This is the first book to reveal what people in the eastern half of Europe really think about the international political climate in which they find themselves after the Cold War. Most of the chapters in this volume are written from the viewpoints of the main countries of the region: Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics. These chapters reveal the 'inside' view of how security looks from each country.

Uniquely, *Perceptions of security* presents the perspectives both of the general public and of international affairs experts. Leading opinion analysts interpret the state of public opinion in each of the six nations and key members of the countries' foreign policy élites give their own assessments of security issues. Topics addressed in this book include the possible expansion of NATO, the policies of Russia in the region, the special place of Ukraine, and the overall challenge of finding security for Europe's new democracies.

Richard Smoke was Professor of Political Science and Research Director of the Center for Foreign Policy Development at the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Brown University.

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PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY

Public opinion and expert assessments in Europe's new democracies

edited by
Richard Smoke

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Abbreviations

CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe (treaty)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (before December 1994)
CSFR	Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (before January 1993)
EC	European Community (before November 1993)
EU	European Union (since November 1993)
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (since December 1994)
PfP	Partnership for Peace
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organization

The staff of the Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies, and all of the contributors to this volume, would like to dedicate this book to the memory of our colleague and friend, Richard Smoke, who died as this book was nearing completion. As co-director of the Security for Europe project, Professor Smoke was responsible for organizing and coordinating the entire project involving scholars from seven countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Throughout his career, he dedicated his work to the goals of enhancing world peace and security for all. For Richard Smoke, security could be realized only when all were secure. Security for one individual, group, state, or nation was not genuine if it came at the expense of a loss of security for others. This central principle guided his work on this project and in this, his last book. We all miss him immensely, but we also dedicate this book as well as our own future efforts to enhancing the cause of peace and security for which he devoted his entire professional life.

Preface

This book surveys and explores, in a broad way, how security is perceived in the major new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. "Security" is used primarily in its standard sense in international affairs, namely political and military security, but other aspects of security are discussed as well. The book explores perceptions of security in six countries: Russia, Ukraine, and the four Central European countries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Thirteen of the book's seventeen chapters are written by authors from those countries. These chapters and the book as a whole book examine the security of Central and Eastern Europe as an entire region, as well as the security issues facing each of the countries individually.

The book is the product of a collaboration that was unusual in not one but two ways. It involved research organizations from all the countries just named plus the United States and Germany. And it involved specialists from two quite different kinds of research organizations: ones that study international security, and ones that study public opinion. The need for both kinds is explained shortly. Thirteen research organizations in Europe participated in the collaboration. The European authors represented in this book are senior researchers in these organizations. (They are identified specifically in the contributors' listing at the end of the book.)

The effort that brought all these organizations together was called the "Security for Europe Project." It was led by the Watson Institute's Center for Foreign Policy Development, of Brown University in the USA. The research agenda was agreed jointly by all the collaborating organizations, as further described in chapter 2. More information about the organization and history of the Security for Europe Project is found in appendix 3.

This book, and the Project from which it derives, were conceived in response to the profound changes that have occurred in Europe. Through more than forty years of Cold War the political landscape of Europe had been frozen. Then in 1989 a torrent of changes began. The countries of

Central Europe regained their independence, and immediately faced wholly new questions of what their situation in Europe now was, and of how to find security. Then in late 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed. Countries emerged from the rubble, like Russia and Ukraine, that were both new and also very old lands. For these states too, new questions arose of how to relate to their region and to Europe generally, and how to find security. In short, the old landscape had vanished and a completely new one was appearing.

As it did, ancient conflicts began rising to the surface. Previously the Soviet empire had quashed any tensions among nationalities and ethnic groups under its control. The end of the empire left a vacuum in which old hostilities could reappear. In Yugoslavia, tensions that had been long growing erupted into open warfare. Through much of the eastern half of Europe other tensions, though not yet nearly so violent, began emerging that posed new questions for security.

Early in the 1990s, therefore, it was evident that the fresh landscape required an equally fresh exploration. The panaroma was so new that no familiar signposts could be assumed. It was from this starting point that this book, and the Security for Europe Project, were born. A fresh inquiry would be launched, making none of the old familiar assumptions. The exploration would begin from a completely blank slate and would survey the terrain in a broad way to capture its fresh features.

Two decisions were made at the outset. One was that this exploration would focus on security in the eastern half of Europe, as it was perceived and being thought about by people in that region themselves. Although the research effort was led by an American research center, the effort would not be chiefly shaped by the points of view and ideas held by Americans or Westerners. Instead, the research would identify the concerns, hopes, anxieties and expectations about security and peace felt by people in the region. The fact that nearly all of this book comprises chapters by authors from the region reflects that commitment.

While it might have been desirable to include researchers and research organizations from every one of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, there are so many that this was not feasible. For practical reasons the effort was limited to the two most important of the post-Soviet countries, Russia and Ukraine, and to three of the most important Central European states, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. During the time research was underway, Czechoslovakia split into two states, the Czech and Slovak Republics, and work naturally continued in both. Wars in Yugoslavia and in the Caucasus region were deliberately excluded as topics in themselves, but their important implications were considered.

The other basic decision made at the outset was to examine the viewpoint of the public in each of these countries, as well as the thinking of experts on foreign and security policy. A truly fresh look at a completely new landscape

should not be confined to the thinking of specialists. The perspective of the general population in these countries needs to be considered also. The hopes, fears and anticipations of the public are important. People in each of these lands have their own point of view on their country's situation in the region and in Europe, and their own point of view on how their country can become secure. Both the public's ideas *and* specialists' ideas need careful examination, particularly when a new international situation has appeared.

The viewpoint of the public was doubly important at this time because these countries, so long ruled by central authorities, were now making transitions toward democracy. In the early 1990s, every one of the countries represented in this book was in some stage of becoming democratic. Some were further along in the process than others, but even those where democracy was least developed had adopted democracy as a goal. For countries that had not previously been democratic, but now were trying to be, an examination of the public's views clearly was especially important, because policy would now have to take public attitudes into account. (More is said about the public opinion research in chapter 2.)

Central and Eastern Europe: the central area

For these reasons, the book gives approximately equal attention to the perceptions of policy specialists and the perspective of the public. Separate chapters, two from each country, present each perspective. The perspective of policy specialists – and of governments – is assessed by leading policy experts from the six countries. The viewpoint of the public is described by leading public opinion specialists from the countries.

