-1989 East-West disagreements.

Several challenges currently divide East-West relations, such as, the ballistic missile-defence crisis concerning Poland and the Czech Republic (2007 – present), the Georgia-South Ossetia conflict (2008), the Ukrainian natural gas incident (2009), the Russian sponsored-Iranian nuclear program (2005 – present) and, the renewed probing of North American air defences by Russian long range bombers (2009). These actions all speak of past tensions that are strikingly familiar. Although the contrasting ideologies are

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<sup>2</sup> Fred Weir, 'Kremlin reasserts control of oil, gas, *Christian Science Monitor*, December 28, 2005, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1228/p01s01-woeu.html>; Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

<sup>3</sup> BBC, 'No Manx alarm over Russia gas row,' *BBC One-Minute World News*, 8 January 2009, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/isle\\_of\\_man/7818026.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/isle_of_man/7818026.stm); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

gone, the West (America, in particular) and Russia are seriously divided on several issues. Economic trouble, conflict over boundaries and oil, it may only require a few more nudges to move the world toward a New Cold War.

This paper will analyze the resurgence of Russian power in re-igniting the past East-West tensions of the Cold War (1945 - 1989). The contemporary Cold War is as precarious and unpredictable today as it was during the height of the Brezhnev – Reagan regimes. Since Putin’s rise to power, it has become clear that the collapse of the Soviet Union did not mean the collapse of the Russian desire for world influence. The emerging autocratic government in Russia seems to fit well with the population’s fabric and its distaste for democracy. Despite the free flow of commodities, people and information across world boundaries, an increasing sense of nationalism within Russia evokes memories of a clash of ideologies. From ‘sovereign democracy’ to aggressive foreign policy, from the deployment of short-range missiles in Kaliningrad to the rebuilding of the Russian military, the emerging features of today’s East-West interaction bears a striking resemblance to the past period of Cold War tension. Russia is slowly reinventing itself into a more placid form of the Soviet Union and is poised to wage a New Cold War on the West.



## Chapter One - THE COLD WAR

In view of the assertion that we may be rushing headlong into a new Cold War, it is reasonable to begin with a retrospective of the original Cold War. In simple terms, the Cold War was a 45 year struggle between ideologies, principles, and beliefs. In popular literature and spy novels of the twentieth century it was frequently portrayed as a struggle between good and evil, or as a battle between freedom and authoritarianism. Whatever descriptors that we use for the actual quarrel, it is clear that the powerful governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Western nations, particularly the United States of America, were worlds apart in ideology.

The story begins at the conclusion of the Second World War. Most people viewed the occasion as an opportunity to rejoice; however, the Allies had many issues to contend with. One such issue was the obligation to partition spheres of influence and to reconstruct post-war Europe. The root causes of the Cold War became evident at the Yalta Conference of 1945. The decisions taken during these talks were enormous and would effect how the world powers would interact for years to come.

Despite, the euphoria amongst the Allies following the defeat of Nazi Germany, and the apparent cohesion of the Allies, there had been a growing rift in East-West relations. The divide began to surface prior to the end of hostilities and would reach a crescendo in 1947. The relationship between East and West saw many ups and downs over the years.<sup>4</sup> The significant differences between the Western nations and the Soviet Union would persist until 1989.

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<sup>4</sup> The Cold War involved episodes of both elevated tension and relative tranquility. For instance, there were international crises such as the Berlin Blockade (1948–1949), the Korean War (1950–1953), the Vietnam War (1959–1975) the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979–1989). There were also periods of calm, known as detente. Despite the periods of tension, direct military attacks

According to Brian Thomas, the majority of orthodox thinkers contend that during this time a number of unjustifiable Soviet actions led to an untenable situation for the other Allies; "...the refusal to permit free elections in Eastern Europe, the failure to disarm, and the continual use of the Soviet veto in the United Nations."<sup>5</sup> In addition, after 1947 several other events involving Soviet influence prompted further divisions between the East and the West. These events included, the rejection of the Marshall Plan, the formation of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), the Berlin Blockade and the initiation of various civil wars and coups and, in particular the promotion of communism.

**The Soviet Union (Prelude to Cold War)** – To fully appreciate the divisions better, one has to look even further back in time. The backdrop of this epic struggle was put into motion in 1917, when Russian communists staged the Bolshevik revolution. On 25 October 1917, Bolsheviks (a faction of the Marxist Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP)) led their forces in an uprising in Petrograd (St. Petersburg), the capital of Russia, against what they considered the ineffective government of Alexander Kerensky, which had succeeded Tsar Nicholas II. For the most part, the revolt in Petrograd was bloodless, with the Bolsheviks taking over major government facilities, with little opposition, before finally launching an assault on the Winter Palace on the night of 25

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were prevented by the potential for nuclear attack and mutual assured destruction., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Brian Thomas, 'Cold War Origins, II,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Jan., 1968), p 184, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/259973>; Internet; accessed 24 February 2006.

October. The palace, which was guarded by military students and a women's battalion was taken easily.<sup>6</sup>

This revolt was a successful purge of monarchist rule, ultimately leading to the implementation of communism. In actuality, the last Russian Czar ruled until March 1917 when the monarchy was overthrown and a short-lived provisional government took power. The latter was overthrown during the Bolshevik Revolution, with the Soviet Union being officially established in December 1922, after a bloody three year civil war. Ultimately, the Bolsheviks became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In addition to forming the Soviet Union, the party formed the Communist International (Comintern), with like minded nations and factions. This communist organization was established to expand communism's ideals to the detriment of capitalism. To the Western powers this threatened their very way of life, as a powerful Soviet empire was pushing at the doorstep of Europe. As the century progressed, the differences between communism and capitalism became glaringly apparent. Countries that became communist became basically classless societies, or at the very least, became considerably more egalitarian. Generally speaking, industry was nationalized and agriculture organized into collectives belonging to the state.<sup>7</sup> Society was to work for the greater good, while profit making was strictly prohibited. During the Second World War, however, differences were set aside. The West and Russia with their conflicting ideals

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<sup>6</sup> Indeed. More people died making Sergey Eisenstein's film, '*October*', about the revolution than in the actual revolution. It was in many respects less a seizure of power and more like walking into a power vacuum.

<sup>7</sup> This is a generalization that of the conditions that existed within the Soviet Union. Despite this, there were in fact differences that existed between member states. For example, Poland's agriculture was never collectivized after World War II and Hungary had a functioning private sector after 1968.

would have to come together to form an uneasy alliance in order to confront Nazi Germany.

The alliance, though, was born more out of necessity and self-preservation than any other reason. Thus, the cooperation that existed on the surface showed nothing of the tension that was simmering and would intensify after the defeat of Nazi Germany. The underlying factors for this uneasiness were entrenched in the history and events leading up to the opening of hostilities in 1939. If one were to pinpoint the event that led to the underlying apprehension and mistrust, the signing of the German Russian (Molotov-Ribbentrop) Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939 underscored the Allied discord. As indicated above, the pact was signed by the Soviet Union and Germany just prior to the outbreak of World War II. Included in the accord was a non-aggression agreement between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, which included a secret course of action on how Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania would be separated between them. As history demonstrates, the two countries began by invading Poland and divided the territory among them in the autumn of 1939.

During the winter of 1939, the Soviet Union waged war against Finland and in the summer, under threat of force, won the territories of Romania and the three Baltic States. The deal with the Nazis further allowed Russia to occupy Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia and Romania. Ironically, the boundaries were approximate to those of the late Imperial Russia, under czarist rule.

For almost two years, the Soviet borders were quiet while Germany went on to invade and conquer Denmark, Norway, and the majority of continental Europe. Success

would embolden Hitler and he reneged on the pact with the Soviet Union, invading the nation in the spring of 1941.

Hitler assumed that the Soviets would be quickly defeated following an overwhelming German offensive. Stalin, wary of war with Germany; however, at the same time, he was eager for Germany to be at war against the capitalist countries. He stubbornly refused to believe that Germany would initiate a two-front war.

In reality, Germany had been amassing large numbers of troops in eastern Poland for some time and conducting flights over the Soviet border. Stalin ignored the warnings and the German invasion in June 1941 caught the Soviets by surprise. Operation BARBAROSSA definitely signaled the end of the German-Soviet non-aggression pact. Nazi Germany had opened a two-front war, which would eventually see the coming together of the 'Big Three'; namely Britain, The United States and the Soviet Union. Together, they would plan and conduct operations that would lead to the eventual defeat and unconditional surrender of the Third Reich.

Following the war, the Government of Russia wished to have a buffer zone between it and the rest of Europe, most notably Germany. Never again did she want a dangerous adversary to come so close to capturing her capital and the motherland. The territory the Soviets desired included the states between her and Germany. These states, some that had been occupied under both the Russian Imperial Empire and taken by force in 1939 – 1940, would be governed in the same manner as the Russian homeland. Conversely, the West wished to reward these states for their resistance against fascism during the war and was eager for them to hold free elections in an effort to have them become democratic. However, the Yalta conference of 1945 sealed the fate of the states

lying between Germany and Russia. At this historic meeting the countries of France, Britain, the United States and Russia met in order to decide how Germany and the eastern European countries would be divided.<sup>8</sup>

Invariably, the international decisions that were made meant that the fate of small countries varied considerably. For example, Denmark and Norway reverted to democracy and; conversely, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were formally annexed by the Soviet Union. Finland, which geographically was in a less advantageous position than Sweden, had to endure territorial losses and it had to bend its foreign policy in favor of the Soviet Union after the war. Luckily Finland remained independent, able to maintain a democratic political system after the war. Needless to say, fissures in the alliance began to take shape rapidly.

Tellingly, the majority of countries refused to recognize the incorporation of the Baltic States *de jure*<sup>9</sup> and only recognized the Soviet governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania *de facto* or not at all.<sup>10</sup> For all the years of the Cold War, many countries, such as, the U.S. and the UK recognized these countries' diplomats and consuls who still functioned in the name of their former governments. In fact, the diplomatic

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<sup>8</sup> Prior to the Yalta conference, an agreement was reached between Winston Churchill and Joseph Satalin about how to divide Eastern Europe following WWII. Known as the *Percentages Agreement*, it was a decision taken 9 October, 1944 to divide Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. The two leaders met at the Moscow Conference and Churchill suggested that the Soviet Union should have 90 percent influence in Romania and 75 percent in Bulgaria; Great Britain should have 90 percent in Greece; in Hungary and Yugoslavia, Churchill suggested that they should have 50 percent each. Churchill wrote it on a piece of paper which he pushed across to Stalin, who ticked it off and passed it back., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>9</sup> *De jure* is an expression that means "concerning law", as contrasted with *de facto*, which means "concerning fact"., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Anthony Aust, *Handbook of International Law*, Cambridge University Press: 2005, p. 26.

representatives persisted in this atypical manner until the restoration of Baltic independence after 1991, following the collapse of the USSR.

A particularly trying situation was the issue of Poland. Effectively, Poland's freedom and sovereignty was the very reason why Britain declared war on Germany in 1939. To quiet the fears of the British, at the Yalta conference in 1945, Stalin promised that if Poland were to come under its influence that free and open elections would be held. This proved to be a hollow promise. This along with other broken assurances would add to the already growing divide in the trust and cooperation between the West and East as the post-war years evolved. There were many other reasons for the Cold War, including the dispute over Berlin, troops in Germany and the fate of Germany itself. Moreover, the ideological threat of communism was taken very seriously by the Western powers. The fear of spreading communism ultimately led to the implementation of the Marshall Plan, to ensure the economic recovery of war torn Europe.<sup>11</sup>

A monumental shift in the global balance of power was transpiring and Old Europe was gone. The United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics emerged as growing superpowers as Germany, UK and France declined in influence. As the two world superpowers, they followed paths truly divergent in nature and mammoth divisions soon transpired. No where was this more apparent than in the creation of military alliances following the Second World War. In particular, the creation of NATO in 1949 followed closely by the official announcement of the Warsaw Pact in 1955 is a prime example of the diverging attitudes.

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<sup>11</sup> The Marshall Plan was a massive economic recovery program (\$13.3B). Proponents of the program argued that a delay in implementation would place the war-impooverished countries of Europe in danger of Soviet dominance. Ultimately, the events February, 1948, involving a Soviet-backed coup in Czechoslovakia swayed even the strongest opponents of the plan., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

**The Washington Treaty (The Creation of NATO)** – Although the NATO alliance was created in response to mounting factors, one noteworthy event signaled the tension and growing division - the Czechoslovakia coup of 1948. The Western powers took this situation as a warning sign that communism was on the rise in Europe. It was considered a threat to the democratic nations and added a new dimension to the shifting global politics of the period. Explicitly, in this instance, democratic politicians in Czechoslovakia, representing the National Socialist, People's, and Slovak Democratic parties, tendered their resignations because of the Communist Party's abuse of the police force.<sup>12</sup> They were not aware that this gesture had sealed their political death warrants.

Thinking that their resignations would force the communists to change their approach to the police issue and/or trigger President Edvard Beneš to call general elections, they were sadly mistaken. In an unprecedented move, the communists, who had been elected in free and fair elections in 1946, were able to garner the support of several hundred thousand citizens. Marches were staged in and around Prague and the democratically leaning President was convinced that the proper action would be to accede to the Communist Party's positioning. In a bloodless coup, a communist cabinet was installed and Czechoslovakia was lost to the Soviet Union. It was masterfully orchestrated and displayed just how far that the USSR and the Communist Party would go to ensure it had influence in Central Europe.

