

20 Years After the Fall: The U.S. and Russia in the Post-Soviet World

The American Security Project

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Introduction

This pamphlet is a collection of essays from our fellows, board members, and adjunct fellows analyzing the evolution of U.S. foreign policy in the 20 years after the collapse of the USSR. Published in partnership with The Atlantic Monthly, these essays examine the last two decades of change in nuclear security, energy policy, the defense industry, regional and bilateral politics, and U.S. posture and geostrategy.

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Russia and the United States in the 21st Century

By Gary Hart

20 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S. and Russia are far from the trusting partners that we perhaps should be.

In October 2011, the Institute for World History in Moscow held an unprecedented conference concerning President Thomas Jefferson and Czar Alexander I. Leading American historians Gordon Wood, Peter Onuf, and others, as well as leading Russian historians, including Academician Alexei Chubarian and Professor Vladimir Sorgin, participated. Some of the presentations and discussions focused on the correspondence between the two heads of government between 1804 and 1808, on Napoleon's invasion of Russia and the British invasion of the U.S., both of which occurred in 1812, and on the consequent torching of the two capitols, Moscow and Washington, thereafter.

Alexis de Toqueville's famous prediction in 1835 that America and Russia, two great continental powers, would someday play leading roles in the world was predated by Russian exploration of the Western American continent as far south as today's California and thereafter qualified by the landing of a small U.S. expeditionary force in Siberia during the Russian Revolution. But throughout the Cold War, de Toqueville seemed prescient indeed.

The shared global leadership between America and Russia ended two decades ago. The 74 year Russian detour into communism can be viewed only as if rapidly retreating in a rear-view mirror. But the end of the Cold War revealed a curious anomaly in U.S. foreign policy thought. Much to the surprise of Russians and many Americans, including myself, instead of rushing to embrace Russia and drawing it closely into Western economic, political, and security circles, we have resorted to reliance on personal relationships between American and Russian presidents as the basis for our bilateral relationships. And we continue to hold Russia suspiciously at arm's length.

There has been little, if any, explanation of this suspicion toward Russia and its roots in the American mind, or at least in the minds of certain foreign policy experts. Arguably, we have better relations with China than Russia and spend a great deal more effort in tending to that relationship. In gauging how close or how distant to remain regarding another nation or power, the measure ought to be whether there are more interests in common than in opposition. By that measure, our relationship to Russia ought to be among our closest.

We both are committed to reduction of weapons of mass destruction. We both have immediate interests in combating terrorism. Russia stands on the border of five significant Islamic republics and shares concerns with us regarding stability in the Balkans and the Black Sea region. Russia possesses immense natural resources (especially energy), supplies many of our allies in Europe, and offers an alternative source to precarious Persian Gulf supplies. Russia has world-class scientists, physicist, and mathematicians. We use Russian rocket propulsion systems to launch space missions and cooperate on manned space missions. Russia offers a vast market



Tsar Alexander I

for American and Western products and services, an opportunity more appreciated by European enterprises than American ones. Further, Russia can be of considerable help to us and our allies in venues as disparate as Iran, North Korea, and the Middle East. In each of these cases, they stand to lose at least as much as we do, if not more, from war in these regions. We should treat the Russians as partners, not subordinates, and appeal to these and other common interests.

The American Security Project offers a series of essays concerning the U.S.-Russian relationship post-Cold War and post-Soviet empire. It is timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Soviet Union, which formally dissolved on December 25, 1991. We consider here Russia's energy picture, our mutual arms control efforts, our role in NATO and NATO's relationship to Russia, and a number of other topics addressed by qualified experts some of whom have studied these issues for years. Efforts such as this very much characterize the charter and purpose of the American Security Project -- to explore new and productive ways of pursuing American interests, especially those that increasingly coincide with old and new allies, that will enhance the security of Americans and others.

For myself, it is sufficient to prophesy, even with little tangible evidence, that sometime in this century, sooner rather than later, the United States and Russia will identify a common destiny that requires a degree of mutual understanding and cooperation seen only by de Toqueville almost two centuries ago. We spent a half-century army-to-army and missile-to-missile. The time will come, and none too soon, when it will be beneficial to both of us to stand shoulder to shoulder.

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Race Around the World: The 20-Year Contest for Oil

By Andrew Holland

The global oil market opened up, ending an 80-year period when the biggest concern was diversity of sources. Now, we face a new challenge: cost.

Two events made 1991 an unusually important year for global oil production and energy security. The Persian Gulf War, started when Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded Kuwait in August, 1990, ended on February 28, 1991. In late December, the Soviet Union, whose territory held the largest proven oil reserves outside of the Middle East, collapsed.

U.S. dependence on imported oil had been growing for 30 years when the Soviet Union fell. The U.S. imported 40% of its oil in 1991; 54% of oil imports came from OPEC members and 24% from the Persian Gulf. The oil crises of 1973 and 1979, and the hardship they caused in the U.S., were still in American memories.. Energy dependence was viewed, much like today, as a vulnerability.

Since then, American energy security policy has focused on efforts to extricate U.S. energy dependence from the political volatility of the Middle East. As Winston Churchill had said in 1913, "Safety and certainty in oil lie in variety and variety alone." In practice, this has meant importing from friendly nations, increasing global supplies, and integrating oil into a single global market.

In the two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union, global oil production has increased from 66 million barrels per day to almost 87 million; much of that increase from Russia and the former Soviet Republics. This almost certainly wouldn't have happened without the fall of the Soviet Union. For example, enormous new oil fields of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan were only developed once foreign investors and technology were allowed in to make it happen.

Political and economic changes also brought new oil to market. The Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline brings crude oil drilled in the Caspian Sea to market through Azerbaijan, Georgia -- two former Soviet Republics -- and Turkey. The BTC pipeline, which opened in 2006, would have been impossible 20 years before.