Part I of the book gives the reader a factual introduction to the subject matter and, in a second chapter, a brief statement of the research methods and assumptions that were used in developing this book. The next four parts contain the chapters by the European authors. A single concluding chapter, in Part VI, offers some overall observations that may be derived from the preceding discussions viewed as a whole.

There are three appendices. One assesses public attitudes in eastern and western Germany, a country of enormous importance to Central and Eastern Europe. One gives a synopsis of the major East–West arms control agreements of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The third appendix gives information about the Security for Europe Project, including acknowledgements of the contributions to it and to this book made by many people and organizations.

This book is intended primarily for scholars and students in Europe and North America. For the benefit of students, the work presupposes no prior knowledge of the subject; the first chapter begins in simple terms that lay the groundwork for the more complicated assessments that follow in later chapters. The book is intended also for policy specialists inside and outside governments, and for general readers interested in world and European affairs.

Part I

Introduction

15

Public attitudes in Russia

Andrei Melville MOSCOW

1 Introduction

Before describing any of the substance of public attitudes in Russia today, it is necessary to explain in a book meant mainly for Western readers some basic aspects of the situation of the Russian people. It is not possible in the current period that the state of the Russian mind could resemble what is found in the West.[1]

In the first place, one must remember that Russia has practically no tradition of public involvement in matters of foreign and security affairs. In both Soviet and czarist times, such matters were the business of the state. Even until fairly recently, even the educated strata of the public were given no reason to have views on such matters and any views they had were not listened to. Beginning with the 1960s, some elite elements began to develop their own opinions. But only with the arrival of Gorbachev and *perestroika* in the 1980s did the idea begin to develop in Russian society that multiple points of view in this sphere were possible and perhaps legitimate. Even now the idea of a "public opinion" on foreign and security matters is a somewhat novel one in Russian culture.

As public opinion begins to form in any culture, its first stage is the development of stereotypes. From various sources, first of all the media, people in Russia have absorbed stereotypes about other countries, about the basic relationship of those countries to Russia, and about Russia's place in the world. When asked their opinions, in polls or by other methods, to a considerable extent they simply repeat the stereotypes they have absorbed. The result is "public opinion" in a sense, but the largely stereotypic nature of this opinion must be kept in mind. Some stereotypes may be held in a deep and lasting way, and thus become "attitudes" of a kind. Only as a culture develops do people, beginning with the better-educated strata, gradually evolve beyond stereotypes into more thoughtful kinds of opinions

and attitudes. The Russian public today is only at an early stage in this evolution.[2]

There is another reason why public views in this area are not much developed in Russia. In the particular circumstances of the 1990s, Russians are primarily inward-looking ("introverted"). As discussed shortly, the internal problems of Russia are so enormous, and the specific external threats are so few, that it is only natural that Russians are giving little thought to the outside world. At the same time, certain recent events have generated several fixed ideas and almost obsessive anxieties, which are discussed below.

A third fundamental feature of the Russian public mood is confusion. Even elites feel considerable confusion; the feelings of the general public are practically chaotic in important respects. It is not unusual for the same individual to express contradictory viewpoints within the span of a few minutes. In the short time since 1989, people have lived through the loss of the European allies, the sudden switch of traditional foes to the status of friends, the August 1991 coup, the sudden break-up of the Soviet Union, the emergence of new threats from places that previously were safely inside the Union, several elections, a military attack on Parliament ordered by President Yeltsin in October 1993 and the bloody and extremely ineffective use of military force by federal troops in Chechnya. After so many drastic events in such a short time, it is not surprising that people should feel confused. And all this does not count the disastrous decline in the economy.

Of all these changes, perhaps the most deeply confusing is the matter of what "our country" is. Throughout the lifetime of everyone, until just a few years ago, "our country" was the Soviet Union. It is difficult for people to keep in mind that "our country" is now Russia. Of course nearly everyone understands that when they think about it. But when they are not thinking about it, the previous deeper feeling of what "our country" is naturally returns. Today it is still common for even well-educated people to think spontaneously of the Soviet territory when they think of "my country," and then perhaps to correct themselves. The term "near abroad," meaning the former Soviet territories outside Russia has come quickly into general use precisely because people find the term helpful to overcome the confusion.[3]

However the very term "near abroad" also signals that this region has a special emotional status for Russians. The term "far abroad" means all lands outside the former Soviet territory, in other words everything that was "abroad" in the Soviet era. Emotionally still, "far abroad" really means for Russians what other people on earth mean by "abroad." The so-called "near abroad" has an intermediate status, special and ambiguous. Emotionally it is not foreign territory, even when people can remember that legally it is.

2 Major anxieties of the Russian public

Two anxieties are fundamental in the viewpoint of the Russian public today. One is the primacy of the internal crisis, which is inseparably intertwined with the immense fall in the country's international position. The other is the near abroad and the problems it presents. In the absence of any great enemy someplace on Earth, no other question or topic that could be related to external affairs carries much force for the public at present. This chapter will take up various more concrete topics later, but they can only be properly understood in the context of these fundamentals of the Russian public's viewpoint.

The internal crisis of Russia is so overwhelming and has so many aspects that by itself it leaves many citizens bewildered and confused. What has been presented as a process of democratization has produced a series of political crises, with a nearly universal expectation of more to come. The fabric of society is deformed and disconnected, in some spheres still authoritarian and top-down, in other spheres freewheeling and hyper-individualistic. Organized crime, especially in urban areas, now surpasses anything found nearly anywhere else. Meanwhile Russia's economy is lurching, generally downward, although with certain pockets of prosperity (sometimes crime-connected). No quick description can communicate how the political, social and economic dimensions of current life add up, especially in urban regions, to an experience of practically permanent crisis and, at times, near-chaos.[4]

Another chapter of this book emphasizes that the public in Central European countries feel that internal insecurities are much more important than any external danger. Yet Russians would say that the internal crises of those countries are mild compared to Russia's crisis. To report that the chief insecurities felt by Russians involve internal, not external, matters would be an understatement. Asked about what threatens Russia, citizens respond spontaneously by speaking about economic collapse, soaring crime, ethnic troubles, the general spread of chaos and fear of the outright disintegration of Russia itself. They rarely mention the far abroad.[5]