As with the Czech coup, other examples of examples of the USSR's expansionist policies began to be looked upon with concern. While Western governments began to draw down their militaries following World War II, the Soviets maintained their wartime

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<sup>12</sup> Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle For The Soul Of The Nation, Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, Lanham, Maryland, 2005, p 276.



levels. Additionally, the illegal blockade of Berlin sent a strong signal that the threat to the sovereignty of democratic countries was in peril. In response, the creation of the Brussels treaty in 1948 was the first step towards post-war Western European collective defence. This treaty brought together Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, merging in a collective defence organization. The treaty bound them together to resist security threats and non-democratic ideologies.

Following closely on the heels of this treaty, negotiations began with Canada and the United States to create a North Atlantic Alliance. Talks culminated in April 1949 when twelve countries came together to sign the Washington Treaty and to form what would eventually be known as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or NATO. Based on the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law NATO doctrine promoted a peaceful order in Europe.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the participants were bound by ideals of greater political and economic cooperation, but indisputably, Article 5 of the Treaty, which contained a mandate for collective defence, was the centre-piece of the partnership. It reads:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self defense recognised by article 51 of the charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> NATO, *NATO Handbook*, Public Diplomacy Division, 1110 Brussels, Belgium, p 18.

<sup>14</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *The North Atlantic Treaty*, Washington D.C., 4 Apr 1949, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2009, Article 5.

As succinctly put by Lord Ismay, the treaty was enacted to; "...keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Russians out..."<sup>15</sup> In the beginning, this was how most Europeans viewed the collective defence organization.

From 1949 to 1989, NATO expanded three times, growing the numbers to 16 from its original 12 members. The first round of growth (1952) involved the admittance of Greece and Turkey. The second undertaking saw the acceptance of the Federal Republic of Germany (1955).<sup>16</sup> The third enterprise was in 1982 when Spain was admitted. The addition of Germany was further secured in 1990 with the unification of West and East Germany. At this time US President George Bush, Sr. and the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl guaranteed to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that no NATO troops, or nuclear weapons would be stationed in the former GDR and NATO would not pursue further eastern expansion.<sup>17</sup>

The final U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, maintains that President George H.W. Bush personally made a promise to Mikhail Gorbachev that if he and the USSR placed no obstacles to a unified Germany's continuation as a NATO member, the western alliance would not attempt further expansion into what had been Warsaw Pact Europe.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991,

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<sup>15</sup> William E. Odom, "Russia's Several Seats at the Table," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* Volume 74, Number 4 (Oct. 1998), 810-811.

<sup>16</sup> The *Warsaw Pact* was the Soviet-sponsored military-treaty organization and the European Communist Bloc's counterpart to NATO. The treaty was signed in Warsaw, Poland on 14 May, 1955 and was an initiative of the Soviet Union in direct response to West Germany joining NATO. *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Jonathan Eyal, "NATO's Enlargement: Anatomy of a Decision," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* Volume 73, Number 4 (Oct. 1997), 698-699).

<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, it seems that the agreement was never written down. Equally, it may have been a misunderstanding. Bush may have been guaranteeing Gorbachev that NATO forces would never move into the former German Democratic Republic — which they did not, and have not done. William Pfaff,

despite having no credible enemy, NATO would utilize the opportunity to expand its influence in Europe. This time, it would look east to the former republics of the Soviet Union.

It must be noted that the Cold War is dotted with examples of the struggle between the ideologies of East-West, democracy versus communism. An attempt to discuss each episode would be enough to fill several volumes of encyclopedic research. Thus, a quick discussion of a few incidents will be offered and later compared to recent years.

As discussed previously, the first international situation to truly highlight the divide was the Czechoslovakia coup in 1948. This was followed closely by the Berlin blockade, the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War and the arms race. In all of these circumstances, the West was concerned that the unchecked spread of communism could lead to the downfall of democratic and free market societies. It will be shown that similar themes are recurring today and that the relationship between Russia and the West is at a point as tenuous as any time during the Cold War era.

## Chapter Two - POST COLD WAR

**Gorbachev's Legacy** - It is obvious that the end of the Soviet- U.S. Cold War did not occur over night. There were several factors that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The 1980s saw the Soviet Union struggle through the quagmire of a protracted war in Afghanistan and during the same period, their economy faced pressure from the continuously increasing costs of an endless arms race with the Americans.

Robert Daniels argues that it was the initiatives taken by Mikhail Gorbachev, as president of the Soviet Union at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, which resulted in the end of the Cold War.<sup>19</sup> However, history shows that as a result of sweeping reforms that were implemented by Gorbachev, the Soviet state could no longer survive in the form that it had for the preceding seventy years. Barbara Falk comments that this is not the case. In fact, she feels that two facts lead to the overwhelming changes and an end to authoritarian communism. She argues that both the non-violent revolutions undertaken within the Soviet republics and the inability or unwillingness of the Soviet elites to maintain rule by force contributed to a withdrawal from Marxism-Leninism ideology.<sup>20</sup> Whatever the actual cause, when he assumed office in 1985, Gorbachev had many choices that he could have made in order to ensure that the Soviet state continued.

Indeed, the choices that had he taken may have led to a different outcome and may have brought about changes to the Soviet system, but allowed the Soviet state to survive. As described by Mark Kramer, although the Soviet economy was languishing in

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<sup>19</sup> A bold statement, considering it places the burden for the collapse of a nation on the shoulders of one man. Robert V. Daniels, *A Documentary History of Communism and the World: From Revolution to Collapse* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994), 318.

<sup>20</sup> Barbara Falk, 'Post-Communism's First Decade: A Primer for Non-Specialists,' *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol.36, No. 2 (Jun., 2003), p. 432 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3233254>; Internet; accessed 25 March 2009.

1985 when Gorbachev came to power, it was not in a crisis situation.<sup>21</sup> Conversely, Gorbachev did realize that his nation was losing the ability to keep up in the arms race and probably feared in this the possibility of a nuclear war. Facing these challenges, he chose to take the initiative and introduced several changes that he expected would aid his country in keeping pace with the West. He hoped his changes including *glasnost* and *perestroika* would allow the Soviet Union to achieve required advances in technology and provide a needed stimulus for the economy.<sup>22</sup> Almost certainly, the last thing that Gorbachev intended to do was to orchestrate the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Therefore, it is ironic that his decision that his country required a complete restructure of the Soviet system ultimately proved dire for the state's survival. As described by Stephen Cohen:

Gorbachev's own policies, which soon led to macroeconomic imbalances, soaring inflation, rampant shortages, the stripping of assets of large firms, and a rapid buildup of foreign debt, destabilized the economy and produced a genuine economic crisis by 1990 and 1991, but these conditions were not present when Gorbachev came to power in 1985.<sup>23</sup>

The mounting problems led to much dissent within both Russia and within the majority of the Soviet republics. Because of the growing dissension, production, and in due course, the economy, faltered. Consequently, the government faced with mounting debt

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<sup>21</sup> Mark Kramer, 'The Reform of the Soviet System and the Demise of the Soviet State,' *Slavic Review*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (Autumn, 2004), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1520339>; Internet; accessed, 22 February 2009.

<sup>22</sup> Glasnost was policy of maximum publicity, openness and transparency in the activities of all government institutions in the Soviet Union. It also referred to the specific period in the history of the USSR during the 1980s when there was less censorship and greater freedom of information. Perestroika is the Russian term for the political and economic reforms introduced in 1987 by Gorbachev. A literal translation is 'restructuring'., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Stephen F. Cohen, 'Was the Soviet System Reformable?,' *SlavicReview*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (Autumn, 2004).

was unable and unwilling to fend off challenges of its control of the Eastern European republics. Stephen Kotkin argues that Gorbachev made a misstep when he failed to recognize that it was the communist party that held the USSR together.<sup>24</sup> In essence, Gorbachev failed to appreciate that breaking the party's hold on power through liberal reforms would cause the union to break apart.

Moreover, because a culmination of miscues, including economic difficulties, reduced international power, and attempts to introduce liberalized or Westernized ideals, Gorbachev and his elites soon lost favour within the nation. Starting in 1989 and continuing into 1990, a myriad of changes befell the Soviet Union: the Berlin Wall was dismantled, the Austrian-Hungarian border was opened in May 1989, and through free elections communist regimes were ousted in numerous states, including East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. In the latter months of 1991 the Soviet Union gradually imploded and dissolved into several republics.<sup>25</sup> In what seemed like lightning speed, the seemingly indomitable Iron Curtain fell and the Cold War seemed to be over.

**NATO Enlargement and the EU Prize** – Consequent to these changes, the thoughts of membership in NATO for some of the former Warsaw Pact nations and Soviet republics began to gain momentum both internally and from the West. Although alluring on its own, membership in NATO held the promise as a gateway to the larger

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<sup>24</sup> Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted, the Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*, (Oxford: ...)

<sup>25</sup> Fifteen independent nations split off from the USSR in December 1991. Known as the former Soviet republics. These states exclude the Baltic States who signaled their intentions to leave the union in 1989. The former Soviet states were: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

European economic and political collective.<sup>26</sup> The value of NATO, however, was also in question at this point in time.

The military alliance was formed to balance the countervailing power and the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union the need for balance seemed to disappear. Yet, the removal of the perceived threat did not lead to the alliance's death. In regard to this, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher commented, "You don't cancel your home insurance policy just because there have been fewer burglaries on your street in the last 12 months!"<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the strategic concept, adopted in 1991 by the alliance noted that the requirement to "preserve the strategic balance in Europe" would continue to be one of NATO's fundamental tasks.<sup>28</sup> In large part, the alliance developed into an organization of like-minded states, committed to the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. Because of this revised definition, NATO was able to survive and transform itself into a political-military entity that was very different in many ways from the initially envisioned organization that stood ready to defend against the communist machine.

Because the conditions for membership into the alliance were far less stringent than those required by the European Union (EU), NATO became the obvious first step to the ultimate prize. Likewise, despite trepidation over the reaction from the Russian nation, many former Warsaw Pact states saw NATO membership as a guarantee to

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<sup>26</sup> Zoltan B. Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion: Four Case Studies* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 30.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Robert B. McCalla, "NATO's Persistence After the Cold War," *International Organization*, vol. 50, no. 3 (Summer 1996), pp. 445-475, here p. 455.

<sup>28</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept," Agreed by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7-8 November 1991, para. 21.

security, stability, economic rejuvenation and political progress. The existing membership of NATO perceived expansion (or enlargement as it has become known) as mutually beneficial.

Enlargement would expand the alliance to include former adversaries, unify much of Europe and allow the organization to redefine itself following the collapse of communism. As well, security concerns loomed large especially for Poland and the Baltic States. From 1989 to 2008, NATO grew from 16 to 26 members. NATO expanded in 1999 to include the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, and in 2004 to include Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Finally, NATO will grow to 28 member states in 2009 with the accession of Albania and Croatia.

From the American point-of-view, NATO enlargement, across the former communist states, played a critical role in underpinning democratic values and institutions in Eastern Europe. In a 1995 study on enlargement, the NATO Alliance reasoned that an increase in European members would enhance the stability and security of Europe.<sup>29</sup> Further, it would solidify the requirement for civilian and democratic control over the military forces in the greater European area.

Accordingly, the mandatory requirements for membership were written to include: a functioning democratic political system, a market economy, fairness to minorities, resolution of conflicts through peaceful negotiation and military contribution to NATO operations.<sup>30</sup> Countries wishing to join the NATO Alliance were thus invited

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<sup>29</sup> NATO Enlargement, <http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.html>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2009.

<sup>30</sup> NATO Enlargement, <http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.html>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2009.



to participate in the Membership Action Plan in order to demonstrate their commitment to future membership.

The prerequisites necessary for EU membership look strikingly similar, requiring aspiring members to: conduct their political business in a stable democracy, have an open market society, respect the rule of law, and respect human rights and account for the protection of minorities.<sup>31</sup> Known as the ‘Copenhagen Criteria’ the EU requirements, although more restrictive in language than those of NATO, have no model upon which to base compliance.<sup>32</sup> For example, the EU does not have a standard from which to measure democracy nor capitalism. Moreover, it is not readily apparent, even amongst the original members of the EU, what kind of market or political system would meet the Copenhagen Criteria.<sup>33</sup> Former US Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, noted the value of NATO enlargement when she stated:

The purpose of NATO enlargement is to do for Europe’s East what NATO did 50 years ago for Europe’s West; to integrate new democracies, defeat old hatreds, provide confidence in economic recovery and to deter conflict.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> William Wallace, ‘From the Atlantic to the Bug, from the Arctic to the Tigris? The Transformation of the EU and NATO,’ *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 76, No. 3, Europe: Where does It Begin and End? (Jul, 2000), p. 486 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2625950>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2009.

<sup>32</sup> The *Copenhagen criteria* are rules that define whether a country is can join the European Union. The criteria require that a country have the institutions to uphold democratic governance and human rights, have a functioning market economy, and accept the obligations and intent of the EU. These membership criteria were adopted at the June 1993 European Council in Copenhagen, Denmark, *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>33</sup> The EU has approval procedures that ensure new members are admitted when they have met all requirements, and with the consent of the EU institutions and the governments of the EU member states and of the applicant country. These requirements have been spelled out with ever increasing clarity during the EU’s evolution, *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>34</sup> US Senate Foreign Relations Committee – Nomination of Secretary of State-Designate Madeline Albright, Washington, D.C., 8 Jan 1997, <http://www.fas.org/man/congress/1997//s970108t.htm>; Internet; accessed 29 Jan 2009.