The expansion of global oil production has been accompanied by oil market consolidation. Mergers of oil companies like Exxon-Mobil, Chevron-Texaco, BP-Amoco, along with significant infrastructure investments created the first truly global oil market. Oil contracts are traded in liquid commodity markets that create uniform oil prices around the world. Due to these changes, price differences in oil only reflect actual substantive differences in quality or transportation costs.

These developments were supposed to alleviate the energy security concerns that the U.S. faced after the 1970s. America would no longer be held hostage to supply shocks that could cut off our access to oil. American soldiers would no longer have to fight to protect sources of oil.



That has not proved to be the case. The U.S. today produces over 50% of the oil that it consumes, and a further 20% comes from our friendly neighbors, Canada and Mexico. Imports from the Persian Gulf have fallen to 9% of our consumption. In spite of these trends we still face concerns about energy security.

We no longer worry that our supply will be cut off, but we face an even more vexing problem -- price. It doesn't matter to the American consumer that the supply of oil that goes into his or her tank is diversified: gasoline is the same whether it comes from Canada, Venezuela, Nigeria, or Saudi Arabia. The integrated, globalized market that we have created means that the price of oil is set globally.

This past May, as civil war was spreading in Libya, global oil prices shot up to \$113 per barrel. The U.S. only imported about 70,000 barrels per day of oil from Libya (about 0.6% of total consumption), but the domestic price of oil, and the gasoline that American consumers depend on, shot up equally fast.

It is global demand -- not supply diversity -- that determines energy security in the modern world.

American policy is beginning to address demand, but too many policymakers still believe that we can ensure energy security just by producing more here at home or by importing more from Canada. The truth is that only by reducing American dependence on oil -- foreign and domestic -- can policymakers break the oil market's choke-hold on the economy.

Only in 2007 did Congress pass legislation that increased fuel economy standards. The Obama Administration has continued on this path by proposing a rule that will double fuel economy standards to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Another option, perpetually proposed and just as often rejected, is to reduce demand over the long term by increasing gasoline taxes -- as European and Japanese governments did in response to the 1970s oil crises.

The best way to ensure that oil is no longer strategically important to the United States may be to promote alternative forms of transportation. A sufficiently large fleet of electric or biofuel-based cars would reduce the influence oil has on American transportation. Such changes could enhance energy security far more effectively, though less dramatically, than even the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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The Uncertain Future of the Military-Industrial Complex

By August Cole

The U.S. defense industry, flush since September 2001, may once again be facing a period of decline

The 1990s might not have been a decade of peace, but they were for big, U.S. defense firms. After decades of working for a Defense Department oriented toward the defeat of the Soviet Union, they struggled to adjust. During the 1980s the Pentagon had spent billions of dollars on developing and improving expensive hardware -- tanks, submarines, fighter jets -- but, in the post-Soviet '90s, their appetite shrank.

In 1995, U.S. Defense Department procurement spending dropped below \$50 billion for the first time since 1982.

This changed with the attacks of September 11, 2001, which began an historic period of prosperity for the U.S. defense industry. Now, much like the period that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, the industry faces a decade, or more, of adversity and softening political support for weapons spending. The defense industry is back at another crossroads, and the stakes for them are just as high.



Lockheed Martin

Defense cuts during the early 1990s had a profound impact on not just the defense industry, but on America itself. Tens of thousands of well-paying jobs were lost when defense firms shut down entire lines of business. The spiritual home of the American aerospace industry, southern California, faced a debilitating economic downturn, crashing real estate prices and scattering aerospace workers throughout the country. More than 100,000 jobs were lost in the Los Angeles area between 1988 and 1994, according to one estimate.

Some companies decided they didn't need the defense business anymore and simply got out of the market, selling off their defense divisions. Texas Instruments sold its defense business to Raytheon in 1997 for \$2.95 billion. At the time, Raytheon executives said the Texas Instruments deal would bring their annual sales up to \$15 billion. By 2010, Raytheon reported annual revenue of more than \$25 billion.

The largest contractors today eclipse Raytheon. These so-called "super primes", Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and Boeing, dominate the global defense market. Their size is a direct result of the corporate consolidation of the 1990s. Martin Marietta Chief Executive Norman Augustine once remarked that the Pentagon held a "last supper" in 1993, when it gathered more than a dozen of the industry's top executives to inform them that the defense landscape was changing in ways nobody would have expected a few years earlier. Augustine later oversaw a merger between Martin Marietta and Lockheed Corp.

Lockheed Martin, currently the Defense Department's biggest contractor by sales, grew its revenue from \$23

billion in 1995 to \$46 billion in 2010. Lockheed Martin even tried to buy Northrop Grumman, but regulators threw up so many roadblocks that Lockheed Martin dropped the bid in 1998, proving there were limits to how big and powerful defense companies could become. Even so, a look at the sprawling Fort Worth, Texas facilities where Lockheed builds the Joint Strike Fighter is a testament to how enormous the firms have become. Lockheed bought the campus from General Dynamics in 1993, two years before Lockheed merged with Martin Marietta. The Joint Strike Fighter, the most lucrative Pentagon contract in history, gives Lockheed Martin a practical monopoly on the U.S. fighter market for the foreseeable future.

There were other changes in the 1990s that affected defense companies. Firms working on exotic nuclear weapons programs or secret satellite communications systems no longer attracted the country's most talented engineers. Technology and Internet companies did. Stock options and paradigm shifts in corporate and personal technologies, not the challenge of outdoing a now defunct adversary, drove innovation. California-based investors and bearded guys tinkering in their garages -- not the defense industry -- became the source of the country's cutting edge technologies.