So severe and lasting an internal crisis would hardly be possible in a country that was a true superpower. People feel this, and in this way at least, the collapse of the superpower of which people used to be proud is linked to their feelings about their daily situation now. Whatever their opinions (which may often be critical) about various specific actions taken by the old USSR, it is hard for Russians to forget that, not long ago, words spoken in the Kremlin could make the world tremble, while now Russia is receiving handouts that almost seem like charity. In today's public attitudes, feelings of loss of position in the world mingle with feelings of loss of a stable, functioning society at home. For many, the old Soviet way of life may not

have been the best they could imagine, but it also was far from the worst, and it was *their* way of life. It was familiar and, for many Soviet citizens, not so uncomfortable. In many ways it is now crumbling or gone.[6]

Among the public in Russia, it is not uncommon to find an attitude of outright hopelessness about Russia's situation. Of course this feeling is far from universal. Many people feel that positive possibilities remain, and there are even some optimists. But hopeless feelings are widespread. Focus group and other research reveals relatively common feelings that Russia is in a state of complete collapse and degradation, and that no path to a better future is clearly visible.[7]

The one subject involving the world outside Russia to which Russians give great attention is the near abroad. As noted, this is a matter of "external" relations only in a rather unreal sense. The Russian public is all too well aware that a number of dangers or possible dangers, some of them complicated, are arising in the near abroad. It is worth emphasizing that for the public, the fact that this is possible *at all* is already a disaster. Only a few years ago, and throughout all the time that anyone can remember, the whole of these regions was totally and unquestionably under Moscow's control. Any internal threat from within the Soviet Union was simply not a possibility. The mere fact that one must now think about a dozen actual and potential risks from the near abroad is therefore a shock in itself. For citizens this is one of the basic realities that shows how much has been lost.

For the public in Russia, by far the greatest question involving the near abroad is the threat to Russians living there. Even something as important as large-scale fighting between non-Russians, for example recently in Tajikistan, is not nearly as important to the public in Russia. Threats to the human rights and sometimes outright violations of human rights of the Russians living in various countries of the near abroad are reported almost daily in the media in Russia and are a common topic of conversation. About 25 million Russians live in these countries. So most people in Russia have friends or relatives, or know people who have friends or relatives, living there. The difficulties facing the Russians living there now, and the difficulties and dangers they may face in the future, are not only a "political" problem "for society," but for many people are matters of immediate and personal concern.

It is essential to keep in mind the viewpoint of Russians on what happened at the end of 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. Previously those 25 million Russians had simply been living, like all Russians, in their own country, which naturally was the Soviet Union. Then suddenly these Russians found themselves living "in a foreign country" through no action of their own, and indeed *against their will*. No one had consulted them about whether the Soviet Union should be ended and they were not responsible for it. Suddenly they discovered they were now "foreigners" living in

new countries that were not their own. The problems created thereby can be profound, both for these Russians and also, to be sure, for the dominant national groups in the new countries.

The concern for these Russians felt by the public in Russia is strong enough for it to be one area where a substantial part of the public would support strong action – force – by Moscow if it seemed necessary to protect the Russians in the near abroad, particularly to protect them from any physical threat. It is important to notice that from the viewpoint of the public in Russia, any such action would be defensive, not offensive. Public support for forceful action by Moscow to protect these Russians would apply, of course, to action taken within the territory of the former Soviet Union, not beyond it.

One more point should be made about public attitudes in Russia about the near abroad. To a considerable degree, the public realizes that the problems of the Russians in the new countries are complicated. Particularly in urban areas, much of the public does not have an overly simplistic view of this question. Rather, much of the public understands that the dominant national groups in the new countries also have rights, and that good solutions to these problems will be complicated and not easy to find. The public in Russia would much prefer negotiated, peaceful solutions.[8]

3 Specific attitudes and perceptions

Against the background now sketched of the public's strongest anxieties, we may now turn to some more concrete topics. The topics discussed below are limited to security and foreign affairs, plus several topics directly linked to them.

External threats

A basic and simple paradox exists in Russian public attitudes. On the one hand, people realize that there is no outside great power to be feared, at least for the present. On the other, people feel that the country of Russia is in so precarious a state that it might be in a weak position vis-à-vis any new threat that might appear.

Russians are very glad that the Cold War, and the sense of threat that it brought, is over. After their immense sufferings and losses of World War II, Russians feel that they love and want peace as much or more than any people. One of the positive features of today's situation for Russians is that there is no specific enemy and no immediate threat from anywhere in the world.

People also feel that their country should be strong, and is not. With vast territories to protect and hardly any natural barriers such as oceans or

mountain ranges, Russians feel today (as they have for centuries) a vulnerability to attack from the outside. A Russia that is strong in military and other ways could protect itself. But people today fear that economic collapse, political paralysis and the general internal crisis must surely mean that Russia is weak. The result is a generalized, non-specific anxiety about the outside world and threats that could appear from some direction. This anxiety about Russia's insecure place in the world and about what the future might bring naturally adds one more element to people's overall fears.[9]

The United States and the West

In one important way, Russians have traditionally been interested in no foreign country more than the USA (it is very often referred to by the equivalent Russian initials, not by words). In psychologists' language, the USA has high "salience" for Russians, whether the content of their feelings is favorable or unfavorable. Russians inhabit the largest country on earth and one that, for decades, was one of only two superpowers on earth. For these and other reasons, Russians wish to compare their country to the greatest other power on earth, which at present is the USA. Thus the USA, more than any country, is Russians' point of reference when thinking about other countries in general.

The content of public views of the USA in Russia is still somewhat polarized. On the one hand, there are a considerable number of Russians who continue to see the USA as a model for Russia. Some even see the USA as an ally. Several attitudes are apparent here. Those who hold democratic values feel that the USA is the greatest proponent of those values; the same applies to people who like Western values and perspectives generally. Other people who may hold different values may merely like the idea of Russia and the USA as partners. Here we see a residue of an old idea, once rather popular, that these two powers should together control the world.

On the other hand, there are many Russians who feel suspicious and even adversarial about the USA. Few now would put their feelings in ideological terms. Also, not many people, except some with links to the military, think of the USA as a probable future enemy. The most common suspicion is of American domination, especially economic domination. Drawing partly on the Marxist idea, on which they were raised, that economic struggle is by far the most important part of international life, these people fear American economic power and fear that the USA may use it to dominate and exploit Russia. There is also some anxiety about cultural domination, as American television shows and commercials penetrate increasingly.