In summary, membership in NATO for the applicants would provide a security guarantee allowing them the ability to proceed with political and economic reforms under the guardianship of the Alliance. In addition, NATO acceptance would be a milestone for EU membership. As Russia's regional objectives remained uncertain, there is little doubt that the security aspect was a principal consideration of the emerging Eastern European democracies.

Germany, too, saw value in increasing the membership of the Alliance.

Considering recent history, their position on the continent, bordering unstable non-NATO states was an especially unattractive arrangement. Therefore, instability and political uncertainty on the Eastern borders was undesirable for the Germans.<sup>35</sup> The German government was of the opinion that stability could be fostered through NATO expansion, which would bind the region politically, economically and provide a security umbrella. Germany was not unique in this logic. For example, the Polish perception of the new European security environment fell along the same line of thinking. As expressed by the former President of the Polish Republic, Aleksander Kwasniewski, in a 1996 address to NATO conference:

...we believe the enlargement of NATO is part of a complex effort to construct a new security architecture in Europe, we believe that enlargement should proceed in parallel with the development of other forms of European cooperation. The effort to expand the European Union eastward is one such form of cooperation.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, "The New NATO and Central and Eastern Europe: Managing European Security in the Twenty-first Century," In *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, edited by Charles Kripnick, 17-45 (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 21-22.

<sup>36</sup> An address by President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski at the XIIIth NATO Workshop held in Warsaw in June 1996.

Moreover, the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in 1999 was seen as both, a way to repair the historic divisions within Europe and as a means to strengthen European security. The Polish President went on further to describe the feeling of many former Soviet states and republics, stating “It is obvious that every credible scheme for European security architecture must include NATO at its core—the Alliance is the key factor of stability in Europe.”<sup>37</sup> In only ten short years, this thinking became possible as states became fully independent and undertook remarkable efforts to define their own destiny.

For the Alliance, the expansion debate became the central issue of the post-Cold War era. The path chosen would shape the agenda for NATO as it transitioned into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ironically, for NATO the Alliance’s relationship with Russia, as in the past, would converge on all the points-of-view, whether they be for or against expansion. As such, theorists argued that any expansion eastward by NATO would isolate Russia and aggravate their fundamental cynicism of the West and in turn this would lessen any new found cooperation.<sup>38</sup> Despite the apparent coming together of Europe, the questions surrounding NATO enlargement were exceedingly emotive and divisive, particularly with respect to Russia.

#### **Russia and the Cold War Hangover – The Russian reaction to NATO**

expansion loomed large in all debates concerning the subject. Cooperation with Russia seemed to be the only practical road toward meaningful European unity. However, very significant in the story of NATO expansion is the fact that between the years 1989 to

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<sup>37</sup> An address by President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski at the XIIIth NATO Workshop held in Warsaw in June 1996.

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Kydd, Trust Building, Trust Breaking: The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement, *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 4, (Autumn, 2001),

2000 the world witnessed arguably one of the greatest increases of sovereign, liberal-leaning societies that the world has ever seen. In light of this, the West was wary of short-term gains vice longer term damages. Therefore, caution had to be taken, for the West did not want Russia to be embarrassed or to feel like it was being treated like a defeated opponent. The underlying theme was that too many rapid changes could fuel continuing resentment and would be viewed as taking advantage of Russian weakness. George Kennan, American diplomat and the architect of containment, viewed Western expansionism in this manner:

...may be expected to inflame the nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian opinion;...to restore the atmosphere of the cold war to East-West relations, and to impel Russian foreign policy in directions decidedly not to our liking.<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, the stance taken was one in which Russia would be treated with care. The approach put forward was one that resembled the efforts toward Germany after World War II. Thus, NATO attempted to be receptive to Russian views and implemented the Alliance reforms in an open manner. Logic held that showing flexibility and openness in the process of expansion would eventually meld Russian interests with those of the West. These efforts, it was thought, would guide the Russian leaders to a common view of the world vice confrontation.

History, however, was stacked against this approach. From 1917 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the countries behind the 'Iron Curtain' were a collection of closely controlled societies. Particularly since the 1920s, all Soviet republics and territories had been run from the Kremlin. Power was at the centre and

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<sup>39</sup> George F. Kennan, 'A Fateful Error,' *New York Times*, 5 Feb 1997, p. A-23, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=1&did=115944058&SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=12&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=HNP&TS=1206501569&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 29 Jan 2009.

notwithstanding several changes in leadership and policies throughout the years everything was done for Russia as a collective, the republics wishes meaning little. For example, when Nikita Khrushchev came to power in 1953 following the death of Joseph Stalin, several repressive policies were eased and political prisoners were released; however, central control continued. Later, under the stewardship of Leonid Brezhnev, economic stagnation and a costly war in Afghanistan devastated the economy of the entire USSR. It was not until the coming of power of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 that policies began to relax for non-Russian republics within the USSR. In spite of this loosening of power, to have the Russian government link the future success of its territories to Western Europe was almost unthinkable. For this reason, and the trepidation of promoting Western ideals, the Russian proponents of democracy knew that they would have to demonstrate prompt success in order to convince Soviet citizens of the benefits of Western, democratic ideas.

As history shows, full blown liberal democratic changes did not take hold in Post-Soviet Russia. While world news headlines in the 1990s told of the rush toward freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and free market society in most Eastern European countries, these values could not find a lasting legacy in Russia. Notwithstanding significant reforms and attempts at market restructure, including massive loans from both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to stimulate the economy, the roots of serfdom and the history of subservience to the state could not give way to a truly liberal democratic, market economy state.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> In addition to the introduction of glasnost and perestroika, by Gorbachev, the nations of the world recognized an opportunity to reach out to Russia. To stimulate the economy almost \$22.6 B in international assistance was given to prop-up the ruble. In spite of this olive branch, the Duma communist majority convinced the Russian government to recant budget cuts, boost domestic spending and withdraw

In a 2008 study of world-wide democracy, *Freedom House* declared that “Russia is not an electoral democracy”.<sup>41</sup> In fact, the highest rating that has ever been given to Russia is a ‘partially-free’ rating (1991 – 1992); however, the country has never been seen as anything close to a genuine democratic state. The metrics presented by *Freedom House* reveal that the levels of freedom in Russia have been on the steady decline since 2000. The organization goes on further to state that several factors point to the situation that exists as “...the dissolution of that country’s democratic potential...”<sup>42</sup> They are not unique in this opinion, as even everyday citizens from the Western nations can follow the declines in political freedoms and the retrenchment of power in the Kremlin. The decline appears to be related to the change in leadership following the demise of Boris Yeltsin; however, internally other themes or factors indicate a desire or tendency to return to authoritarian rule.

Indeed, the Russian government is quick to pass the blame to West for this, especially those associated with the miscues of liberal reforms in the 1990s. The crash of the Soviet economy in 1998 is a case in point. There is little doubt that this unenviable situation played a large part in Russian condemnation of the West. Vladislav Surkov summed-up the state of affairs in 1990s Russia as follows:

Some say that in the 1990s Russia was regarded as a democracy in the West. Their memory is defective. Of course, the West

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from paying foreign debt. As a result, by the end of 1998, the ruble was devalued by over 30% and a moratorium on repayment of foreign debt was put in place., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>41</sup> Freedom House, ‘Freedom in the World – Russia (2008),’ [http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc\\_country\\_detail.cfm?year=2008&c;](http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc_country_detail.cfm?year=2008&c;); Internet; accessed 12 February 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Freedom House, ‘Freedom in the World – Russia (2008),’ [http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc\\_country\\_detail.cfm?year=2008&c;](http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc_country_detail.cfm?year=2008&c;); Internet; accessed 12 February 2009.

encouraged the weakness and muddle-headedness that we showed at that time. But weakness and muddle-headedness do not amount to democracy.<sup>43</sup>

Arguably, there is no single factor that contributes to the failure of democracy to take root in Russia. Even with attempts from the West to promote the values of liberal democracy and provide various economic stimuli, Russia has continued to be haunted by a plurality that believed that the U.S. and Western nations wished it to fail as a state.<sup>44</sup> This prevailing attitude has meant retrenchment and a consolidation of power.

Several factors point towards the tendency of an autocratic Russian state: constitutional change has meant that power has been once again centralized in the Kremlin; rival political parties have been rendered impotent; business leaders have been forced (through heavy taxation and strong arm tactics) to relinquish their assets to the government and broadcast media outlets have been placed under government control.<sup>45</sup> The regime is showing through its words and actions, that there is a strong predisposition within the country to preserve centralized power and a resolve for a sovereign Russia.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Vladislav Surkov, 'Russian Political Culture The View from Utopia,' *Russian Politics and Law*, vol. 46, no. 5, September-October 2008, p. 19.

<sup>44</sup> From 1992 to 1997 nearly \$60 million was distributed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), to help countries of the former Soviet Union achieve political and economic reform. In particular, the funding was to support the introduction of open markets, and transparent governmental regulation and administration. Kelly Patricia O'Meara, 'Looting Russia's free market; as communism collapsed in the former Soviet Union, U.S. economic 'reformers,' led by a Harvard University clique, took free-market capitalism to a new low,' *BNET Business Network*, 2 September 2002, [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1571/is\\_32\\_18/ai\\_91210681](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1571/is_32_18/ai_91210681); Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>45</sup> Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World – Russia (2008),' [http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc\\_country\\_detail.cfm?year=2008&c](http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/fiw/inc_country_detail.cfm?year=2008&c); Internet; accessed 12 February 2009.

<sup>46</sup> As examples: In 2002 the last independent Russian TV station is forced by authorities to stop broadcasting. In 2003 Yukos oil owner (Russia's richest man) is arrested and held in custody over an investigation into tax evasion and fraud. In 2004, the assets of Yuganskneftegaz, a key production unit of Yukos, is seized for tax debts. In 2005, the state controls over 50% of Gazprom. BBC News, *Timeline Russia*, Tuesday 6 January 2009 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country\\_profiles/1113655.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1113655.stm); Internet; accessed 30 January 2009.

Through the exploitation of xenophobia and the saturation of information (now controlled through government media outlets) linking Western contempt toward the former Soviet states, the government has steadily acquired the acquiescence of its citizens. As previously stated, these sentiments were profoundly illustrated in the aftermath of the Russian economic crash of 1998.

**The Russian Economic Crash of 1998** - The economic meltdown of 17 August 1998 has had a lasting effect on the decisions made by the Kremlin in respect to central control. The financial crash forced the government devalue its currency, default on domestic debt and place a ninety-day freeze on foreign payments.

When compared to life in the West during the Great Depression of the 1930s, Russian existence was much worse. In contrast, unemployment during the Depression was 1.2% of the total population in the U.S., while in Russia in 1998, the figure reached 7.7%. Even more sobering is the fact that over a four year period of the Depression, stock prices fell 90%, while the Russian stock market lost 90% of its value in less than one year. This dramatic freefall resulted in millions of ordinary citizens losing their life savings.<sup>47</sup>

Measured in dollars, Russia's economy had faltered by more than two-thirds, foreign investment fell by over 60%, the ruble had lost 75% of its value and Russian banking system had collapsed in just over six months.<sup>48</sup> Inflation reached 84% and many

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<sup>47</sup> United States, U.S. House of Representatives, Member's of the Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, United States House of Representatives 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*, (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, September 2000). <http://www.fas.org/news/russia/2000/russia/part10.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 Jan 2009.

<sup>48</sup> United States, U.S. House of Representatives, Member's of the Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, United States House of Representatives 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*,



foreign providers would not extend credit to Russian firms or they demanded payment in hard currency.<sup>49</sup> Shortages became commonplace and widespread with necessary goods such as, cooking oil and sugar proving difficult to acquire.<sup>50</sup> Workers went on strike to protest unpaid wages and the country was thrown into a political crisis.

The main cause of the collapse was attributed to loose fiscal policies of the Russian government and the failure to pay attention to the fundamentals of a free-market economy.<sup>51</sup> The Russian stock market was artificially kept afloat by the injection of billions of dollars from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. As a result, the Russian Central Bank quickly became the world's leading stock market of any developing country. A crash of the Asian stock market, however, was a reminder to

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(U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, September 2000).  
<http://www.fas.org/news/russia/2000/russia/part10.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 Jan 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Anders Åslund, "Go Long On Russia – Russian economic conditions," *Business Services Industry*, The International Economy, July 2000.

<sup>50</sup> Those who kept their jobs frequently found their wages suspended. When wage payments were finally made, the average Russian saw his or her wages drop by two-thirds, from \$160 to \$55 per month. The number of people living below the official poverty line--in Russia, a measure of truly desperate conditions--rose to nearly 40%. The standard of living for the average Russian, already low by international measures, plummeted by 30%. In urban areas, Russian families with children and seniors--with no access to jobs or land--were the hardest hit. Unlike those in rural areas, who could subsist on homegrown food, they had nowhere to turn. As in Soviet times, Russians were waiting in lines, hunting for scarce goods, and hoarding what they could find. Such staples as flour, butter, rice and sugar were purchased as soon as they appeared on shelves. Retailers found it difficult to restock inventories. United States, U.S. House of Representatives, Member's of the Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, United States House of Representatives 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*, (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, September 2000).  
<http://www.fas.org/news/russia/2000/russia/part10.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 Jan 2009.