In the decade following September 2001, military spending soared and so did the fortunes of defense firms, which booked record profits, revenues, and stock prices. Procurement spending rose to more than \$147 billion in 2010, nearly three times the amount for 1995.

Now, the cycle is shifting again. With the U.S. winding-down in Iraq and Afghanistan, and its domestic politics increasingly concerned with the country's debt, severe declines may be ahead for military budgets.

It's not yet clear how far defense spending will fall. The uncertainty alone is already putting enormous pressure on U.S. defense companies. The biggest are simply too large to try to merge with their peers, as they did during the 1990s, without falling afoul of regulators or investors.

The defense industry is once again at a crossroads, and the stakes are the highest they've been. Large defense contractors are interwoven into not just every layer of the national security apparatus, but also of civilian government. They are involved in everything from smart bombs to military interrogations to the most recent U.S. census. Tens of thousands of jobs are again on the line during a time of economic trouble. Whatever the level of military spending falls to, the defense industry's economic, strategic, and political actions well into the 21st century will continue to be heavily influenced by its period of decline following the fall of the Soviet Union.



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Peace In the Post-Cold War World

By Michael Cohen

The world is a much safer place than it was 20 years ago -- here's why, how it happened, and what it means for our future

Twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the world is a freer and more open place. From the former Soviet republics and the buffer countries of Central and Eastern Europe to Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Far East, the fall of the Soviet Union has led to a cascade of political and economic advances rarely before seen in human history.

According to Freedom House, there were 69 electoral democracies in 1990; today there are 115 -- an increase of more than 60 percent. In dozens of countries, centrally planned economies stifled innovation and entrepreneurship. Today, economic liberalization has, albeit imperfectly, created new opportunities and rising incomes that would have seemed unimaginable more than two decades ago. Yet beyond these advances, perhaps the most important development that came with the fall of the Soviet Union is frequently forgotten -- the world is today a demonstrably safer place.

To many observers, that might sound like heresy. The post-Soviet world, after all, has been marred by seemingly constant civil and global conflict -- the Gulf War in 1991, the ethnic cleansing and bloody civil war in the former Yugoslavia, the genocide in Rwanda, the unending fighting in the Congo, Sudan, and Somalia, the terrorist attacks on September 11 and the ongoing American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. American politicians repeatedly warn of the dangerous and unsafe world that we inhabit.



Courtesy Ronald Reagan Library

Moreover, didn't the Cold War prevent large-scale wars between great powers and keep ethnic and national tension suppressed? The threat of nuclear conflict certainly helped to prevent World War III, but it hardly stopped dozens of countries from waging horribly violent wars. On the Korean peninsula, in South-East Asia, across the Middle East, on the Indian subcontinent, and across sub-Saharan Africa, conflict was a relatively common state of affairs during the Cold War. Many of these conflicts were exacerbated by the machinations of the competing super powers. Would millions have died in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan if these three countries had not been considered the frontlines in the conflict between Cold War rivals?

1982 to 1984 was "the least safe time to live on earth" In fact, the Soviet Union's demise sped up rather than slowed down the global movement toward a safer and more secure world. The reality is that today, wars are rarer than ever before. According to the 2009/2010 Human Security Report, state-based armed conflict declined by 40 percent from 1992 to 2003. And when wars occur, they are less deadly for both combatants and civilians. The average war so far in the 21st century kills 90 percent fewer people than the average conflict in the 1950s. The last ten years have seen fewer war deaths than any decade of the past century.

The world has not seen a major power conflict in more than six decades -- the longest period of sustained peace between great powers in centuries. Finally, insurgent groups, rather than governments, are the greatest cause of

civilian deaths today -- a worrisome trend for sure, but one that stands in sharp contrast to much of the 20th century, in which nations devised new and ingenious methods for slaughtering millions of their own citizens.

But there is a larger reality of the post-Cold War world -- the threat of nuclear conflict has declined dramatically. From the late 1940s to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the potential for a devastating nuclear exchange that would destroy the globe and wipe out mankind was a distinct and real possibility.

As Micah Zenko, a Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, told me, the period from roughly 1982 to 1984 was “the least safe time to live on earth. The number of deployed nuclear weapons was obscene overkill, and potential flashpoints for a U.S.-Soviet conflict were many.” Nuclear weapons were far more widely-dispersed across the Soviet Union than they are today, and launch authority remained at shockingly low levels even into the 1980s. While the threat of nuclear war may have always been a low possibility, it was still real; distorting and disrupting international affairs for much of the 20th century. While there remains the extremely slim risk of accidental launches or nuclear terrorism, ridding ourselves of this existential burden has been a boon rather than a detriment to the conduct of international affairs.

For all the challenges to global security we face today, they pale in comparison to the threat of superpower war and the proxy battles that defined the four decades of ideological and geopolitical conflict between East and West. The fall of Soviet Russia, for all of its many positive ramifications, helped to end the constant danger of a war that would truly and catastrophically “end all wars.” A more complex but decidedly more secure and safer world has replaced it.

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No Great Game: The Story of Post-Cold War Powers in Central Asia

By Joshua Foust

The U.S. has been increasingly active in these former Soviet satellites, but Russian influence is still a major force

On December 16, 2011, Kazakhstan will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its independence from the Soviet Union. It was the last country to politically separate itself from Russia in 1991, the final nail in the coffin of the seven-decade Soviet experiment. The year saw a wave of Soviet states pulling away from the Soviet Union, like the skins of an onion, until only Russia was left in the center.

Central Asia, a part of the world that has long been the subject of speculation, romantic adventure fantasies, and misinformation, suddenly found itself in the global spotlight. Kazakhstan possessed the world's largest nuclear testing site in Semipalatinsk, dozens of nuclear weapons, a biological weapons research facility on Vozrozhdeniye Island in the dried-up Aral Sea, and huge reserves of oil and natural gas in the Caspian Sea. Turkmenistan, too, had some of the world's largest reserves of natural gas.