The fear of economic domination by the USA (or by the West in general) appears in one particular form with considerable frequency. Russians fear

that their country is going to be reduced to Third World status, as a more or less deliberate act by the USA and the West. Some Russian intelligentsia speak of a Western policy to "deindustrialize" Russia. Among the general public, it is not uncommon to hear anxieties voiced that Russia will become an American economic colony. Everyone knows that Russia is both enormously rich in natural resources and at present is industrially backward by Western standards (not counting the military sector). Many people fear that the real goals of the West are to get the raw materials for itself, while taking steps to make sure that Russian industry will not be any competition.[10]

Once people are thinking this way, it is not hard to find "evidence" supporting this view. For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) sets conditions for loans. The IMF says that its conditions are determined merely by objective economic factors. But proud Russians may see it differently. Believing that the IMF is dominated by the West, and by the USA primarily, people complain that the IMF is "dictating preconditions" for its loans, preconditions that surely suit its sponsors. Here again, as so frequently, we find Russian attitudes taking shape against the background of keen awareness of how great the country was for so long. Why should a country that until recently was a global superpower now find that some Western organization is dictating preconditions to it?

Part of the negative feeling about the USA now is an unconscious reaction to a collapse of earlier illusions that huge American aid would miraculously solve Russia's domestic problems. In a much broader way too, there was a kind of "Russian–Western honeymoon" for a time in Russian public attitudes. Large numbers of people who grasped that Western aid could bring, at best, only limited benefits also shared in this feeling, which partly was just a normal, very human reaction and relief after many years of tense hostility. The honeymoon period has now faded, as Russia's situation grows no better and the realization sinks in that the Western world has only limited interest in Russia.

The media and information

The Russian public holds a deeply sceptical attitude toward the media and toward the information received from the government and the media about foreign and security affairs, and about public affairs generally. Chapter 3 discussed dissatisfaction with information and the media among the public in Central Europe. The public attitude in Russia is much stronger than dissatisfaction. Almost unanimously, Russians believe that the information they receive is unprofessional, insufficient and, indeed, untrustworthy. People not only doubt what they are told, they commonly believe that it is misinformation, perhaps even deliberate disinformation. There is a wide-

spread cynical feeling that the whole of Russian media, including its relationship with the state, is an organized system for feeding the people what those in power want them to hear.[11] However, the public were very pleased, in the weeks following the Chechnya intervention, to see the frank and open treatment of that war in the newspapers and on the independent (not state-controlled) television channels.

To a considerable extent, Russians' deep scepticism is a continuation of a similar public attitude during the Soviet era. During that era not only was it generally understood that the media transmitted whatever the authorities wished, but further, society developed an art of gleaning the truth by "reading between the lines" in Soviet media and by passing along information from foreign sources. Since this stance was already deeply ingrained, it is only natural that it largely continues now, when people also mistrust the state (if for somewhat different reasons). Although some newspapers are less mistrusted than others, and certain writers and television programs may gain some reputation for honesty for a while, the public does not believe it has any lasting source of trustworthy information about foreign affairs or any public affairs. The public's cynicism about information from official sources and about the media was only deepened, first after the destruction of the White House in the autumn of 1993, and especially after the official propaganda, including lies, about the bloodshed in Chechnya.

Ukraine

The public in Russia hold extremely diverse views about the independence of Ukraine. There also is considerable confusion, in part simply as a product of public feelings that could hardly be more sharply conflicting. Some people fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty and independence. Others feel that historically and culturally, Ukraine is simply part of Russia and that any "independent" Ukraine is a senseless idea that should quickly come to an end. Every degree of opinion between these extremes can also be found.

Perceptions of Ukraine provide a good example of the confused and jumbled state of the public mind generally. This enormous diversity of views is found in one political "layer" of attitudes. Right next to it, in an emotional layer of feelings, the near abroad including Ukraine is felt to be not really abroad, as discussed earlier. Emotionally, most Russians simply cannot comprehend that Russia and Ukraine have become two independent countries. Thus it is common, even for individuals who say that politically they respect Ukrainian independence, to make some remark in the same conversation that, for instance, refers to Kiev as one of "our" cities. Similar disconnections among attitudes are found across many topics.

The fact that Ukraine is not emotionally separated from Russia in the Russian mind is not only a source of difficulties; it also has positive

implications. Most Russians do not accept that there is even a slight chance that political confrontations between the two could lead to military conflict. Here is an attitude strikingly different from the public's view in Central Europe and Germany, where a military clash is one of the possibilities the public takes seriously. Not surprisingly, the public in Ukraine tend to share the attitude of the public in Russia (as discussed in chapter 13). The Russian and Ukrainian peoples have shared the same country and the same culture for so long that war is almost unthinkable.

Simultaneously, and perhaps paradoxically, the Russian public can be outraged and even a bit frightened by actions of the Ukrainian government. Russians commonly feel that the ambitions of the authorities in Kiev are excessive and even dangerous. On this topic as on many others, Russians' feelings are much influenced by Moscow's official rhetoric and confrontation at the state level easily translates into popular mistrust and fears. People generally assume, however, that Kiev's excesses can be handled by means well short of war.

Slavic unity

An attitude appears to be growing among the public in Russia that a "Slavic unity" exists and has always existed among Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, and that it inevitably will reassert itself again. In 1992, just after the sudden and frustrating collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of these three as independent countries, this idea could be encountered only sometimes. In 1993 and since, it has become more widespread.[12] Of course Russia, Belarus and Ukraine are the only Slavic states of the former Soviet Union.

This "Slavic unity" is understood primarily as a deep blood relationship, and a historical, cultural, psychological and emotional affinity among Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians who are felt to be practically the same nation. Among some people this feeling of unity has an almost metaphysical overtone. The Russian people have great difficulty accepting – and ultimately perhaps cannot accept – the separation of the three, and want to believe that sooner or later their natural unity will triumph again.

Here is another reason why there is no place in today's Russian mentality for any idea of a "Ukrainian threat." This also may be why there is almost no interest among the Russian public in the question of the nuclear weapons in Ukraine. Except for some among the educated elite who are concerned about the global proliferation of nuclear weapons, Russians are paying little attention to the Ukrainian weapons or to any matter involving nuclear weapons.

Interestingly, the sense of Slavic unity among Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, which is more a feeling than a thought-through idea, seems to be distinctly different from traditional pan-Slav ideology. For centuries,

various intellectuals in Russia and other Slavic countries put forward pan-Slavism as an intellectual doctrine and a political program. But traditional pan-Slavism usually embraced all Slavs, including the South Slavs who live in the Balkans and the West Slavs – Poles, Czechs and Slovaks. Today's attitude in Russia seems not to include these peoples and certainly does not contain a wish for any assertive attempt to create some kind of political bond among them all. Part of the reason for this is doubtless the vividness of the distinction between the near abroad and the far abroad.