<sup>51</sup> For example, Russian firms, still suffering under the weight of Soviet-era laws and regulations, were unable to earn enough to pay taxes. The government's revenues were falling--at times as much as 50% below budgeted tax receipts. The decline in tax collections was exacerbated by the notoriously inefficient Russian tax system, as well as by corruption among tax authorities and sweetheart deals that granted tax leniency to select enterprises. United States, U.S. House of Representatives, Member's of the Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, United States House of Representatives 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*, (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, September 2000).  
<http://www.fas.org/news/russia/2000/russia/part10.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 Jan 2009.

investors to be wary of free-market fundamentals in emerging markets. Russia's weakness in the area of monitoring free market fundamentals, coupled with falling energy prices (to which its currency was tied) meant crippling effects. Russians were not generally accepting of the true causes of the crisis and, thus, the West was blamed for intentionally leading their country to the brink of financial collapse.

As stated previously, some observers state that the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of Soviet Union offered the West the greatest foreign policy opportunity in four decades. Yet, less than ten years following the historic events, Russia's financial system was allowed to atrophy and tensions were on the rise.<sup>52</sup> Unable to solve the massive problems of his nation, Boris Yeltsin would be forced to relinquish his presidential powers to his hand picked successor, the largely unknown, Vladimir Putin. To counter the economic freefall, Putin would institute a series of changes that would once again centralize control of Russia within the Kremlin under what he termed 'Sovereign Democracy'.

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<sup>52</sup> United States, U.S. House of Representatives, Member's of the Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, United States House of Representatives 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Russia's Road to Corruption, How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People*, (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, September 2000).  
<http://www.fas.org/news/russia/2000/russia/part10.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 Jan 2009.

### Chapter Three - RUSSIA TODAY

**The Government (Sovereign Democracy)** – For all intents and purposes, what is described as democracy in Putin’s terms does meet the definition acknowledged by the greater part of society.<sup>53</sup> The term sovereign democracy has its roots in the Russian presidential elections of 1996. Best explained, sovereign democracy in the Russian sense is a political system masked to look as if it represents the people’s will. The utilization of elections, a multiparty system and a biased media have provided a skewed perspective of the Russian electoral process for the benefit of the outside world. This has both increased the Kremlin’s influence over society and maintained the appearance of a democratic state. The appearance of democracy rather than its full reality is necessary in order to assure the maintenance of foreign aid and investment.

The Kremlin, and more specifically the presidential administration, controls the political landscape, through their influence and manipulation of the political opposition, the media and society in general. All actions and ceremonies reflect the outward existence of democracy, but in reality the Kremlin “...tailors the electoral system to ensure the desired outcome.” This control of the electoral system is illustrated in a reform introduced in 2005 whereby the Russian president appoints all regional governors.<sup>54</sup> As a result, in 2007, Russia ranked 102 out of 167 states the annual

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<sup>53</sup> Democracy is much more than political constitutionalism. More than free and fair election, ..., ...civil and political rights, the rule of law, the establishment of an independent judiciary, reasonably free and independent media, adequate protection of minorities, avenues and opportunities for civic participation.... Barbara Falk, ‘Post-Communism’s First Decade: A Primer for Non-Specialists,’ *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol.36, No. 2 (Jun., 2003), p. 432 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3233254>; Internet; accessed 25 March 2009.

<sup>54</sup> As a result, governors are no longer accountable to their constituents. Similarly, majority parliamentary districts have been replaced with proportional representation from party lists, with parties required to receive at least 7 percent of the vote to win any seats. This severed the link between voters and their representatives and concentrated the manageable political elite in Moscow. The reforms, in other

*Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index.*<sup>55</sup> In fact, some surprising countries, such as, Kenya, Uganda and Mozambique ranked higher. Moreover, many of the so called reforms, introduced by Putin and his administration, have returned Russia state based on centralized control.

**The Putin Factor** - Putin's meteoric rise to president ushered in a contrasting decline in relations between Russia and the U.S. In the beginning, the Putin and Bush relationship appeared very promising.<sup>56</sup> This was all to change very rapidly and changes would soon yield to the world that old adversarial recollections still remained between the two former superpowers and their leaders. U.S. journalists, such as Thomas Watson, have described Putin as another Joseph Stalin.<sup>57</sup> This is a problematic comparison, given that Putin has not constructed gulags, nor has he orchestrated famines leading to the deaths of millions. However, it is a plausible comparison, given that his administration has abridged several freedoms that were gained in the early 1990s. As well, it seems as though he has found a way to remain power even after leaving office as president.

As previously iterated, it is no secret that TV stations and newspapers have been shutdown for not adhering to Kremlin censorship. Additionally, powerful businessmen

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words, have again turned Russia into a centralized state. Ariel Cohen, 'Domestic Factors Driving Russia's Foreign Policy,' *Executive Backgrounder, Published by The Heritage Foundation*, No. 2084, November 19, 2007 <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/bg2084.cfm>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2009.

<sup>55</sup> Laza Kekic, 'The World in 2007: Democracy Index,' *Economist Intelligence Unit, 2007* [http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY\\_INDEX\\_2007\\_v3.pdf](http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf); Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

<sup>56</sup> During their first meeting in 2001, George Bush remarked, "I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straight forward and trustworthy and we had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul. He's a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country and I appreciate very much the frank dialogue and that's the beginning of a very constructive relationship,...." Caroline Wyatt, 'Bush and Putin: Best of Friends,' *BBC News Saturday* 16 June 2001, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1392791.stm>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Thomas Watson. Russia: a new cold war. *Canadian Business Magazine* September 29, 2008.

have been reprimanded and jailed, through taxation and corruption charges. Likewise, rival political parties have been neutered by their lack of ability to rally, protest and challenge Putin's rule. Support for this assertion is reflected in comments by various international institutes, such as, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), who monitored the 2004 national elections. The OSCE characterized the elections as "unfair" and further stated that the vote "failed to meet...standards for democratic elections".<sup>58</sup>

Putin is unmistakable when he describes the role he sees for Russia in the world; his vision is for Russia to once again be a major player on the international stage. In order to achieve this, he seeks a free reign on internal affairs, without external pressures, which includes; the choosing of the political system, the ability to use force to silence Russian republics and to exercise influence over former territories.<sup>59</sup> Ultimately, he believes that his country does not require Western approval for its actions.

In an interview for *Time Magazine* in 2007, Putin was asked if he thought that Western nations had any misunderstandings about Russia that required clarification. In response, he stated the following:

I don't believe these are misconceptions. I think this is a purposeful attempt by some to create an image of Russia based on which one could influence our internal and foreign policies. This is the reason why everybody is made to believe... [Russians] are a little bit savage still or they just climbed down from trees....<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> 'Putin's Power Landslide election Victory Strengthens Russian President's Grip,' *Weekly Reader Corporation*, [www.weeklyreader.com](http://www.weeklyreader.com); Internet; accessed 16 February 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Adi Ignatius, 'A Tsar Is Born,' *Time Magazine*, Tuesday, Dec. 04, 2007, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753\\_1690757\\_1690766,00](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753_1690757_1690766,00); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Adi Ignatius, 'A Tsar Is Born,' *Time Magazine*, Tuesday, Dec. 04, 2007, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753\\_1690757\\_1690766,00](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753_1690757_1690766,00); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

Statements such as these take us back to the dark days of the Cold War when disinformation and mistrust were the flavours of the day. As a product of the KGB, Putin is instinctively familiar with different propaganda techniques used by both sides over the previous 50 years.

During Putin's eight years as president, Russia has undergone considerable transformation. Under his government, there is stability and a sense of pride and nationalism after years of languish immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The economy has seen a steady rise of approximately seven percent per annum and the country has paid off its foreign debt that hovered around \$200 billion (USD).<sup>61</sup> So, although political freedoms have decreased, the economy has gone in the opposite direction.<sup>62</sup> True, this has all been buoyed by surging oil and gas prices, but under Putin's leadership the boon has been managed with an extreme adeptness. The burgeoning economy has meant an ability to finance a renaissance for the nation: specifically, a Russian revival.

Along with this revival, Russia can once again influence matters on the global stage. In this, Russia offers an alternative to the West and has been demonstrating international influence in regions, such as, the Korean peninsula and the Middle East. Strobe Talbott, a former advisor on Russian policy in the Clinton administration, has

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<sup>61</sup> Adi Ignatius, 'A Tsar Is Born,' *Time Magazine*, Tuesday, Dec. 04, 2007, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753\\_1690757\\_1690766,00](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753_1690757_1690766,00); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

<sup>62</sup> Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, The Myth of the Authoritarian Model, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2008.

argued that “sometimes Russia will be helpful to Western interests, and sometimes it will be the spoiler”.<sup>63</sup>

As described by Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, in most of Russia, Putin’s popularity/approval rating is flourishing and has habitually been around 80 percent and “...nearly a third of Russians would like to see him become president for life”.<sup>64</sup> High ratings such as this are almost unheard of in the West. In contrast, during this same time period, U.S. President Bush’s approval rating was around 33% as measured by the *Washington Post* in a 2009 telephone poll.<sup>65</sup> The phenomenally high ratings for Putin have been described by the president of the Nixon Center, Dimitry Simes, as follows, “He is emerging as an elected emperor, whom many people compare to Peter the Great,..”.<sup>66</sup>

Today, as Putin emerges as the Prime Minister, he is poised to remain in power and direct his plan for the full re-emergence of Russia on the world stage. If Russia is able to maintain its present course, Putin will have few competitors to challenge his

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<sup>63</sup> Adi Ignatius, ‘A Tsar Is Born,’ *Time Magazine*, Tuesday, Dec. 04, 2007, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753\\_1690757\\_1690766,00](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753_1690757_1690766,00); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, ‘The Myth of the Authoritarian Model,’ *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2008. Michael McFaul is a Hoover Fellow, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at Stanford University and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, Associate Director for Research and Senior Research Scholar at the Centre on Democracy, Development at Stanford University

<sup>65</sup> This Washington Post-ABC News poll was conducted by telephone [October 8-11, 2008](#), among a random national sample of 1,101 adults, including additional interviews with randomly selected African Americans and 18-29 year olds, for a total of 150 black respondents and 201 18-29 year olds. The added interviews (commonly referred to as an "oversample") were completed to ensure there were enough respondents in each group for separate analysis; neither group was over-represented in the reported results. The results from the full survey have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa. | GRAPHIC: washingtonpost.com - Updated Jan. 20, 2009

<sup>66</sup> Adi Ignatius, ‘A Tsar Is Born,’ *Time Magazine*, Tuesday, Dec. 04, 2007, [http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753\\_1690757\\_1690766,00](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/printout/0,29239,1690753_1690757_1690766,00); Internet; accessed 14 February 2009.

authority. This will mean that Russia can once again compete as an influential power with the great nations around the globe. Accordingly, one of the first things Putin endorsed upon taking power was *The Foreign Concept of the Russian Federation*.<sup>67</sup> Signed on 28 June, 2000 the document is succinct, yet all-encompassing.

**Russian Foreign Policy** – A quick review of the current Russian foreign policy reveals an ideology that can only be described as assertive. In keeping with the theme of the document, Vladimir Putin, in a speech to a security conference in Munich, Germany in February 2007, strongly criticized American foreign policy: “...the United States has overstepped its national borders in every way...No one feels safe anymore.”<sup>68</sup> Later that year, he compared the U.S. to the Third Reich, criticizing its foreign policy as confrontational and extremist. He went on further to associate the U.S. as a nation with disrespect for human life, and as having a disposition for world dominance. Edward Lucas, in his book, *The New Cold War*, states that “all this anti-Westernism has created a bogeyman that allows Russia’s rulers to sidestep any criticism of their own authoritarianism.”<sup>69</sup> The Kremlin has likened democracy and liberal freedoms as something that is promoted by the state’s enemies.

To justify these expressions of condescension for the West, the Putin regime continuously refers to gaffes in policy and mistakes by U.S. and European governments

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<sup>67</sup> Government of Russia, *The Foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, Approved by the President of the Russian Federation v. Putin June 28, 2000, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2009.

<sup>68</sup> Mark N. Katz, “Assertive, but Alone,” *The World Today*, Vol 63, Iss. 11 London, November, 2007, p29, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=19&sid=2&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=6&startpage=-1&clientid=1711&vname=POD&RQT=309&did=1382721611&scaling=FULL&ts=1238272316&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1238272330&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Edward Lucas. *The New Cold War*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York 2008.



and organizations as justification for its own misadventures, for example, the misplaced invasion of Chechnya. As can be seen from the example above, some of the comparisons seem strange. Despite this, the approach has seemed to have taken hold and autocracy has replaced liberalism. The EU and NATO, organizations that once seemed to hold promise for even mother Russia are now characterized as institutions that are menacingly out to destroy Russia. This attitude is apparent, with the Kremlin resolute in their thinking that what is good for the West can be replicated by Russia.