But despite a small gold rush of sorts to capture the region's energy resources, Central Asia mostly remained an underdeveloped backwater. Uzbekistan struggled with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a terror group that continues to plague parts of Afghanistan. Tajikistan endured a brutal civil war that, in many ways, defines the West's perception of it. After a brief paroxysm of ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, both countries settled into a sort of comfortable anonymity. There was a brief interest in exporting Turkmenistan's natural gas through a pipeline crossing Afghanistan and Pakistan, but the Taliban's war in Afghanistan prevented the plan from moving off the drawing table.

Toward the end of the 1990s, interest in the region picked up: Chevron signed a major deal to develop one of Kazakhstan's Caspian oil fields and construction began on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the first non-Russian export route out of the region. The U.S. deepened its military ties with the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, sending small numbers of U.S. military trainers and bringing local officers to U.S. service academies. It seemed Russia was not only diminished but soundly defeated, and America was ascendant.

The terror attacks of September 11 and subsequent invasion of Afghanistan seemed at first to cement the rise of America in Central Asia. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld negotiated the use of military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, even while the State Department grew less and less comfortable with human rights abuses in those countries. By the time the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003, American policy in the area seemed set on autopilot, dominant and victorious.

Then, something changed. In March of 2005, the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan unseated Askar Akayev, who had ruled the country since 1990, throwing the U.S. into panic that it might lose access to the airbase at Manas. Also that year, in May, Uzbek security forces massacred hundreds of protesters in the city of Andijon,

and in the ensuing outcry the U.S. lost access to the Uzbek airbase it relied on to supply the troops in Afghanistan. While the Americans later managed to secure expanded access to Manas, it came at an increasingly high cost.

The mid-2000s also saw Russia emerge from its slumber. Under Presidents Vladimir Putin and then Dmitri Medvedev, Russia slowly revived its campaign for influence in the region, gaining concessions from the Central Asian rulers and sometimes challenging the U.S. for access and resources. As of 2011, Russia and the U.S. could best be called frenemies in Central Asia, with Russia chafing at the continued American presence even while its officials worry about the consequences of an American withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The U.S., though, seems destined to diminish in the region, even as Central Asia finally flirts with economic viability. Kazakhstan's economy is thriving, Kyrgyzstan joined the WTO well before Russia, and Turkmenistan's gas pipeline to China has brought it much-needed cash. Both Turkey and China are spending increasing amounts of money and energy to gain social, economic, and political footholds in the region, and Russia is looking for new ways to extend its "security umbrella" southward. The U.S. is trying to cement its position with the New Silk Road, a concept for regional trade that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is mentioning in speeches, but that project's success seems far from certain.

Politically, however, Central Asia remains painfully close to what it was in 1991, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan (which still struggles for stable political leadership). The tyrant of Turkmenistan may have died in 2007, but his replacement has continued to rule in much the same way. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan are now entering their second decade with the same autocrats in charge. In many ways the region exists in a sort of time warp, with a dismaying lack of political or social progress on many fronts.

Viewing Central Asia as a competition for influence, however, misses the point; that is a contest that America could probably never win. Instead, what's emerging is a tenuous collaboration: Russia and America working together to support and develop the region. Unthinkable 20 years ago, this new alignment of interests has the potential to be far more transformative than the fall of communism ever was.

Joshua Foust is a fellow at the American Security Project and the author of Afghanistan Journal: Selections from Registan.net.

How the Fall of the Soviet Union Changed the News Media

By Carolyn Deady

TV would never cover breaking news the same way again

International media coverage of the historic events in Moscow on December 25, 1991, was a first for world broadcast news. Earlier in the year, Ted Turner's Cable News Network had a television news victory. A decade after its founding, CNN, surpassed the "Big Three" American networks -- ABC, CBS, and NBC -- in ratings with its coverage from inside Iraq during the Gulf War. The 24-hour news network had come into its own. That Christmas Day, CNN got its next major scoop in Moscow.

With the exception of a small ABC crew filming in Moscow for a documentary, CNN had exclusive access that day to both Boris Yeltsin, set to become the first-ever Russian president, and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. After carrying Gorbachev's resignation speech live, CNN broadcast a sit-down interview with the former Soviet leader. CNN aired the speech at 11 am EST, whether on its own channel or through other networks that had bought the right to show it, in over 150 countries; history-making news broadcast around the world instantaneously. It was the first time that a news organization had broadcast, live, an interview with a world leader the same night he had resigned.



Cameras rolled as the Soviet flag, which had flown over the Kremlin for decades, was taken down and replaced with the new Russian standard. The flag was not supposed to be replaced until after the New Year, but Kremlin workers made the switch shortly after Gorbachev's resignation. Russian News, the only outlet aware of the changeover in advance, was the sole organization to capture it on video.

While handing over the nuclear suitcase would also have made for an iconic image, it never happened, at least directly. Gorbachev's transfer of control of the Soviet Union's nuclear missiles to now-President Boris Yeltsin, a metaphor for the end of the Cold War, was an act of paperwork. The two leaders never made the direct exchange, but a wire service got a photo of Gorbachev signing the document handing over control of the weapons. The image appeared on the front page of newspapers around the world the next day.

At 9 pm that night -- Christmas day -- President George H.W. Bush addressed the nation from the Oval Office. His address was carried live by most TV networks in the United States and picked up around the world. Other world leaders also made statements regarding the events of the day, all of which was covered in both broadcast and print media. Most Western leaders praised Mikhail Gorbachev, recognized the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States -- the successor organization to the Soviet Union -- and expressed their faith in the security of nuclear weapons with the transfer of power.