The new form of feelings of Slavic unity may help explain why most of the *public* in Russia did not become greatly interested in the civil war in the former Yugoslavia for a long time. In spite of a traditional sympathy for the Serbs, and in spite of many statements by certain political figures, events in Yugoslavia did not deeply engage most of the public for years. This must also be seen in the context of several wars occurring during the same period *within* the near abroad. However, pro-Serbian feelings among the Russian public grew during 1994.[13]

Nationalism and political ambitions

Russians' attitude about the ambitions of the Kiev government is typical of public attitudes about nationalistic ambitions and striving for independence in all the new states in the near abroad and, for that matter, about similar ambitions and strivings in the autonomous regions within the Russian Federation controlled by non-Russian ethnic groups. (Chechnya is only one such region, of many.) The Russian public are inclined to feel that these nationalistic ambitions are inflamed and manipulated by local politicians.

Most Russians, certainly most living in urban areas and having some education, accept that other nationalities have a right to their own identity.[14] The Soviet Union, and the czarist empire before it, were always multiethnic states and in many significant ways Russians accept and respect the needs of other nationalities for their own identity and culture. Russians feel that these needs, in their moderate and "natural" form, should present little problem. The ambitions of local politicians are blamed for inflating nationalistic feelings out of all proportion, and thereby creating political and social problems which otherwise would not exist. The strong similarities should be noticed between this attitude held by Russians and similar attitudes felt by Ukrainians and Central Europeans (discussed elsewhere in this book). Throughout Eastern and Central Europe this is a point of public consensus. Of course, Russians disagree about whether and how much *Russian* nationalism may be a problem, and may be inflamed by Russian politicians. Obviously a considerable number of Russians are now finding Russian nationalist leaders appealing.

Borders

The public in Russia are generally aware that nearly all of Russia's borders, and nearly all borders within the territory of the former Soviet Union, were drawn arbitrarily and thus are not very legitimate. This is not an area of public ignorance. The public are generally aware that many borders are simply lines drawn on maps by communist bureaucrats.

Beyond this, the public are rather confused and unsure what practical conclusions should be drawn. There are conflicting impulses. Some people feel that since the lines are artificial and do not mean much to begin with, it should be possible and reasonable to change them. These people are not interested in increasing Russian territory for its own sake, but rather in adjusting borders where the current ones split some nationality into two countries, or to redress clear injustices. On the other hand, many people feel that it could be dangerous to start making changes. Since nearly all borders are questionable, changing some could be potentially explosive. The net result of these two contrary impulses is a sense of confusion. The public hear demands from various sources for border changes and do not know how to respond.[15]

In 1992, in the months following the collapse of the USSR, the public were worried about the shrinking territory of the former superpower. This concern has diminished as time has passed and borders have apparently stabilized.

Peacekeeping

The Russian public have relatively complicated attitudes about peacekeeping, including who should do it and where. For Russians there is a decisive difference between peacekeeping outside and peacekeeping inside the territory of the former Soviet Union. Again we see how central it is in Russian attitudes that the far abroad is really abroad, and the near abroad is not.

For the world outside the former USSR, Russian attitudes about peacekeeping differ only somewhat from the attitudes of other Europeans. Most Russians support the legitimacy of peacekeeping by the United Nations in the world outside. However, Russians may be somewhat more sceptical than other Europeans that international peacekeeping can be effective in many situations. There is a strong tendency for Russians to think that "outside interference" in local conflicts may aggravate them, and certainly that there is no universal formula for success in peacekeeping.

Another difference in Russian attitudes is that Russians are not enthusiastic about "sending Russian boys" to some far-off place as peacekeepers. In part this feeling results from a suspicion that there may be all too many

situations, in coming years, where Russian boys will be needed to manage conflicts much closer to home. In part this feeling is simply a product of the introversion mentioned earlier. Russia itself is vast, and the near abroad is vaster. Anything beyond that feels far away.

The public in Russia feels emphatically that Russian soldiers who are called upon to risk their lives in peacekeeping anywhere must be volunteers. Here is a point where a consensus within Russia is in full agreement with the consensus in other countries, reported in other chapters.

Attitudes about peacekeeping in the near abroad are strikingly different from those about peacekeeping elsewhere around the world. A consensus of the Russian public feels that *only Russian troops* may be used for peacekeeping in the near abroad. "Foreign" involvement, by the United Nations or anyone else, on the territory of the former Soviet Union is absolutely unacceptable to the great majority of Russians.[16]

Clearly this is a topic on which Russians strongly disagree with the attitudes of Central Europeans, and perhaps more significantly, the attitudes of Ukrainians. The emotional quality of the difference in attitudes can be described in even stronger terms. Russians do not merely hold a different position. The public in Russia *take it for granted* that only Russian forces and no others may act as peacekeepers on formerly Soviet territory. For most Russians this is so clear that the matter is not worth discussing.

Here is one topic where the current policy of the Moscow government is fully rooted in public attitudes. In 1993 and since, Moscow has officially and repeatedly appealed to the world community and the United Nations to give the Russian Federation a mandate to conduct peacekeeping on the former Soviet territory. This appeal, which so far has received little positive response from the world,[17] is not merely a "position" worked out by policy specialists in Moscow; it genuinely reflects an attitude strongly held by the Russian people. (Notice that this means that a more democratic regime in Moscow would not only seek the same goal but might seek it even more vigorously.)

East Central Europe

In general, the public in Russia are not very interested in Hungary, Poland and the Czech and Slovak Republics. People feel that these countries neither present any threat nor have much of importance to offer, and that Russia has dozens of more pressing concerns. Beyond this, two specific attitudes are widely held. From the Western viewpoint these attitudes appear to be in conflict with each other; from the Russian viewpoint they are consistent.

The public in Russia, especially people with some education living in urban areas, generally approve of the fact that these countries now find their own way in the world. Their past control from Moscow is seen as something that was enforced by communism. People feel that these countries today are properly returning to their own identities. At the same time the public in Russia oppose any idea that these countries should join Western structures, such as the European Union or NATO, if Russia does not also join simultaneously. People simply do not accept that these countries should, or should want to, join Western institutions before or without Russia.

From the Western viewpoint, these attitudes seem to be in conflict. If the East Central European countries are really free, they should be free to join whatever institutions they choose. Russians see it differently. For them the central feature of this question is the inclusion of Russia. If Western institutions are going to expand eastward, then their expansion must include Russia. In particular, Russia must not be deliberately excluded.