Several bona fide examples of this are predominant. Specifically, Mark Katz describes nine of these in his dissertation, *Assertive, but Alone*.<sup>70</sup> Firstly, there was a provocation which compelled Russia to aim missiles at Europe. This is a direct reaction to NATO's and by extension America's strategy to deploy a ballistic missile defense system to Poland and the Czech Republic. Second, the Putin shelved his country's involvement in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty. Third, Putin has in no uncertain terms voiced his opposition towards any proposal that would see Kosovo as an independent nation. Fourth, the Kremlin is loath to meet and discuss global concerns about Iran's nuclear intentions. Fifth, the Russian military has reinstated the strategy of having its nuclear bombers test both European and North American defences. On 27 February 2009, it was announced by the Canadian government and NORAD that incursions by Russian bombers had been happening for quite some time, with at least

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<sup>70</sup> Mark N. Katz, "Assertive, but Alone," *The World Today*, Vol 63, Iss. 11 London, November, 2007, p29,  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=19&sid=2&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=6&startpage=1&clientid=1711&vname=PQD&RQT=309&did=1382721611&scaling=FULL&ts=1238272316&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1238272330&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

twenty in the last two years alone.<sup>71</sup> Sixth, there's been increasing pressure and a press campaign to convince Kyrgyzstan to expel U.S. military forces from the staging base they are using for operations in Afghanistan. The U.S. has recently been told to leave this logistics base, causing NATO to hurriedly explore other alternatives. Seventh, prior to the clash over South Ossetia, claims by Georgia seem to point to the fact that Russia deployed a missile into Georgian territory unprovoked. It is unclear whether the unexploded missile was actually launched by Russia, but the Kremlin's response makes it obvious that Russia made no attempt to calm relations with its neighbors. Eighth, Russia's has flatly refused to cooperate with the UK to investigate the mysterious death of Alexander Litvinenko a former Russian KGB officer who was killed under mysterious circumstances in London. This implies that Putin's regime is not readily concerned with the political fallout. Finally, bewilderment can only be used to describe Moscow's reaction to the Estonian government's movement of a Soviet era war memorial. In this instance the reaction over the arrest of four ethnic Russians, appeared to be excessive when the Estonian government and banking system were confronted by a cyber-attack.<sup>72</sup> This is all evidence of a robust and, indeed, very aggressive foreign policy. Although not entirely comprising all of the markers of the Cold War era, such as a contest of ideologies, regional power blocs, these actions are an indication of a return to the adversarial posturing of the Cold War.

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<sup>71</sup> Allan Woods, 'Back off and stay out of our airspace, Russia,' *The Toronto Star*, February, 28 2009 <http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/594490>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Mark N. Katz, "Assertive, but Alone," *The World Today*, Vol 63, Iss. 11 London, November, 2007, p29, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=19&sid=2&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=6&startpage=-1&clientid=1711&vname=PQD&RQT=309&did=1382721611&scaling=FULL&ts=1238272316&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1238272330&clientid=1711>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

The election of a new Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev as meant little change in these principles, as he continues to share Putin's desire and commitment for an independent, assertive and powerful Russian state. His reaction to NATO's proposal to place anti-ballistic missiles in Poland and the most recent gas row with Europe exemplify his philosophy. This dogma not only resonates with the two men at the top, but permeates throughout the country. A number of factors appear to play a role in this pursuit by Moscow's for a more aggressive foreign policy.

The first element of this oppositional creed points to a revived nationalistic attitude. Second, an element that further enables this nationalistic pride is the meteoric rise in oil and gas prices over the last several years. New found riches have resulted in a nation with a burgeoning GDP and thus less dependence on the West. According to 2005 financial records, Russia had paid off its entire debt to the IMF and only owed 5.4 billion dollars (USD) to foreign creditors.<sup>73</sup> Third, there is an impression in the Kremlin and a predominant theme in the Russian press, that America and NATO has become exhausted because of protracted and foolish military incursions in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Lastly, former President Bush's plummet in popularity has had a profound influence on American and NATO credibility. Conversely, the Kremlin's and in particular Putin's continued high popularity ratings have bolstered Moscow's ability to manoeuvre.<sup>74</sup> Buttressed by revenues from high natural resource prices and governed by former KGB

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<sup>73</sup> Denis Novikov, 'Anti-Westernism as a Strategy,' *Russian Politics and Law*, vol. 46, no. 6, November-December 2008, p.24.

<sup>74</sup> Mark N. Katz, "Assertive, but Alone," *The World Today*, Vol 63, Iss. 11 London, November, 2007, p29.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=19&sid=2&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=6&startpage=1&clientid=1711&vname=PQD&RQT=309&did=1382721611&scaling=FULL&ts=1238272316&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1238272330&clientId=1711>; Internet; accessed 19 January 2009.

members, Russia has developed a nationalistic approach reminiscent of both the Russian Empire of the Czar and the Soviet Union of communists.

Time will be the judge if the success of this assertive stance will bear fruit. As we move rapidly through this period of globalization, friction with old adversaries may prove intolerable. In the end, Russia must be wary of the fact that American frailty may be short-lived. It is clear that the U.S. under its new presidency is looking for a way out of both Iraq and Afghanistan. Moreover, even if the U.S. is losing its way in Iraq, and their economy is waning, it must be noted that the country's recovery from previous wars and economic downfalls has been relatively swift. Regardless of current domestic issues, the U.S. remains the world's most powerful nation.

Evidence of Russia's aggressive foreign policy stance can be found as early as 2004; we are already over half a decade into this current downward spiral. It was at this time that the pro-Western and pro-NATO Ukrainian presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko was fighting for his life. He was left physically scarred by a bungled poisoning attempt, but was politically triumphant. The Russians had failed to stop the popular 'Orange Revolution' candidate, Yushchenko, from becoming president, so the Russian political machine tried to discredit him. Natural gas supplies were disrupted, almost crippling both the power grid and the Ukrainian economy.<sup>75</sup> Likewise the countries of Latvia and Lithuania have been cut off from an old Russian pipeline since 2003 and 2006 respectively, forcing them to import more expensive oil.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, in 2006 Alexander Litvinenko an outspoken former Russian KGB officer, whose life led

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<sup>75</sup> Matt Gurney, The New Cold War, a brief history, *The National Post* August 15, 2008.

<sup>76</sup> Adam B. Ellick, As It Rises, Russia Stirs Baltic Fears, *New York Times* (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: November 11 2007, pg. 4.3.

him to London, was poisoned by the FSB and eventually died on British soil. A year later Putin turned up the heat on England, with his announcement that Russia would recommence long range bomber flights.<sup>77</sup>

In international fora, such as the United Nations, criticism of Russia has been somewhat muted in regard to its aggressive foreign policy, and Russia has to some extent gained impunity. In part Russia's freedom of manoeuvre has been gained because of the effects of America's war in Iraq. In June 2007 *Time Magazine* commented:

Consider the following: Guantánamo has discredited America's longstanding international legitimacy; false claims of Iraqi WMD have destroyed U.S. credibility; continuing chaos and violence in Iraq have diminished respect for U.S. power. America, as a result, has come to need Russia's support on matters such as North Korea and Iran to a far greater extent than it would if not for Iraq.<sup>78</sup>

Of significance, is that the Kremlin feels that it can do as it pleases, especially near its own borders in its historic sphere of influence and it can take political potshots at the U.S.'s embarrassment. In the end, Russia hopes that America will suffer the same fate as the Soviet Union. Putin describes the dissolution of the USSR as one of the great disasters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>79</sup>

In this, Putin has failed to provide his nation with a coherent or modern approach upon which to build. Instead, he is clinging to nostalgia. Arguably, Russia's history and heritage are providing the framework for its current regime. As put succinctly by Ariel Cohen, "The Kremlin's current ideology has its roots in statism, authoritarianism and great

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<sup>77</sup> Matt Gurney, The New Cold War, a brief history, *The National Post* August 15, 2008.

<sup>78</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, How to Avoid a New Cold War, *Time Magazine* Thursday 7 June 2007.

<sup>79</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, How to Avoid a New Cold War, *Time Magazine* Thursday 7 June 2007.

power jingoism but with strong elements of capitalism”.<sup>80</sup> Cohen goes on further in the article to describe how the state is instilling these ideals in the minds of the youth through manipulation of the education system and nationally endorsed youth movements, such as Nashi which prepares the youth for future membership in the party that currently holds power in Russia, United Russia.<sup>81</sup>

These findings are supported by others such as Andrew Kramer, whose research has indicated that school textbooks have been re-written to depict Stalin as a great leader, stating that sometimes it is necessary to rule with a strong hand to build great nations.<sup>82</sup> This resuscitation of the Soviet leader, lends credence to the current xenophobic propaganda and path of increased centralization of power within Russia. As has been the case for most of Russia’s history, extremism is on the rise and is definitely fostered by the state.

No where is state control more obvious than as it relates to the media. This is one of the most used tools by the Kremlin to shape public opinion. However, state control goes much further. A *Financial Times* report from 2006 stated that several companies are now controlled centrally, with members of the presidential administration on the board of directors. These businesses include: aircraft manufacturing, shipbuilding,

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<sup>80</sup> Ariel Cohen, ‘Domestic Factors Driving Russia’s Foreign Policy,’ *Executive Backgrounder*, Published by *The Heritage Foundation*, No. 2084, November 19, 2007 <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/bg2084.cfm>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2009.

<sup>81</sup> Nashi is a government-funded youth movement in Russia. It positions itself as a democratic anti-fascist movement. Its creation was encouraged by senior figures in the Russian Presidential administration, and by late 2007, it grew in size to some 120,000 members aged between 17 and 25. One of the movement's main goals is preventing the introduction of foreign control in Russia., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.

<sup>82</sup> Andrew E. Kramer, ‘New Russian History: Yes, People Died, But...,’ *International Herald Tribune*, August 15, 2007 <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/08/15/news/letter.php>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

nuclear industries, oil companies, the media and Aeroflot.<sup>83</sup> Through this process, the Kremlin has increasingly centralized control of the economy and other institutions, which were left to languish during the 1990s. The military is another illustration of this resurgence.

**The Postmodern Russian Military** - Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian military has been plagued by chronic problems. Moreover, the current situation for Russia is described by Jacob W. Kipp:

...the threat of general war and nuclear war appear remote prospects, the Russian political and military elite foresee a continuation of the current trend toward local war and armed conflicts on its own periphery.<sup>84</sup>

In effect, the more pressing problems for Russia may include: internal instability, nuclear proliferation (enhanced by an inability to control stockpiles of weapons in former republics) and NATO expansion. It is threats such as these, especially as they relate to Russia's nationalism, on which Russian defense policy is based. Because of Russia's massive economic decline in the 1990s, it was unable to keep pace with the United States even after jettisoning support to other eastern states. However, a burgeoning economy based on large reserves of natural resources, most importantly oil and natural gas, may signal an end to this decline. As described by Alexei Arbatov:

The events in Kosovo, NATO's decision to conduct military operations against Russia's advice and in the absence of a mandate from the United Nations (UN) Security Council-transformed the balance of political power within the Russian national security policy and bolstered the case for decisively using Russian military

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<sup>83</sup> Neil Buckley and Arkady Ostrovsky, 'Back in Business-How Putin's Allies Are Turning Russia into a Corporate State,' *Financial Times*, June 19, 2006 <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d776a916-ff2f-11da-84f3-0000779e2340.html>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2009

<sup>84</sup> Dr. Jacob W. Kipp, 'Tectonic Shifts and Putin's Russia in the New Security Environment,' *Military Review*, (March – April 2002): 1.

power on its own periphery, even in the face a possible external intervention by the West.<sup>85</sup>

Soviet-era equipment will not be completely phased out until at least 2020. The Russian Navy has rusted in port since the fall of the Soviet Union. For example, only 26 of Russia's 50 submarines are currently operational. This is a significant reduction from the 170 submarines that were available to the Soviet Union in 1991. Plans announced by President Medvedev in October 2008 have the Russian Navy reducing the total number of submarines to twenty by the year 2020.<sup>86</sup> Of Russia's latest and most sophisticated fighter jets, the Sukhoi-35, there remain only fifteen in active service. Russia still relies on the antiquated T-72 tank which first went into production in 1971. Despite great revenues from Russia's oil and gas companies and significant expenditures on the military, Russia's defense budget is less than 1/10 the amount of annual U.S. military spending.

The Russian military is still a vastly inferior to the U.S.; however, Russia does not need the best equipment in order to assert itself and generate instability. Russia does not need to directly confront the U.S. in a mono a mono fight. War is something that both sides will avoid at all costs, as each still has the ability to destroy the world several times over with nuclear weapons. This is beyond doubt a remnant of the Cold War. Instead, in today's world Russia can and will use political and economic warfare, of which it has many tools to use.

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<sup>85</sup> Alexei G. Arbatov, "The transformation of Russian Military Doctrine: Lessons Learned from Kosovo and Chechnya," *The Marshall Center Papers*, 12 – 13.

<sup>86</sup> Cameron Ainsworth-Vincze, 'Russia plans huge nuclear expansion,' *MacLean's Magazine*, October, 13 2008, p. 45



That said, in August to 2007, Putin announced that Russia would again resume the practice of a long range bomber flights over the Pacific, Atlantic and Arctic oceans, for the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Putin made it clear that the resumption of these flights was in direct response to previously discussed NATO threats (e.g. BMD in Poland and proposed further expansion of NATO) towards Russia, including the encroachment of military installations in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.<sup>87</sup>

President Medvedev is also flexing his country's military muscle. Since coming to power in May 2008 he has sent warships and aircraft to the Caribbean for joint exercises with Venezuela, invaded Georgia, and continues Putin's hard line stance concerning the development of nuclear technology. In October 2008, he announced that over the next eight years Russia intends to build a new space and missile shield, and to modernize its nuclear defences.