For media around the world, the end of the Soviet Union was perhaps the biggest story of 1991. Coverage from Moscow on Christmas Day prompted much discussion: analysis of Gorbachev's resignation speech,

what the end of the Cold War meant, the fate of the Russian economy and that of the other republics in the Commonwealth of Independent States, energy reserves, nuclear weapons, and the economic impact on other communist nations (like Cuba and North Korea).

In the days before the Internet, cell phones, social media, texting, and tweeting, the world got its news from television networks, newspapers, and magazines, often with a lag time of at least a day. But, on Christmas day 1991, people could watch history happen, right in front of them on their TV screens.

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The Cold War Is Long Gone, but the Nuclear Threat Is Still Here

By Eric Auner

America's nuclear strategy hasn't changed much since the Soviet Union fell, but the world's nuclear dangers have

In the two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the nuclear challenges facing the United States have changed radically. American nuclear strategy has not.

American nuclear forces are largely designed to deter a superpower that no longer exists. Meanwhile, nuclear and missile technology is more widely available than ever to outlier states like Iran and North Korea, and Americans continue to worry about a nuclear weapon winding up in the hands of a terrorist.

American nuclear strategy has three main goals in the 21st century. First, ensure that nuclear weapons are not used against the United States or its allies. Nuclear deterrence still plays a key role in the modern world. Second, convince or compel other states not to acquire nuclear weapons. Third, secure nuclear weapons and dangerous nuclear materials against theft or diversion to terrorist groups.

Current strategy is heavily geared towards the first goal of deterring nuclear weapons, a legacy of the Cold War arms race. Efforts towards the second and third goals have been incomplete.

During the Cold War, the rival superpowers threatened one another with large numbers of nuclear weapons. Most were far more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These weapons helped to maintain a shaky peace between the United States and the Soviet Union. Many of the weapons on both sides were available for almost immediate use to deter a massive surprise attack, potentially involving thousands of nuclear weapons, from the other.



This basic posture, with large numbers of weapons capable of destroying an entire city available for rapid use, continues today, even though the U.S. military no longer fears a large-scale Russian attack. No other nation in the world has sufficient nuclear forces to even attempt a disabling nuclear first strike on the United States.

The size of the American nuclear arsenal has shrunk considerably, and both Republican and Democratic presidents have recognized that the United States can effectively protect itself and deter attack with fewer nuclear weapons in a post-Cold War world. Treaties mandating parallel U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenal cuts have enabled these necessary reductions to take place.

These reductions went hand in hand with a bilateral verification regime that gave U.S. inspectors on-site access to the Russian nuclear arsenal. The New Strategic Arms Reduction (New START) treaty, ratified with bipartisan support in December 2010, continues this process and helps to maintain strategic stability.

The large and capable nuclear arsenal that the United States retains under New START continues to play a role in protecting the United States and reassuring allies that depend on the American nuclear umbrella. The arsenal cannot, however, help the United States to accomplish the vast majority of its other national security

goals, including the struggle against terrorism.

America's nuclear arsenal is only one aspect of American nuclear strategy in the 21st century. The United States has taken the lead in creating institutions and agreements, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, under which the vast majority of nations have agreed to forgo nuclear weapons.

Many observers fear that the global nonproliferation regime is fraying. Iran is a member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty but the country's activities, which include a uranium enrichment program, have led to fears that the country is on the verge of a nuclear weapons capability. Institutions like the Nonproliferation Treaty clearly must be strengthened and updated.

Investments in technologies such as ballistic missile defense also have a role to play in managing nuclear threats. Ballistic missiles, a traditional delivery method for nuclear weapons, have continued to proliferate in some of the world's most unstable regions. Ballistic missile defense is increasingly being developed and deployed on a cooperative basis, including with Russia, a country that has protested American missile defense plans for decades.



U.S. Department of Defense

The salience of efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism has greatly increased since the end of the Cold War, and especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Cooperative Threat Reduction programs to protect nuclear weapons and materials in former Soviet states have been a major post-Cold War American foreign policy success.

The United States has had other successes in this area, including the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit. Building relationships to secure nuclear materials with countries in unstable regions has proven difficult, however, and concerns about nuclear terrorism persist.

The United States has choices to make about its nuclear strategy. In a constrained budget environment, the United States will need to make the investments to combat today's nuclear threats, rather than the threats of past decades.

Eric Auner is a former Policy Analyst at the American Security Project

A Changing NATO for a Changing World

By John Adams

NATO can expect success if its goals and efforts reflect NATO nations' common purpose, as they did during the Cold War, and failure if they do not

Twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO can point with pride to its history. But can it point with confidence to its future? NATO's viability in the 21st century depends on applying the lessons of the past, but it also depends on seeing the present clearly.

NATO's finest achievement is its contribution to the peaceful resolution of the Cold War. Allies bonded together in unity of purpose with a common strategy, projecting credible force to preserve trans-Atlantic security. The fall of the Soviet Union cemented NATO's record of ensuring peace and prosperity for its members without becoming their political master. Because NATO allies trusted NATO as an institution, NATO harnessed allies' common purpose and displayed credibility to potential foes.

Today, the most important issue for NATO is whether allies will continue to trust it to address trans-Atlantic security issues.



NATO

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO's record has raised many doubts about its relevance. On the positive side, NATO's efforts restored peace to the Balkans and Southeast Europe and brought a strong measure of political stability to the former Soviet space. Enjoying the widespread support of allies, these efforts follow logically from NATO's original purpose as articulated in the opening paragraphs of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, "to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area."