Here is one manifestation of a feeling that has run very deep in Russia for centuries. Ever since the time of Peter the Great, there has been a recurrent anxiety in the Russian mind that Russia might somehow discover that it is not being included in Europe. Russians have feared that in some fashion they might be pushed away, "defined out," defined as "not European." Down the centuries, making sure that this does not occur has been a recurrent need and often a source of policy. In different periods of history this anxiety has naturally taken different specific forms. In the current period, one form is a Russian belief that any eastward expansion of Western institutions must include Russia if it is to occur at all. In particular, there must be no new "line" drawn – say on Poland's eastern border – that makes it possible for the world to say that "Europe" lies on one side and the other side is "not Europe." The depth of this concern, which is felt by the general public as well as by policy-makers and politicians, must not be underestimated.

Russia as a source of threat?

The public in Russia today hold a mixture of ideas about the possibility of Russia being a threat to others. Naturally, in this country like any other, most people do not see their homeland as a potential military threat to others. However, views in Russia are so very diverse that even that idea can sometimes be found.

There is a widespread acceptance among Russians of a quite different idea of "a Russian threat," namely that Russia's instability can pose a danger to others. Many people readily agree that a collapse of the country into chaos would endanger the outside world and especially Europe. Some are ready to accept comparisons between what Russia could become and the situation of the Balkans today.

Definite disagreements arise over whether a strongly authoritarian regime would be a greater or lesser threat to the outside world. People who wish for such a regime see chaos as the greater danger, for Europe as well as for

Russia. Many other people, especially in urban areas, feel that a new authoritarian regime could create a new danger for Europe and the world. Despite all the things said outside Russia (and sometimes inside) about the so-called authoritarian instincts of Russians, more than half the public is opposed to the imposition of a new dictatorship in Russia on *any* grounds (54 percent against, 28 percent in favor).[18]

There has been much speculation since the December 1993 elections about the extent of public support for the extreme views of Zhirinovsky. A certain number of people voting for his party does not mean that the same number agree with his views. Some people were voting "no" against an almost unbearable status quo. There appears to be no great swing of public opinion back to outright neo-imperial and neo-interventionist ambitions. It seems, rather, that the public are learning to accept today's Russia as it is, without wishing to restore the USSR and without imperial ambitions.[19]

Both focus group and quantitative research show that a majority of people do want Russia to be strong, and to be a great power even if that might mean some deterioration of relations with other countries.[20] This is not at all the same as wanting to embark on a new wave of expansionism. Unquestionably, broad public support has been building since at least sometime in 1993 for a more definite, independent and assertive foreign policy. Previously, people felt that foreign policy seemed to consist too much of agreeing with and following Washington. People want Russia to define its own needs and interests.

However, it is important to observe that people also feel that such a policy is merely normal. It is normal even for ordinary states, and certainly for a great power such as Russia. Some of the mood that to outside observers may seem like assertiveness is really just a desire that Russia be subservient to no foreign power, and that Russia make its own decisions about what is right for itself, as any country does. Many Russians who feel this desire for strength, independence and pride would not make any connection from this to expansionism; indeed many would say expansionism is not at all in Russia's interests and could be dangerous for Russia. Here "expansionism" refers to Russia's stance toward the outer world; the near abroad is a more ambiguous topic.[21]

Other feelings of threat

An earlier chapter mentioned the strong public concern in some other countries about crime, about ecological dangers and about the migration of peoples. These worries are felt also by Russians, in specifically Russian forms. To a large extent these matters are not seen as external.

The huge presence of crime in Russia's cities today has been mentioned already. Ordinary people living in cities must consider the possibility of danger to themselves on a daily basis.[22] The public also are aware in a general way that "mafia" organizations now pervade enormous areas of society and the economy. For many, such things are among the most visible of Russia's illnesses.

There is also awareness of the dangers of "another Chernobyl" or other environmental disasters. Nuclear power stations, as people know, are scattered around various places in the near abroad and Russia. Environmental concerns would be relatively keen, were it not that they tend to be pushed to one side by even more urgent worries. For many people, the feeling that an ecological disaster could occur at any time is just one more ingredient in the more general feeling that society is constantly on the brink of disaster.

Russians see an important movement of peoples already, namely the many Russians who are returning, or who may be returning soon, from various places in the near abroad. The feeling that fellow-Russians are being forced out of places where they have long lived (in some cases for generations) is a natural source of resentment. At the same time, people feel that Russia itself is so poor and so burdened with problems that there is no way that even fellow-Russians can be received. Here is another reason why sentiment is growing that Moscow should take steps to ensure just and reasonable living conditions for the Russians of the near abroad, both for their sake and so that they will not have to move.

There are clear signs that animosities are now growing among the Russian public, especially in cities, toward darker-skinned people – often called "blacks" – from the south. Azerbaijanis and other peoples from the Caucasus area, often seen now in kiosks and market-places in the cities, are widely viewed as profiteering at the expense of ordinary Russians and as occupying jobs that Russians used to hold. Popular resentment has been reinforced by some official actions, for instance some forced deportations of Azerbaijanis ordered by the Moscow mayor's office in 1993. (This sort of official action may be taken partly to create scapegoats, and to deflect public attention from widespread corruption and the huge inability of the bureaucracy to solve real problems.)[23]

4 Concluding remarks

In the early 1990s the Russian people find themselves living in a confusing and extremely difficult time. For decades, nearly all aspects of the life of society and of the country were definite and sure. The life of individuals was secure and, for many, not so unsatisfactory. More recently Russians have experienced a great series of profound shocks and upheavals, which taken together have added up to nothing short of a cataclysm. For most of the public, the huge losses in territories controlled by Moscow, disastrous as those are, are less profound than the stunning decline of the country

internally. A previously firm political order has been replaced by a freer but badly disorganized politics punctuated by crises in Moscow. Society presents people with a bewildering combination of greater freedoms and more opportunities in some respects, combined with severely degraded, even collapsing, services and structures in many other respects. The economy, despite pockets of growth, is falling visibly overall with no upturn in sight. Taken together, these things give many Russians a feeling of living inside a disaster, with worse possibly to come and with outright chaos feeling uncomfortably close. Hopelessness about the future is common.