Although its status on the world stage has been reduced, Russia still possesses enough long range nuclear weapons to engage the West. It has a burgeoning arms trade, including stockpiles of nuclear weapons that are sought by terrorists and it presently controls the largest reserves of oil in the world. According to a 2003 U.S. Congressional Research Service Brief for Congress, Soviet Union possessed 27,000 nuclear weapons spread throughout its republics when the nation collapsed in 1991.<sup>88</sup> The report goes on to reveal that, as of 2003, all these weapons had been recovered to Russia. The U.S. Congressional Research Service has reported that there are no major concerns with the

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<sup>87</sup> Michel Chossudovsky, 'New Cold War: Simultaneously, Russia and America Conduct Major War Games,' *GlobalResearch.ca*, October 16, 2007.

<sup>88</sup> United States, The Library of Congress, *Nuclear Weapons in Russia: Safety, Security, and Control Issues*, (Washington, DC: Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, August 15, 2003). <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/ib98038.pdf>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

security, but media reports about nuclear materials being available on the black market are still serious cause for concern. Thus, nations such as Canada and the U.S. are working with Russia to improve the security and control of the nuclear materials.<sup>89</sup> Again, despite this apparent cooperation in some areas, comparing the last 15 – 20 years to the Cold War period, the relationship with the West and NATO is increasingly tumultuous.

In view of the events surrounding Kosovo, Iran, Ukraine, Georgia, NATO expansion, missile defence, nuclear cooperation, access to oil and the Kremlin's internal politics and the collision of East and West is readily apparent. As Stephen Cohen surmised, "...a growing number of observers on both sides think the relationship is verging on a new cold war..."<sup>90</sup>

It must be remembered that Russia urgently wishes to reaffirm itself as a global power. It also wants to contend with the mounting power that the U.S. has over some of its former regions.<sup>91</sup> Correspondingly, some insecurity and instability within the former Russian sphere of influence has been perpetuated. The instability created can be linked to the desired effects Russia wishes for its state-controlled economy. Strangely enough the sectors in the economy to benefit most from international instability are the military-industrial complex, including the nuclear sector. As argued by Ariel Cohen:

...these influential industries need international instability to increase sales. The USSR and Russia at times have sold weapons to both sides in a conflict, such as to Iran and Iraq in 1980s. Russian

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<sup>89</sup> United States, The Library of Congress, *Nuclear Weapons in Russia: Safety, Security, and Control Issues*, (Washington, DC: Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, August 15, 2003). <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/ib98038.pdf>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

<sup>90</sup> Stephen Cohen, 'McCain, Obama and Russia,' *The Nation*, 30 June, 2008.

<sup>91</sup> Cameron Ainsworth-Vincze, 'Russia plans huge nuclear expansion,' *Maclean's Magazine*, October 13, 2008, 45.

experts are fond of saying that weapons exports create allies. “Civilian” nuclear reactors are often precursors of a military nuclear program, as is the case with Iran, to which Russia sold the Bushehr reactor...<sup>92</sup>

In view of this, the West has been circumspect with respect to Russia’s interests, but also firm in its stance, especially as it relates to the sale of nuclear technology in the Middle East. This is especially true as the military has been a priority for Putin, as well. Since coming to power, he has made various statements, and in 2004 addressed Russian officers as follows:

The process of modernizing the Armed Forces continues. The staff structure of the army and navy has become more optimal. Alert units are being recruited from contract soldiers. Our troops have begun to use new kinds of weaponry and technology. The material provision for the officer body is gradually improving...<sup>93</sup>

Military spending still remains well below that of the U.S., but it has risen significantly compared to the 1990s. Increased spending on defence and modernization of the Russian forces has been made possible by enormous revenues created through revenues from oil and gas sales. The resource windfall has also brought about an attempt by the Russian government to improve infrastructure and create an environment conducive to attract more diverse business as they compete in the global marketplace.

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<sup>92</sup> Ariel Cohen, ‘Domestic Factors Driving Russia’s Foreign Policy,’ *Executive Backgrounder*, Published by The Heritage Foundation, No. 2084, November 19, 2007 <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/bg2084.cfm>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2009.

<sup>93</sup> Vladimir Putin, ‘Speech at a Meeting with Superior Officers,’ 10 February 2004.

## Chapter Four - GLOBALIZATION

**The West/Russia and the Global Economy** – Being a major player in the global market economy has never come easy for Russia. The 1998 economic crash was a stern reminder of this. More recently, following the Russian invasion of Georgia, the government had to deal with a \$500 billion (USD) drop in market values. This amount represented foreign investment and foreign capital that was hastily withdrawn both prior to and following the conflict. This flight in capital was followed by the catastrophic world economic downturn of autumn 2008 that occurred almost immediately on the heels of the Georgia invasion meaning an even further reduction of the Russian economy. Moreover, the Russian economy's over-dependence on the energy sector may well mean that it could see a financial crisis worse than that of 1998.

Despite this set-back, the Russian economy has grown by an average of 6 to 7 percent annually since 1999. In 2005 the stock market index increased by 83 percent, while the gold reserve and foreign currency holdings were assessed as the fifth largest in the world.<sup>94</sup> Most of these advances, which are largely touted by the Russian government, were due mainly to record-high prices for the country's oil and gas riches.

In the November 2008 State of the Nation Address, Medvedev blamed the global financial situation on Washington and reaffirmed that his country would overcome the crisis.<sup>95</sup> *The Economist* magazine reported further, stating:

The two main events of the year, Mr Medvedev said, had been the August war in Georgia and the world economic crisis. And America bore responsibility for both. The war stemmed from the presumptuous policies of America's government; the economic crisis was a result of its arrogance and selfishness. It had ignored

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<sup>94</sup> Stephen F. Cohen. 'The new American Cold War,' *The Nation*, July 10, 2006.

<sup>95</sup> *BBC News*, Europe, 'Russia to move missiles to Baltic,' Wednesday 5 November 2008.

the advice of countries such as Russia and undermined everybody's financial markets. Yet Russia, he promised, will not back down in the Caucasus—and nor will it be pulled down by the economic crisis.<sup>96</sup>

This type of rhetoric is at the nexus of the revival of a new Cold War. It is yet another attempt by the Kremlin to revive national pride based on nostalgia and revert to old Soviet style politicking.

**The West/Russia and the Global Energy Market** - It is not just political differences or political ideologies that are separating America and Russia. Since the departure of Yeltsin, there has been a fundamental shift in Russia's outlook towards the rest of the world. It is not that they do not want to dominate international affairs; they just want to do it by means other than military might. In this vein, as the U.S. government mobilizes for a homeland defence and the global war on terrorism (GWT), Russia wages a war in the global energy market.

Russia is in an enviable position, controlling over 25 percent of the natural gas resources of Europe, thus effectively dominating the most affluent and energy dependent marketplace. An obvious example of this dominance occurred in January 2009 when the natural gas pipeline that supplies central Europe was shut down over a dispute with Ukraine. Almost all of the Baltic States and much of central Europe were threatened through the withholding of the principle heating source during typically the coldest month of the year. The move is seen as more political than anything else. Though a response from the United States and NATO was somewhat muted, the European Union denounced the move and called for the free flow of gas during the winter. On the other

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<sup>96</sup> *The Economist*, 'Getting Medvedev's Message A belligerent state-of-the-nation address from Russia's president,' *The Economist*, November 6, 2008  
[http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=12564707](http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12564707); Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

hand with combat operations occurring in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. and NATO could offer little support to the citizens of Europe. Although a 10 year deal for the flow of gas through Ukrainian territory was reached between the governments of Ukraine and Russia (19 January 2009), it is unclear if this agreement will be the end of the European gas problems with Russia.<sup>97</sup> Not surprisingly, there has been a rebirth of the use of oil as a central instrument of foreign policy by Russia corresponding with a rise in energy prices over the last five years (2003 – 2008).<sup>98</sup> This has been able to occur because of the geopolitics of the energy market and the sobering fact that the world wide economy is driven by an insatiable appetite for oil.

While many Western nations including, Canada, the countries of Western Europe and the OECD states in Asia have relinquished the use of oil as an instrument of foreign policy, there remain several countries that continue to leverage revenues from the sale of oil and gas as a critical factor in their economy.<sup>99</sup> This in turn makes the energy sector a central component of foreign policy for these countries; Russia is one such country.

For Russia, revenues from the energy sector are essential to the authority of the state and the pursuit of aggressive policies abroad. Essentially, the Putin years have been characterized by constantly rising oil prices. Correspondingly, the state has grown significantly dependent on its oil and gas revenues and has resorted to utilizing energy reserves as a weapon in order to regain some of its superpower status, while flexing its muscles abroad. Ukraine, the Baltic States and some Western European countries have

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<sup>97</sup> *BBC News*, 'Q&A: Russia-Ukraine gas row,' 20 January 2009  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7240462.stm>; Internet; accessed 2 February 2009.

<sup>98</sup> Edward L. Morse, 'Politics, Geopolitics and Financial Flows in "Low" Oil Price Environment,' *Geopolitics of Energy*, Volume 31, Number 1, January 2009, p. 5.

<sup>99</sup> Edward L. Morse, 'Politics, Geopolitics and Financial Flows in "Low" Oil Price Environment,' *Geopolitics of Energy*, Volume 31, Number 1, January 2009, p. 6.

witnessed how Russia can use this weapon through the withholding of supply for both political and economic reasons.

In the face of their energy dependence on Russian natural gas, the Baltic States are currently attempting to challenge Russia's energy monopoly. In fact, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, along with Sweden, are resisting a Russian-German plan to build a pipeline under the Baltic Sea. Named Nord Stream, when completed, the 1,200 kilometer pipeline would pump several billion more cubic meters of natural gas per year from Russia to northern Germany thus meeting a significant portion of the growing gas needs of the European Union. In sad reality, the Russian oil giant, Gazprom, controls over 35 percent of the gas companies in the Baltic region and central Europe continues to rely heavily on these imports.<sup>100</sup>

On the other hand, the recent stabilization of energy prices from peak-values in 2007 – 2008 is having a dramatic effect on the Russian state. As well, the governments affected by the recent distribution issues are growing weary of Russia's repeated tactics and they are cognizant of Russia's critical requirement for revenue from natural gas exports. From the outset these factors have limited the credibility of Russia's denial of supply. As the price of oil hovers or dips below \$50 (USD) per barrel, the country needs to confront fundamental choices between revenue requirements and the need to exert an assertive foreign policy.

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<sup>100</sup> Adam B. Ellick, 'As It Rises, Russia Stirs Baltic Fears,' *New York Times* (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: November 11 2007, pg. 4.3.

## Chapter Five - RUSSIAN DESIRE FOR INFLUENCE

**The Baltic States** - Although there have been many issues that have caused increased division between NATO and Russia, the Baltic States were one of the most contentious issues with respect to NATO expansion. This was evident on many fronts; however, most to this point most have been of a minor nature. The case of Estonia offers evidence of this premise.

Estonia, in particular, has long and storied history with the Russian empire, having been occupied or ruled since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Notwithstanding this long association, in 1991 the country declared independence from the crumbling Soviet Union. Since independence, there have been ongoing political clashes between the two states about both citizenship and territory. However, the most peculiar incident in recent history was caused when the Estonian government wanted to move a Soviet era statue, which glorified the Red Army.

The actions that followed this announcement can only be characterized as absurd, particularly if they are taken in the context that the action of moving a monument deserved an offensive attack. More likely, the Russian actions were in response to what was seen as a much larger nationalistic issue in regard to ethnic Russians within Estonia.<sup>101</sup> In this instance, all evidence points to the Russian government's desire to carry through on its foreign policy concept implemented in 2000 in which it vowed "...to uphold in every possible way the rights and interests of Russian citizens and fellow

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<sup>101</sup> Current demographics indicate that ethnic Russian compose approximately 25% of the Estonian population., *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2009.



countrymen abroad....”<sup>102</sup> In this instance, all evidence points to the undertaking of a concerted cyber attack waged against the Estonian government. In review of Russian actions in Estonia, one of the lessons to be learned is that Russia was actively willing to attempt to manipulate opportunities within its former sphere of influence. The accusations and evidence indicate that hackers, financed by the Kremlin, paralyzed Estonia’s government ministries and financial institutions with cyber attacks.

The Estonian government strongly asserted that their websites were the subject of an attack that shut down services nationally. The infected sites included those of political and governmental officials (the president, the prime minister, Parliament and other government agencies), political parties, the media and the business community and its biggest bank.<sup>103</sup> All evidence indicates that Russia used technological techniques to disrupt electronic communications in a sovereign nation. Should this be true, it is a clear violation of sovereignty, bordering on warfare.

“For NATO, the attack may lead to a discussion of whether it needs to modify its commitment to collective defense,....”<sup>104</sup> To support this assertion, consider Article 51 of the Geneva Convention, which states that a country has the right to self-defence when attacked. Should this include cyber-warfare, arguably an appropriate military reaction would have been reasonable. As Scott Weber comments:

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<sup>102</sup> Government of Russia, *The Foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, Approved by the President of the Russian Federation v. Putin June 28, 2000, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2009.

<sup>103</sup> Mark Lander and John Markoff, ‘Digital Fears Emerge After Data Seige in Estonia,’ *The New York Times*, May 29, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/29/technology/29estonia.html?pagewanted=print>, Internet accessed 15 February 2009.

<sup>104</sup> Mark Lander and John Markoff, ‘Digital Fears Emerge After Data Seige in Estonia,’ *The New York Times*, May 29, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/29/technology/29estonia.html?pagewanted=print>, Internet accessed 15 February 2009.