However, the adventure in Afghanistan is casting a long shadow on NATO's attempt to harness its members' resources to common purpose. American observers commonly criticize their European NATO Allies for failing their commitments in Afghanistan; however, many Allied commitments were caveated in the first place, limiting their involvement.

Having served in NATO assignments over the course of three decades, it is my experience that NATO's common purpose suffers most when Alliance decisions are unwisely leveraged despite obvious lack of Allied enthusiasm, even in the face of genuine opposition.

If NATO is to survive as an Alliance, its efforts must reflect Allied political and strategic consensus. The United States, as a leader within the Alliance, should encourage rather than hinder this process. Lack of political will, lack of participation in Allied operations, lack of defense spending - these incur American criticism of Allies' political will, but they reflect a fundamental lack of common purpose in the goals' conception. American efforts to influence NATO decision-making has fostered "ready, shoot, aim" decision-making applied at the highest levels, and has sparked questions about the alliance.

Recently, at Wilton Park in the UK, defense and foreign policy experts from NATO nations convened to discuss the upcoming Chicago Summit in 2012. A number of productive ideas emerged from the Wilton Park meeting to address the problem of restoring NATO's viability in the 21st Century, chief among these scrapping the alliance's archaic metric of 2% defense spending as a measure of Allies' commitment. Thoughtful observers realize that a narrow focus on defense spending is as poor a measure of 21st Century national security, as was measuring national security by the number of battleships in the 1920s. Rather, the metric of commitment to common purpose must be focused on allies' and NATO programs that produce useful capabilities against commonly perceived threats, rather than merely increasing the size of Allied defense establishments.

Certainly, U.S. leadership remains critical to NATO success, because of both America's capabilities as well as America's global view. For example, the United States plays the pivotal role in building the trans-Atlantic missile defense architecture and defending the trans-Atlantic space against developing ballistic missile threats. Geographically and technologically, NATO and Russia are essential participants in an effective architecture. Only strong U.S. leadership can help NATO forge this important capability.

America's long-term strategic interest requires effective participation in institutions that safeguard trans-Atlantic peace and prosperity. NATO continues to be the best vehicle for that effort, but whether it will remain viable depends on tough American and NATO choices. Twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union, a successful strategy to preserve trans-Atlantic peace and prosperity relies upon encouraging the fullest participation of NATO allies in setting the alliance's strategic course and restoring the legitimacy of the institution itself. NATO can expect success if its goals and efforts reflect NATO nations' common purpose, as they did during the Cold War, and failure when they do not.

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Soviet Nationalism Is Still Driving Russian Politics

By Randall D. Law

Forged in World War II, the Stalin-era phenomenon has persisted into Putin's Russia today

Don't let the recent public protests against Russian prime minister and presumptive president Vladimir Putin fool you: authoritarianism remains firmly entrenched in Russia 20 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and there's more to it than meets the eye. It's not communism that lingers, but rather Soviet nationalism, which has formed the basis of a new social contract between the state and its citizens.

Soviet nationalism in its most influential form goes back to World War II, when the Soviet Union's victory was made possible by a new brand of nationalism: Russian in that it fit within a thousand-year-old history of expansionism, but Soviet in that it was achieved via modern technology, bureaucratic organization, and civic-mindedness. This new ideology kept the USSR afloat after 1945. Outsiders always emphasized the brutality and coercive power of the Soviet system – which was never in doubt – but the reality was more insidious and complex. For Soviet citizens during the Cold War, the carrot was a vast Eurasian empire, global power, domestic order, and a rising standard of living; the stick was fear of foreign domination and the consequences of internal disarray. “Soviet nationalism” was therefore more than just patriotism; it was an identity forged by great power status and the state's paternalism.



The Kremlin

In the end, the sclerotic Soviet economy wasn't able to satisfy citizens' demands or keep up with American military spending. Mikhail Gorbachev hoped to transform the Soviet Union into a modern socialist state “with a human face.” Instead, he hastened its collapse, in large part by violating the post-war social contract amidst the chaos of glasnost and perestroika.

Boris Yeltsin, Russia's first democratically elected post-Soviet leader, further eroded the underpinnings of the social contract tied to Soviet nationalism. Primarily concerned with his own quest to assert control, he swung wildly between pro-democracy demagoguery and authoritarian belligerence, and his victory over parliament in 1993 established a presidency of far-reaching power but little popular support. Yeltsin tried to capitalize on the development of a new Russian imperialism, but the first disastrous war in Chechnya and the humiliating peace treaty of 1996 showed it wouldn't work.

The corrupt and hastily executed privatization of Soviet infrastructure overseen by Yeltsin ironically provided a way forward by indebting a new generation of Russians to the state. Crony capitalism created a new class of billionaire “oligarchs” and “new Russians,” those in their 20s and 30s who were agile enough to become western-style entrepreneurs and consumers. But privatization and the collapse of social services devastated the older generation, which was left to limp on as best it could, humiliated and bewildered. Problems unknown since the devastation of World War II – homelessness, street beggars, and destitute seniors – appeared.

But the Yeltsin years were also the freest in Russia's history. Every shade of political opinion and historical revisionism was available in newspaper kiosks, at the movie theatres, and on television. Elections became freewheeling, anarchic affairs, waged by flamboyant nationalists, progressive democrats, and grumpy – and

barely reformed – Bolsheviks. And for the first time, Russians could lap up all the foreign consumer goods they wanted. Blue jeans and bootlegged western rock were passé; in the 1990s, Russians were deluged with foreign-made pornography, electronics, plastic goods, and a mind-boggling selection of booze. These developments thrilled many, but others were horrified by the sense of chaos, moral decline, and international humiliation. That horror – that is, the further degradation of the basis of post-war Soviet identity – helped pave the way for authoritarianism to return.