Against this background, it is not surprising that Russians are fixated on Russia's situation and care little about the outer world. Russians know, with relief, that no great enemy elsewhere threatens attack, and they have hardly any other reason to be interested in the world beyond the near abroad. The near abroad does receive people's selective attention. In particular, current and likely future dangers to the many millions of Russians living there produce anxiety and resentment. The legitimacy of intervention by Moscow to "keep the peace" and protect Russians against any physical threat is taken for granted. Thus all necessary attitudes are already in place in the public mind to produce public support for Moscow's use of force in the near abroad, should circumstances seem to warrant it.

People want Russia to be strong, in military and other ways, and see anxiously that Russia is not. They also feel that their desire for a strong, secure Russia is only normal. The majority of Russians, at least at present, do not equate "strength" with any policy of expanding beyond the near abroad. Most Russians do not want their country to seek world leadership again anytime soon. People do expect Russia to be treated by others as the great power that, in basic ways, it is. They do not want their country to fall into line behind somebody else. They expect Moscow to define reasonable national interests for the country and then to pursue them, as every country does. Most Russians are also ready to see reasonable accommodations made with other major powers in the interest of preserving peace, as also is normal. To live in peace with the world is greatly desired. If the West and everyone will treat Russia with the respect due to any great power, most Russians will be generally satisfied with their relations with the outer world, and will focus their attention on improving the grim situation at home.

Notes

1 This chapter is based on research conducted by the Center for International Projects for the Security for Europe Project, and on other research by the Center for International Projects. See also note 11.

In the Russian language, the name of the country is pronounced "Ross-ee-ya." The word "Moscow" is the English-language name for the capital city. In Russian its name is pronounced as if it were spelled "Mosk-va" in English.

2 Examples of stereotype and cliché words in common use at present include "totalitarianism," "empire," "partocracy," "democracy" and "market."

3 A further ambiguity is created by the fact that some people use the term "near abroad" to include the three Baltic countries, whereas other people exclude the Baltics from what they mean by the "near abroad."

4 According to a VTSIOM poll in November 1993, 42 percent of those polled said they fear the loss of order and an increase in anarchy in the country. Reported in *Moscow News* (December 5, 1993). VTSIOM are the initials for the organization whose name in translation is "All-Russian Central Public Opinion Research Institute."

In a VTSIOM poll of January 1993, 86 percent of respondents feel insecure and unprotected from crime and criminals. Reported in *Moscow News* (February 14, 1993).

5 These conclusions are drawn primarily from the research sources mentioned in note 1. Quantitative research data agrees. In June 1994, the Russian Independent Institute on Social and National Problems conducted a survey that asked "What is the major danger for Russia today?" No respondent referred to external matters; all mentioned internal ones only. The internal dangers were assessed by respondents as follows. In the political sphere, 45 percent mentioned the danger of civil war and 36 percent mentioned the activity of mafias. In the economic sphere, 42 percent mentioned the fall in the standards of living, 36 percent mentioned the fall in production, 28 percent mentioned hyperinflation, and 28 percent mentioned unemployment. In the social sphere, 49 percent mentioned the rise in crime, 27 percent mentioned an inability to provide good education for children, and 25 percent mentioned precarious old age: Vladimir Petoukhov and Andrei Riabov, "How are you doing, Russia?" *Moskva* (magazine) (September 1994), pp. 114–21.

In a poll conducted for the US Information Agency by the ROMIR survey research firm in November and December 1993, the greatest threat to Russia's security was identified by 75 percent of respondents as coming from problems inside Russia, by 6 percent as coming from the near abroad, and by 4 percent as coming from the far abroad. *USIA Opinion Research Memorandum* (January 3, 1994).

As early as February 1993, 46 percent of public opinion leaders judged the likelihood of Russia breaking up as "high" or "very high." Four hundred opinion leaders were polled by "Vox Populi." *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, 2 (13), Moscow: Vox Populi Service for the Study of Public Opinion (March 1993).

6 The Eurobarometer surveys show how the public in the European part of Russia have become disillusioned with the transformation of society. In the autumn of 1991, only 34 percent of Russians agreed with the statement that "the creation of a free market economy is a bad thing for Russia's future." By December 1993 the proportion taking this view had risen to 58 percent. European Commission, *Central and Eastern Eurobarometer*, 4 (March 1994), p. 33.

7 This public pessimism is aggravated by a widespread perception of a fundamental gap between the government (which claims to be democratic) and the people. One poll of late 1994 revealed only negative public feelings toward the

government: distrust and fear (73 percent), resentment and protest (63 percent), disrespect (60 percent), indifference (50 percent) and pessimism (49 percent). From a survey conducted by the Institute of the Sociology of Parliamentarianism. Nougzar Betanely, "One would awfully much like to live without fear," *Obshaya Gazeta*, (weekly) (December 2–8, 1994), no. 48/73. Notice that these results date from before the intervention in Chechnya.

The gap between government and people was further reinforced by the government's mishandling of the crisis in Chechnya. Even at the beginning of the intervention, 63 percent of the public disapproved of Moscow's use of military force, and a full quarter of the public said that they believe the military conflict in Chechnya means the end of democracy in Russia. From a poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation. Lef Aleinik, "Engagement of troops in Chechnya reduced President Yeltsin's rating," *Segodnia* (December 27, 1994).

It is also worth noting that the public reaction, in the first weeks, to the intervention in Chechnya revealed the confusion felt by many Russians between what is "domestic" and what is "international," and what are the appropriate means of domestic and international politics.

8 These conclusions emerge from the focus group research conducted by the Security for Europe Project. It is also true that some among the public have simpler feelings. It would not be easy to determine with any accuracy, by polling, what proportions of the public in Russia hold what view, because much would depend on how questions were worded, and on the context in which they were asked.

9 The uncertain and indeterminate nature of the feeling of potential external danger is suggested by the results of a survey conducted by the "Vox Populi" Service for the Study of Public Opinion in August and September 1993. Asked which country they considered Russia's "enemy number one," only 16 percent replied that Russia has no enemies and only 26 percent named a specific country, while 20 percent said that Russia has "many enemies" and 38 percent were unable to answer at all. *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, 1 (85). Moscow: "Vox Populi" Service for the Study of Public Opinion (November 1993).

10 An example sometimes mentioned in the summer and autumn of 1993 was the demand by the US government that Russia halt the sale of a cryogenic rocket to India. Although Washington claimed that its motive was to slow down the proliferation of rocket technology to the Third World, many Russians saw this step as an American blow against Russian industry in one of the areas, rocket technology, where it is competitive with the West.