When the laws of war were written in the Geneva Conventions in 1949, and even in the protocols that followed in the 1970s, the possibility of a cyber attack was not part of the arsenal of warfare. Today, however, cyber warfare is a very real and powerful threat.<sup>105</sup>

Governments in other former Soviet republics use the example of Estonia, including riots in the capital of Tallinn during April 2007, as evidence of a greater Russian plot to disrupt the affairs of its former republics. In this instance, concurrent to the cyber-attacks, four ethnic Russians were charged with inciting riots and protests related to the government's plan to move the statue of the Soviet soldier from the capital to a suburb.<sup>106</sup> The Estonian government anticipated some opposition from its Russian population, but nothing of this magnitude.

Another Baltic State, Lithuania, fears the financial strength of Russia. The Lithuanian government is concerned that the Kremlin may use their economic influence to corrupt their state's officials and perhaps officials of the other Baltic States. There are several signs of Russia's resurgent influence. For example, the Kremlin has sponsored a pan-Baltic Russian language television station. In fact, about one-third of Lithuania's television stations are already broadcasting in Russian and often feature biased documentaries that praise the Soviet Union.<sup>107</sup> Throughout the Baltic States, there are Russian financed media, ethnic Russian politicians and economic development. Moreover, it seems that president Putin's strategy is to revive Russian power and influence in the former republics.

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<sup>105</sup> Scott Weber, 'Cyber Warfare & The United States-A Call To Arms,' *Adfero Group*, January 30, 2009 <http://securitydebrief.adfero.com/cyber-warfare-the-united-states-a-call-to-arms/>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2009.

<sup>106</sup> Adam B. Ellick, *As It Rises, Russia Stirs Baltic Fears*, New York Times (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: November 11 2007, pg. 4.3.

<sup>107</sup> Adam B. Ellick, *As It Rises, Russia Stirs Baltic Fears*, New York Times (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: November 11 2007, pg. 4.3.

**Poland and the Czech Republic (Missile Defence Shield)** - Rhetoric and threats symbolic of the old Cold War of the nineteen seventies and eighties are abundant today. Yet, no situation is more closely symbolic of the past East-West relationship than the U.S. plan to build a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic. The introduction of these weapons systems close to Russia threatens to reignite a dangerous military situation that is reminiscent of Cold War-era Europe.

The rationale behind the missile defence system is based on concerns over the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) following the demise of the USSR. Quantities of chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear weapons were spread amongst the former states of the republic. Initially the Western fear was that the weapons would become available to rogue nations like Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea.<sup>108</sup> Clearly, the main thrust in ensuring WMD non-proliferation is to deny access to both the systems and the technology. Additionally, the American doctrinal approach is to counter the WMD threat with a forward-positioned ballistic missile defence (BMD) system.

Although the U.S. argues that the BMD eastward deployment is not meant to target Russia; the Russians believe that this weapons system could eventually be used against them. As the U.S. effectively reneged on its commitments to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, this is a major concern for Russia. This perception is further fueled by the fact that much of the technology that is possessed by the 'hostile organizations' or 'rogue states' was derived initially from the Russian military. Adding to this is the fact that Russia continues to export missile technology expertise to the highest bidder.

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<sup>108</sup> Brian Finlay, 'Russian Roulette: Canada's Role in the Race to Secure Loose Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons,' *International Journal* Volume 61, Number 5 (Spring 2006), 411-413.

The U.S. now has agreements in place with both Poland and the Czech Republic to install missile sites in Eastern Europe in order to close a hole in its global system of missile defence. The aim is to construct both a radar installation in the Czech Republic and construct a ten-silo missile site in Poland. The proposal has the backing of the wider NATO alliance because of the ability to counter Iranian long-range missile technology. The plan to place this missile defence shield in Russia backyard has incensed the Kremlin.

The Russians remain unconvinced as to the stated requirement for the system. This is in most part because the U.S. rationale to pull out of the ABM Treaty was based on a threat assessment and confidence in emerging BMD technology.<sup>109</sup> Consequently, Medvedev, in his first address to the nation, stated that Moscow would deploy a missile system to Kaliningrad, a sovereign Russian territory located between NATO members Lithuania and Poland.<sup>110</sup> The Russian controlled enclave is a seaport between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea. Effectively the former German East Prussia, it was a World War II gift that was placed under Soviet control during the division of Europe following the Allied victory in 1945. The territory is geographically separated from the rest of Russia (found about 350 kilometres from the nearest Russian border) and is Russia's smallest region. The region is a wedge-shaped piece of land along the Baltic Sea, its primary port city, also known as Kaliningrad, is an ice-free port, which was home to the Soviet Baltic fleet during the Cold War. After the collapse of the USSR, and the new found independence of several former Soviet republics, Kaliningrad was

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<sup>109</sup> George N. Lewis and Theodore A. Postol, 'European Missile Defence: The Technological Basis of Russian Concerns,' *Arms Control Today* Volume 37, Issue 8 (Oct 2007), 13-14.

<sup>110</sup> *BBC News, Europe*, 'Russia to move missiles to Baltic,' Wednesday 5 November 2008.

geographically and politically cut-off from the remainder of Russia. The president went on to say that short-range Iskander missiles would be placed in Kaliningrad, on Europe's border, and that radio-electronic devices would be installed to jam America's missile-defence system electronically.

Again, this story remains reminiscent of the classic struggles of the Cold War. Ironically, it is beginning to play out much like the Cuban Missile Crisis. Exemplifying this line of thinking is the recent announcement by Russia that it has plans to delay its deployment of short-range missiles into Kaliningrad. Reported by the BBC, "...the implementation of these plans has been halted in connection with the fact that the new U.S. administration is not rushing through plans to deploy"<sup>111</sup>, referring to the missile defence system planned for Poland and the Czech Republic. This move is undoubtedly linked to President Obama's tepid acceptance of the rationale behind the envisioned missile shield system.

Further, in a recent news story from Reuters, the United States has indicated that it may consider a delay in the planned missile defence system should Russia agree to cease its aid to Iran nuclear aspirations.<sup>112</sup> For their part, the Kremlin has been pressing the U.S. to eliminate the missile system and in return Russia would aid in ensuring a supply route (through Russian territory) in support of NATO operations in Afghanistan.

Although recent relations are showing promise, there has been a deterioration in recent years between the United States and Russia. This has been acknowledged in the Western press with the media blaming the circumstances solely on former president

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<sup>111</sup> *BBC News Europe*, 'Russia halts missile deployment', Wednesday, 28 January 2009.

<sup>112</sup> James Kliner and Ross Colvin, 'U.S. links Moscow help on Iran to missile shield,' Reuters Fri Feb 13, [http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/reuters/090213/world/international\\_us\\_usa\\_shield\\_russia](http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/reuters/090213/world/international_us_usa_shield_russia); Internet; accessed: 15 February 2009.

Putin's policies, both foreign and domestic.<sup>113</sup> Experts on the Cold War, say that a resurgence is no longer possible because Russia's military is too weak to wage such a profound conflict. They also argue that the conflicts are not global, and therefore, not ideological in nature. All seems to be forgotten that the last Cold War began regionally, in Central and Eastern Europe. They also seem to fail to recognize the present day differences with the U.S.'s promotion of democracy and Moscow's ideologies of centralized control.

It is the opinion of this author that a nation that has controlled contiguous territory for almost four centuries would most certainly desire a significant vote in the political alignment and militarization of those regions; this is on par with other sovereign nations. Moreover, continued NATO expansion and militarization in the former Soviet republics will do little to alleviate justified Russian anxiety.

The rhetoric over the positioning missiles in Poland harkens to the days of the Cuban Missile Crisis. A complete reverse of the former situation, the reaction between the adversaries is a mirror image. To ease the situation, the parties must not forget the contrast in perspectives and acknowledge that neither country is any different than any other fully independent state. Thus each nation has justifiable national interests both at home and abroad.

**Georgia** – NATO and Georgia have been involved in open dialogue for membership since 1992. Accession to the alliance is one of the main goals of Georgian foreign and security policy.<sup>114</sup> In the aftermath of the Russian invasion and occupation of

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<sup>113</sup> Stephen F. Cohen. 'The new American Cold War,' *The Nation*, July 10, 2006.

<sup>114</sup> Georgia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *NATO – Georgia*  
[http://mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang\\_id=ENG&sec\\_id=88](http://mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=88); Internet; accessed 27 February 2009.

South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Georgia now seems more committed than ever to NATO membership. Likewise, the rift with Russia makes membership all the more desirable, if not critical. The attacks had a destabilizing effect on the emerging democracy and the national economy. As a result of Russian interference and problems such as this, NATO members remain divided on whether to finalize the integration of Georgia into the grand alliance. As well, there is little doubt that the move to integrate Georgia into NATO has, once again, infuriated Moscow and has led to allegations of American and European interference in Russia's sphere of influence.<sup>115</sup>

It is, therefore, important to the government of Georgia and for the security of its citizens to accelerate its acceptance into NATO's fold. Under Article 5, membership will bring the necessary security umbrella so desired. However, at this juncture in time, further attempts by Russia to influence events in its own 'backyard' cannot be ruled out even with NATO membership.

Indeed, the Russian military reaction to the events in Georgia in August 2008 should not have been surprising to the West. Since rising to power, Putin has not been sympathetic to republics that break step with Russia. In September, 2008 the Russian president was said to have declared that NATO provoked the conflict with Georgia. At the same time he stated, that he would not allow the west to "...contain it behind the new iron curtain". He went on further to say, "...we will continuously strengthen our national security, modernize the military and increase our defense capability to a sufficient

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<sup>115</sup> Peter O'Neill, 'Sarkozy warns of new Cold War over Georgia,' *Canwest News Services* Monday, August 18, 2008.

level.”<sup>116</sup> This has been the case ever since the NATO campaign in the former Yugoslavia.

More than any other event in recent history, NATO’s decision to wage a military campaign in Yugoslavia, without a UN Security Council Resolution, changed Russian thinking towards its national security interests. The intervention heightened Russian resolve to be decisive in initiating its military might when challenged from within or on its borders. In fact, the Yugoslav conflict has been an impetus for Russian security policy and influenced decisions about Georgia and the Caucasus.

Twentieth century Cold War memories have been revived or surging since the recent conflict in Georgia. As Russia’s troops withdraw, U.S. and NATO support is pouring into Georgia. The Caucasus energy pipeline continues to pump oil outside the state run Russian monopoly that once controlled all former Soviet energy exports to the west; however, the situation remains precarious. The Russian advance into Georgia on the fourteenth of August 2008 with tanks rolling into the city of Gori, marks one in the culmination of escalating Russian provocations.

**Ukraine** – Ukraine’s involvement with NATO dates to 1991, when it joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council) in hopes of one day becoming a full member of the alliance. Despite being the first of the Commonwealth of Independent States to join the Partnership for Peace initiative, full membership still eludes Ukraine.

From the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, to the gaining of the largest post-Soviet military and nuclear arsenal, the ‘Orange Revolution’ and most recently, a gas row with Russia that has caused disruptions pan-Europe, Ukraine has been a special case for the

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<sup>116</sup> *Sky News*, UK, Friday, September 19, 2008.



West and NATO. Since coming to power in 2004, the Western-backed President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, has put forth ambitious plans for reform. In spite of this, several aspects of political and military restructuring are considered still lacking by NATO members. In particular, in respect to security, it is believed that the government must; provide for more civil control over security and defence, retrain and resettle a large number of former military members and destroy large stockpiles of weapons.<sup>117</sup> These issues, coupled with the complicated matter of the Russian Black Sea port of Sevastopol located within Ukraine's borders, irregularities in the 2004 Presidential elections and several cases of political upheaval since that time, the area is a potential flashpoint as far as East-West relations are concerned.

The strategic location of Ukraine is further complicated as it is the main transit route for Russian natural gas to the rest of Europe. In an effort to display its influence in the region, Russia, through the state-run Gazprom, shut off pipelines through Ukraine on 1 January 2009, leaving millions in Europe without natural gas to heat their homes. It accused Ukraine of siphoning off gas for its own needs that was meant for export to other countries.

The action was seen as Russia utilizing energy as a political and economic weapon to ensure that former Soviet states agree to a favorable stance regarding involvement with the Kremlin.<sup>118</sup> In essence, the situation was probably not linked to energy resources at all. In fact, this appears to be a re-articulation of a Soviet policy from many years ago. It is eerily similar to the Brezhnev Doctrine of the late 1960s. When

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<sup>117</sup> NATO, 'NATO-Ukraine relations,' *NATO Topics*, <http://www.nato.int/issues/nato-ukraine/topic.html>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2009.

<sup>118</sup> *British Broadcasting Corporation*, 'Q&A: Russia-Ukraine gas row,' <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7240462.stm>; Internet; accessed 7 February 2009.

Soviet forces invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, then First Secretary Leonid Brezhnev stated:

When forces that are hostile to Socialism try to turn the development of some Socialist country towards capitalism...it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all Socialist countries.<sup>119</sup>

Despite the many changes since the collapse of the Soviet Union, unity and influence within the Eastern European states is still an important issue for Russia.<sup>120</sup> It is exactly this desire for influence that remains the biggest challenge to overcome in East-West relations as we head into the second decade of this century.

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<sup>119</sup> C.B. Jones. *The Cold War*. Contemporary Books: Chicago 2004, p. 117.