Enter Yeltsin’s hand-picked successor, Vladimir Putin. Much is made of the fact that he was a KGB officer, but he absorbed far more Soviet nationalism than communism. “I was a pure and utterly successful product of Soviet patriotic education,” he told an interviewer in early 2000. Putin’s nationalism is not the cartoonish chauvinism of European or Russian nativists; it is Soviet at heart, focused on the state’s role as the main vehicle of modernization and guarantor of stability.

During his brief stint as prime minister in the fall of 1999, Putin renewed the war in Chechnya, calling it necessary to preserve Russia’s sovereignty and protect its citizens against terrorists. After he became president less than a year later, his statist nationalism and emphasis on law and order undermined the legitimacy of anyone who spoke out against his increasingly authoritarian practices, especially journalists and democracy activists.

Putin found the way to a new social contract in the country’s oil fields, which helped satisfy rising global energy demand. On the one hand, the country’s oligarchs were put on notice: they could play ball with the new boss and continue to reap extraordinary profits, or they would be destroyed. Not surprisingly, the energy sector has produced the clearest winners and losers in Russia’s pay-to-play business world. Sibneft owner and Putin pal Roman Abramovich has thrived, while Yukos owner Mikhail Khodorkovsky – once the richest Russian – was singled out over tax evasion charges. Energy revenue has also allowed Putin to revive some Soviet-style paternalism by encouraging greater domestic production of consumer goods and providing larger subsidies for those Russians left behind by the boom.



The Kremlin

Putin’s own term for the new phenomenon is “managed democracy.” Nearly all Russian media outlets are controlled by the Kremlin’s allies, who guide voters to Putin, his ally/underling Dmitri Medvedev, and his party, United Russia. Provincial governors are now appointed by the state, and representatives to the lower house of parliament are elected from party lists. Government candidates and United Russia have never achieved embarrassingly one-sided majorities, but they have comfortably dominated. In the wake of United Russia’s comparatively poor

electoral showing this month, Putin and his party might have to depend more on other pro-government groups, but the outcome will likely be the same.

Putin still has at his disposal the state’s robust and effective machinery of intimidation. Security and police services routinely target opponents, scores of journalists who have investigated political corruption and war crimes in Chechnya have been murdered, and a subservient judiciary harasses potential rivals and invalidates their runs for office.

Cracks have certainly emerged in the foundation of Putin’s authoritarianism. His relationship with the energy and media barons is weakening, while the broader population is eager for national respect and material comfort, something that depends on growing oil revenue. And activists have become increasingly bold in

denouncing the corruption, sham democracy, and police intimidation of the new Russia. But Putin's system has also shown its ability to deliver enough of the goods and deny the means by which an opposition can coalesce around a rival. It seems that Soviet nationalism still has some staying power.

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An edited version of this essay can be found at The Atlantic Online

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/12/soviet-nationalism-is-still-driving-russian-politics/250391/>

How the Soviet Union Transformed Terrorism

By Nick Lockwood

The USSR developed two tools that changed the world: airplane hijackings and state-sponsorship of terror

In the 1960s and 70s, the Soviet Union sponsored waves of political violence against the West. The Red Brigades in Italy and the German Red Army Faction both terrorized Europe through bank robberies, kidnapping, and acts of sabotage. The Soviets wanted to use these left-wing terror groups to destabilize Italy and Germany to break up NATO. State-sponsored terrorism was a deeply Soviet phenomenon, but its practice did not stop when the Soviet Union ended. While state sponsorship continues, terrorism has mutated into something even harder for us to understand and respond to. But some of the roots of today's terrorism go back to the Soviet Union.

Russia is the birthplace of modern terrorism. The Russian nihilists of the 19th century combined political powerlessness with a propensity for gruesome violence, but their attacks were aimed at the Tsarist state and ruling classes. Later, the Soviet Union and its allies actively supported terrorism as a means to politically inconvenience and undermine its opponents. The East German Stasi and the KGB provided funds, equipment, and “networking” opportunities to the myriad of leftist German terrorist cells in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The Red Army Faction and the 2nd June Movement in Germany, as well as the Red Brigades in Italy, shared Marxist philosophies, a hatred of America, solidarity with the Palestinians, and opposition to the generation, some of its members still in power, that had supported the Nazis and fascists. They were good foundations for a Cold War fifth column. It was not just Europe, either: Soviet equipment, funding, training and guidance flowed across the globe, either directly from the KGB or through the agencies of key allies, like the Rumanian Securitate, the Cuban General Intelligence Directorate.



Palestinian groups were enthusiastic participants in Soviet terror largesse. General Alexander Sakharovsky, head of the KGB's First Chief Directorate, famously said in 1971, “Airplane hijacking is my own invention,” referring to the Palestinian Liberation Organization's hijackings. In the 1950s and 60s there was, on average, five hijackings a year; in 1969, Palestinian terrorists hijacked 82 aircraft. George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was crucial. The secular, left-wing Habash boasted, “Killing one Jew far away from the field of battle is more effective than killing a hundred Jews on the field of battle, because it attracts more attention.”

When the Soviet Union ended, so did much of the secular, left-wing terrorism it had sponsored. Logistical support, funding, and advice all stopped. But, just as importantly, the intellectual, spiritual, and philosophical engine of leftist terror had become broken and powerless. Communism did not work; liberal democracy and capitalism had won. Marxism lost its inspirational impact without a superpower cheerleader and benefactor. The potential terrorists were no longer motivated by Marxism and, crucially, neither were their supporters.