"Vox Populi" asked 400 public opinion leaders in July 1993 this question: "What lies behind the West's current interest in Russia – a striving to revive Russia, or on the contrary, to weaken it?" The "revive" response was chosen by 20 percent and the "weaken" response by 35 percent, while 40 percent rejected both. *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, 2 (60). Moscow: "Vox Populi" Service for the Study of Public Opinion (August 1993).

11 According to a VTSIOM poll of January 1993, 50 percent of Russians polled do not trust "at all" any of the branches of authority in Moscow. Reported in *Moscow News* (January 31, 1993).

The Center for International Projects conducted another extensive series of

focus groups in the autumn of 1993; groups were held in eleven regions around Russia. The findings of these regional focus groups confirmed and reiterated the findings of the groups held specifically for the Security for Europe Project.

One of the main findings in all regions was a deep alienation of the people from all central authorities. The public have an undifferentiated perception of the executive and legislative branches in Moscow as simply "the authorities," who are basically in opposition to the people. The public's strong disillusionment with the so-called "democrats" *in power*, which is part of the public's alienation from all forces in power, may help explain the democrats' defeat in the December 1993 parliamentary elections in Russia. At the same time, no strong inclinations toward neocommunist and/or strong nationalist opposition forces were visible.

12 In 1992, one or two individuals in focus groups held by the Security for Europe Project would typically express this idea. In groups held in 1993, this attitude was typically endorsed by a majority. Since then this attitude certainly has not declined among the public, and political and economic events may be reinforcing it.

13 Violence on a large scale took place during the early 1990s in Tajikistan, in Georgia, and elsewhere in the Caucasus area, as well as between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the focus group research conducted by the Security for Europe Project in 1992 and 1993, very few participants even mentioned Serbs or Yugoslavia spontaneously. Even after the groups were asked about this topic explicitly, the typical group reaction was passive and uninterested. Interest grew in 1994, however, and it also must be kept in mind that future events in the former Yugoslavia could arouse Russian feelings.

Polls conducted in Russia for the US Information Agency by the ROMIR survey research firm showed an increase in the proportion of the public who feel that Russia should support the Serb side from 13 percent in September 1993 to 39 percent in April 1994. *USIA Opinion Research Memorandum* (April 19, 1994).

14 Whether certain groups, such as Ukrainians, are really "another nationality" is a separate question.

15 According to a poll conducted for the US Information Agency by the ROMIR survey research firm in June 1992, 54 percent of Russians thought that Crimea should be part of Russia; 27 percent disagreed. In the same poll, 43 percent thought that the areas of Kazakhstan where Russians are in the majority should *not* be part of Russia; 33 percent thought that they should. *USIA Opinion Research Memorandum* (August 6, 1992).

16 This conclusion emerged clearly from the research conducted by the Security for Europe Project. See also the article on this topic in the *Moscow News* (July 26, 1993). The consensus in support of using "only Russian troops" naturally includes allied CIS troops, such as Kazakh, Uzbek or Kyrgyz troops, who may be deployed alongside Russian forces.

17 In July 1994 the United Nations Security Council gave its approval to Russian peacekeeping activities in Georgia, and only in Georgia. The Budapest Summit of the CSCE, held in December 1994, declined a Russian request that Russia take the predominant role in peacekeeping in Nagorno-Karabakh, and approved a different plan in which Russia would have a smaller role.

18 Data from a poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation. Reported in *Izvestia* (January 6, 1995).

19 Only 18 percent of Russians support the idea of a restoration of the USSR. *Moskva* (September 1994).

20 In a VTSIOM poll in the summer of 1993, 69 percent of Russians agreed with the statement that Russia should preserve itself as a great nation even if it led to a deterioration of relations with the outside world. Reported in *Moscow News* (July 26, 1993). Note that the popular desire that Russia be, and be seen as, a great power is not necessarily the same as Russia being a "Great Power" as specialists use the term.

21 A VTSIOM poll of December 1992 showed that only 4 percent of Russians rely on a restoration of military power as a means to return to superpower status. Meanwhile 66 percent rely on economic reforms, while 30 percent think that superpower status does not mean anything today and what is important is being "a country where people have a good life." Reported in *Izvestia* (January 23, 1993).

22 According to a survey conducted in late 1994, 71 percent of Russians believe that crime has increased in the place where they live, 59 percent have fears about their personal security, and 56 percent of adult Russians are afraid to walk outdoors in the dark. *Obshaya Gazeta* (December 2–8, 1994).

23 Western readers may wish to note that the word "Caucasian" is used in Russia and throughout the countries of the former Soviet Union in exactly the opposite sense that it is used in the West. In the West this word is the formal word for "white" people. In the former Soviet countries, it is a not entirely polite word, commonly used, that means "black" people. The Caucasian peoples are not, of course, "black" in the sense of African, but their much darker skin is sometimes colloquially called "black."

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Russia: policy analysis and options

Yuri Davydov MOSCOW

1 Introduction

Russia has experienced changes of staggering magnitude in recent years, and this has produced much confusion among Russian specialists on questions of security. Until late in 1991, the country that all specialists in Moscow were thinking about was, of course, not Russia but the Soviet Union. This should be emphasized at the outset, because many Western experts do not entirely appreciate the depth of the shock that policy specialists in Moscow have lived through, nor how emotionally difficult it has been, and still is, to adapt to the new realities. Feelings of confusion about what "our country" is still continue today.

The shock of the sudden end of the USSR was made even more difficult psychologically, because it came so quickly after Moscow had lost the alliance of six important countries in East Central Europe. So far as security on the European side of the USSR was concerned, the Warsaw Treaty Organization was the pillar of Soviet policy and Soviet ideas. All thinking about security in the Western direction revolved around the WTO. Then at the end of the 1980s, the WTO became quickly undermined as an effective military alliance. East Germany was allowed to unify with West Germany on terms extremely favorable to the West. Moscow proposed that the WTO be converted into a political organization, but the European allies rejected that also. Thus specialists in Moscow found themselves in a situation where the bedrock alliance on the Western side was dissolving completely. The impact was comparable to what specialists and officials in Washington or London might feel, if NATO dissolved, completely and in a short time, in spite of every effort by Washington to prevent it.

Before the implications of the loss of the alliance could fully sink in emotionally, or be entirely understood intellectually, experts in Moscow were overwhelmed by the still greater catastrophe of the end of the Soviet Union itself. It is perhaps understandable that, for some time then, experts

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