<sup>120</sup> Certainly, the situation, if true, might have prompted a Russian reaction. However, the disruption of gas supplies to major European centres has done nothing but hurt Russia's reputation and trustworthiness as a gas provider. Conversely, Putin and other Russian officials have placed the blame on pro-Western forces in Ukraine for trying to provoke a wider dispute. British Broadcasting Corporation, 'Q&A: Russia-Ukraine gas row,' <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7240462.stm>; Internet; accessed 7 February 2009.

## Chapter Six - THE WEST TODAY (A NEW DIRECTION?)

**The Obama Factor** – In addition to the Russian question, the newly inaugurated U.S. President, Barack Hussein Obama, will begin his term with the biggest financial challenge of any American president in history. He enters office with high expectations: both Americans and the world are looking for a renaissance. As Luiza Savage argued:

Few presidents have entered office not only facing so many problems, but also such sky-high expectations – from fixing the economy, ending the wars and restoring America’s image abroad, to achieving historic racial reconciliation and transforming the “culture of Washington”.<sup>121</sup>

Young and energetic, the 47 year old, Harvard law school graduate is a relative newcomer to Washington who will be challenged on many fronts. Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the never ending issues of Syria, Israel, Iran, Libya, North Korea and Cuba will fill his agenda. Russia, though, is a venue in which Obama has the potential to make quick progress.

Arguably, U.S. - Russian relations are at the lowest point that they have been in almost twenty years. Early encounters between Presidents George Bush and Vladimir Putin were promising, but the mood hastily cooled. Disagreements on issues such as Kosovo, Iran, NATO expansion and missile defence have stymied a relationship that once seemed to be flourishing. The Russia – U.S. relationship will be important to the Obama administration.

First, the relationship with Russia is important because it still possesses the largest nuclear arsenal outside of the U.S. Second, it exports arms and nuclear technology to governments hostile to the West. Finally, Russia’s control of some of the world’s largest

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<sup>121</sup> Luiza CH. Savage, ‘A historic moment. An impossible challenge. Obama,’ *Maclean’s Magazine*, November 17, 2008, 30.

reserves of oil and natural gas means that it wields great power both economically and politically.<sup>122</sup> It seems that the Obama administration understands this and Vice-President Joe Biden delivered a clear message to this effect at a security conference in Munich in February 2009.

His message reflected much of the same content from the most recent Presidential campaign, which relayed to the world that the U.S. under Obama was ready to strike a new balance in its relations around the globe. In particular, he reiterated what Obama had been saying in the run-up to the election in relation to Russia, stating, “It’s time, to paraphrase President Obama, to press the reset button and to revisit the many areas where we can and should work together.”<sup>123</sup> The remarks by Vice-President Biden were welcomed by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Sergei Ivanov. In response, he stated that, “The U.S. administration sent a very strong signal, which was heard, the signal that they are ready to resume U.S.-Russian dialogue, to talk on all issues....”<sup>124</sup>

The appointment of Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State should also go a long way in legitimizing the new administration on the international stage. Since her appointment she has been popularizing a new catchphrase, ‘smart power’. The concept combines ‘soft power’ and ‘hard power’ and as Secretary of State Clinton describes it:

...the full range of tools at our disposal-diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal and cultural-picking the right tool or

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<sup>122</sup> Stephen F. Cohen, ‘McCain, Obama and Russia,’ *The Nation*, June 30, 2008, <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20080714/cohen>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2009.

<sup>123</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation, ‘US seeks to rework foreign ties,’ *One-Minute World News*, 7 February 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7876184.stm>; Internet; accessed 7 February 2009.

<sup>124</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation, ‘Russia ‘positive’ on US approach,’ *One-Minute World News*, 8 February 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7877415.stm>; Internet; accessed 8 February 2009.

combination of tools for each situation. With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of our foreign policy.<sup>125</sup>

All in all the Obama has wasted little time in making changes, demonstrating to the world that it serious about its approach to international affairs. As evidence, Presidential orders have been signed to close Guantanamo Bay, secret prisons have been closed and aggressive interrogation techniques formerly used in Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations abroad have been forbidden.

Still, one of the great tests of the Obama administration will be the management of the Russian portfolio. David Satter has suggested Obama must ensure that his Russian policies are based on sound principles and not shaped by personalities.<sup>126</sup> In this he means that Obama cannot be swayed by the charisma of Putin and his team only to ignore the rule of law and or as he states ‘criminalization’ that was ignored while Yeltsin preached democracy. Additionally, Satter advises that the West has to be wary of Russia and its sincerity.<sup>127</sup> He uses as examples of this the defence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia by Russia as they claimed their independence, while crushing uprisings in Chechnya under similar circumstances. The opposition to the U.S. sponsored missile defence system in Poland has also highlighted the fickleness of Russia. In one breath they are denouncing the program, while in the next they sponsor an Iranian nuclear program for which the missiles are intended to defend against.

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<sup>125</sup> Luiza CH. Savage, ‘The dream job from hell,’ *MacLean’s Magazine*, 5 February 2009, <http://blog.macleans.ca/2009/02/05/the-dream-job-from-hell/>; Internet; accessed 8 February 2009.

<sup>126</sup> David Satter, ‘Obama And Russia,’ *Forbes Magazine*, November 14, 2008 [http://www.forbes.com/2008/11/13/obama-putin-russia-oped-cx\\_ds\\_1114satter.html](http://www.forbes.com/2008/11/13/obama-putin-russia-oped-cx_ds_1114satter.html); Internet; accessed 31 January 2009.

<sup>127</sup> David Satter, ‘Obama And Russia,’ *Forbes Magazine*, November 14, 2008 [http://www.forbes.com/2008/11/13/obama-putin-russia-oped-cx\\_ds\\_1114satter.html](http://www.forbes.com/2008/11/13/obama-putin-russia-oped-cx_ds_1114satter.html); Internet; accessed 31 January 2009.

With the election of Obama, the West is at a crossroads. There is little doubt that the relationship between the U.S. and Russia requires attention. Because of the recent global recession, a new Cold War is craved by neither side. Considering this, it is reported that Obama is scheduled to meet in bi-lateral talks with President Medvedev during the G20 economic summit in London.<sup>128</sup> This meeting closely follows Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton's early March 2009 meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov. In view of the limited mention of Russia during Obama's Presidential campaign, it will be interesting to see in what direction the new administration takes in its relationship with Russia.<sup>129</sup> If the first few months are any indication, the outlook should remain positive, but only if the Russians decide to reciprocate.

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<sup>128</sup> *The Associated Press*, 'Obama to Meet with Russian, Chinese leaders,' 26 March 2009, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ibUbFkt3uMhJSCGadlCbz43RjogD97584U80>; Internet; accessed 29 March 2009.

<sup>129</sup> During the Presidential campaign Barack Obama made limited mention of America's relationship with Russia. During his campaign, on 15 July 2008, he offered the following comments: "Beyond taking these immediate, urgent steps, it's time to send a clear message: America seeks a world with no nuclear weapons. As long as nuclear weapons exist, we must retain a strong deterrent. But instead of threatening to kick them out of the G-8, we need to work with Russia to take U.S. and Russian ballistic missiles off hair-trigger alert; to dramatically reduce the stockpiles of our nuclear weapons and material; to seek a global ban on the production of fissile material for weapons; and to expand the U.S.-Russian ban on intermediate-range missiles." Remarks of Senator Barack Obama: A New Strategy for a New World Washington, D.C. July 15, 2008, [http://www.barackobama.com/2008/07/15/remarks\\_of\\_senator\\_barack\\_obam\\_96.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2008/07/15/remarks_of_senator_barack_obam_96.php); Internet; accessed 29 March 2009.

## CONCLUSION

Several opportunities for solid international relations have been squandered in recent years. This result is primarily the result of broken promises by the United States and NATO, promises that they had made to then Russian president Gorbachev relating to NATO expansion. At the end of the Cold War, instead of welcoming post Soviet Russia with open arms and as an equal partner, both President Clinton and then George W. Bush undertook a winner take all approach and attempted to force unilateral concessions first on Yeltsin, and then, on Putin. Their policies have included the expansion of NATO into Russia's neighboring states (breaking a promise to Gorbachev); they have removed themselves from the anti ballistic missile treaty; and they have encircled Russia with U.S. and NATO bases in the former Soviet states.<sup>130</sup>

For most of the 1990s, the policy taken by the West (led by America) was one of treating Russia like a defeated foe. Many government officials in the Kremlin began to believe that it was as if the West thought that it could manipulate Russian economic and political direction. This included efforts by USAID and the influx of enormous sums of money that flooded markets from the IMF and the World Bank. It is these remarkably ill-advised policies, which the Kremlin viewed as an obvious attempt to isolate and subjugate Russia. Some authors and researchers such as Stephen Cohen, Edward Lucas and Mark MacKinnon have termed the fall-out and after-math a 'New Cold War'.

In light of this, matters have been further complicated good relations with Kremlin elites persuading most Russian government bureaucrats that their country's best option now lies in a reversion to pre-perestroika control and customs. As a result of NATO's strategy of enlargement, interpreted by the Kremlin as an overt intention to

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<sup>130</sup> Stephen F. Cohen, Gorbachev's Lost Legacy, The Nation, February 24, 2005.

reduce the Russian sphere of influence and control of its resources, any previous gains made toward pro-Western thinking have been wasted. This has led to a revival of Russian nationalism and assertiveness.<sup>131</sup> Although the intervening years amid the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the shelving of Russian communism showed hope and promise, the divisions of the East-West relationship remain great.

Twenty years ago, the Cold War ended and the leaders of both the USSR and the U.S. met at Malta to formally declare an end to the superpower confrontation. A new era and spirit of cooperation was ahead. Today the East-West relationship lies in disarray. The Kremlin, both weak militarily and unstable financially, has moved closer toward its nuclear arsenal, even expanding instead of reducing it. NATO, driven by the two previous U.S. administrations of George W. Bush has done the same. The Obama foreign policy, that wishes to 'push the restart button', may provide a smoothing of relations. However, disheartening is the fact that this and Hillary Clinton's 'smart power' comment are the only remotely positive statements issued by the Obama administration to date in relation to renewed spirit of cooperation with Russia.

Considering the Georgian affair, it is ironic to think that the world has learned anything from history. International law or 'the rule of law' is one thing, but it does not mean anything if there is not disciplined behaviour. It is also challenged when it is confronted by fierce nationalistic and ethnic pressures. Under the authoritarian rule of the Soviet Union, these forces of loathing were kept under fierce control. Following the collapse of the USSR, globalization and interdependence were the new realities that were to take hold and suppress the old quarrels between adversaries. In essence, it was

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<sup>131</sup> Stephen F. Cohen, 'McCain, Obama and Russia,' *The Nation*, June 30, 2008.



hypothesized that a sense of openness, oneness and global values would triumph over national interest. In reality the opposite, is happening today despite our inter-connected world.

As commodities, people, and information flow freely across borders, especially in the cyber world, national boundaries seem to be falling. In the face of this there is an increasing sense of nationalism. There are many factors for this, but none probably more prevalent than the spread of democracy. This Western influence has fueled the attractiveness of speaking out and acting on behalf of values and interests. Moreover, the European Union is a prime example of democratic nations working together in somewhat harmony, notwithstanding an intense, competitive process to administer the national interests of its members.

The Russian government on the other hand, seems to loathe the thought of the West pushing its ideologies of freedom and democracy. Rather the current leaders seem to view this as humiliation and desire retaliation. Russia refuses truly open and free democratic society as an opportunity to move ahead. Instead, the government desires to rebuild the greatness on the heels of their history, not progress. This is most evident in the foreign policy of their nation. The policy is their outward demonstration to the world of their desires as a nation. In this, the government has stated that they wish to remedy what they see as the dismantling of their greatness. Under Putin, Russians are determined to rebuild their nation in the spirit of their rich history. For the foreseeable future, Western interaction with Russia is going to be awkward and, therefore at best cumbersome. There are indications that at times diplomacy and cooperation will be the order of the day. This is quite evident in the global fight against terrorism. In contrast,

there will be times when the situation will be adversarial. The Georgia, Ukraine and Ballistic Missile Defence issues are testament to this. This is no different than the history of the last century when it comes to East-West relations.

However, since Putin's rise to power, one thing is certain and that is that the collapse of the Soviet Union did not mean that Russia was ready to forgive and forget. Quite the opposite has occurred. In spite of efforts on the part of the Western nations to aid the country toward freedom and democracy, modern Russia still has an inclination for autocracy. This seems to be part of its population's fabric, which pre-dates the days of communism. As well, there remains a fear of encirclement and a wariness of foreigners. The push eastwards by NATO and the EU, notwithstanding reassurances of non-threatening intent, does little to comfort the Russian regime.

After the Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna divided Europe into areas of influence between empires and nations.<sup>132</sup> This agreement, no matter how absurd it may seem today, averted war and kept the peace in Europe for almost a century. Perhaps something similar is required today. At the very least, a binding and enforceable agreement between Russia, NATO and the EU needs to be addressed. In this, NATO should break from any encouragement toward the membership of more nations. Georgia and Ukraine should have to wait a little longer, but at the same time, it should be made clear that any Russian advances westward to reclaim its sphere of influence will be met with resistance by NATO and the EU. In this, there still remain shadows of the Cold War.

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<sup>132</sup> Christopher Meyer, 'A return to 1815 is the way forward for Europe,' *The Times*, September 2, 2008, [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest\\_contributors/article4656255.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest_contributors/article4656255.ece); Internet; accessed 18 February 2009.

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