Terrorism has always been about more than the terrorists themselves. The perpetrators need a motivating ideology to justify their crimes, as well as committed enablers around them. The enablers themselves require a

broader base of political supporters and advocates -- “the useful idiots” (an expression credited to Lenin). In the early 1970s, one poll reported that a tenth of Germans under the age of 40 said they would shelter members of terrorist group Baader-Meinhof; a quarter expressed their broad support, even after Baader-Meinhof had murdered over 30 people, including police officers, newspaper workers, and businessmen. With the fall of the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism, extreme leftism lost its inspiration and the terrorists lost their support. Baader-Meinhof announced its own disbandment in 1998, five years after its last terrorist attack and seven years after the Soviet Union disbanded.

Terrorism, however, did not go away.

Many of the next generation of terrorists found inspiration in the founding narrative of Islam, of Mohammed and his few but dedicated supporters affecting massive political change against impossible odds. While this is perverse to the vast majority of Muslims, some genuine grievances helped broaden political support for that agenda among a wider population. Cheap and easy air travel, fluid financial systems, and especially the flow of information over the Internet enabled a greater reach than in the 70s.

Whatever else it is, al-Qaeda was an inspiration, with an agenda easily adopted by willing “franchisees.” State support still continues. Elements of the Pakistani military continue to assist terrorist organizations in Indian Kashmir and in Afghanistan. Iran and Syria continued in a similar fashion, sponsoring operations in support of foreign policy objectives within their neighbors’ territories.

The lesson of Soviet-sponsored terror and its end is that, if the world is to defeat Islamist terrorism, it will have to defeat the motivating narrative. In the same way that communism became a bankrupt ideology, the political philosophy underpinning terrorism needs to be challenged, exposed, and ridiculed.

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The Cold War and How We Think About Private Property

By Peter Charles Choharis

A less-discussed aspect of the conflict, one still ongoing today, is over the laws governing property and investment

Seventeen months after the Cuban Missile Crisis, the U.S. Supreme Court wrote in an opinion, “There are few if any issues in international law today on which opinion seems to be so divided as the limitations on a state’s power to expropriate the property of aliens.” The Court was considering a case involving the Fidel Castro government’s nationalization of American-owned private property. But based in part on this uncertainty about international legal protections for foreign investments, the Court held that U.S. courts should not judge the legality of a foreign government’s official acts and did not reach the merits of the case.

Throughout the Cold War, even non-communist post-colonial countries often asserted the legal right to seize foreign investments as part of land redistribution and controlling natural resources. Often, there was no remedy available to those who had lost their property.

Twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the world’s largest communist country, China, attracted \$215 billion in foreign direct investment over the last four quarters, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The United States attracted \$226 billion during the same period. And while global foreign direct investment is down substantially from its pre-financial crisis high in 2007, total global foreign direct investment (inflows and outflows) was nearly \$2.7 trillion for the last four quarters. Without this access to foreign investment capital, the global recession and worldwide unemployment would be far more severe than they currently are.

Many technological, financial, and political developments help account for the growth in private international investment. But it could not have happened without a worldwide revolution in how we think about international law and private property.

In the United States, for more than two decades Democratic and Republican administrations alike have promoted bilateral investment treaties, or “BITs,” which provide substantive protections for foreign investments against unlawful government interference. These protections cover all kinds of investor property, including intellectual property; intangible assets like contracts, stocks, and bonds; and hard assets like factories and office buildings. To enforce these protections and resolve investment disputes, these treaties provide for international arbitration.

Today, 176 countries throughout the world have also adopted BITs. Although they were around during the Cold War, in the last two decades the number of BITs worldwide exploded from 385 in 1989 to 2,750 by the end of 2009, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).



While the specifics often differ, many BIT provisions protecting foreign investments have become near universal. Both the Turkey-Turkmenistan and U.S.-El Salvador agreements protect foreign investments from direct or indirect expropriation, nationalization, or similar measures “except for a public purpose, in a non-discriminatory manner, upon payment of prompt, adequate and effective compensation, and in accordance with due process of law.” Some countries’ more recent BITs also contain provisions designed to protect environment, labor, public health, and other public policy concerns in addition to the property rights of foreign investors.

Although the pace of BIT formation has slowed in the last few years, many regional trade agreements such as NAFTA and the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement now include investment protection provisions. In fact, as of 2009 at least 295 free trade agreements throughout the world have protections for foreign investments, according to UNCTAD.

Treaties do not mean that foreign investments are immune from government interference. For example, foreign-owned oil companies have become embroiled in high-profile disputes with the Russian and Venezuelan governments over the past few years. But these only reinforce the need for robust legal protections and enforcement.

The international legal and economic frameworks that have promoted and protected foreign investments over the last two decades are not destined to continue. At a 2002 meeting in Monterrey, Mexico, 171 countries affirmed the so-called Washington Consensus when they agreed on the need to “attract and enhance inflows of productive capital” by creating “a transparent, stable and predictable investment climate, with proper contract enforcement and respect for property rights” -- even after the Argentine debt and East Asian fiscal crises. But those were viewed as regional problems that were contained. If the current global financial crisis worsens or spreads, there may be far less interest in promoting the free-flow of capital and protecting foreign financial interests.

Ironically, the courts of the world’s largest economy have done little to help. Despite the fact that there are few issues in international law on which opinion is so unified today, U.S. courts are still mired in Cold War doctrines that prevent them from hearing claims about injuries to foreign investments by state actors. And an increasing number of American judges are openly skeptical about the relevance of international law to U.S. jurisprudence.

Still, there is hope. For the first time since La Revolución, Cuba announced in November that it would permit its citizens to buy and sell their own homes. The revolution continues.

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Further Reading

American Security Quarterly

A collection of essays from our fellows, board members, and adjunct fellows published over the last quarter on all our issues: national security strategy, energy & climate, terrorism & asymmetric warfare, American Competitiveness, and nuclear security. American Security Quarterly will be published on the ASP website on 4 January 2012.

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Building a New American Arsenal

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