# COMING TOGETHER OR FALLING APART?

## Regionalism in the Former Soviet Union

*Edited by S. Neil MacFarlane*

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

Coming together or falling apart? : regionalism in the former Soviet Union

Papers presented at a conference on the international relations of the former Soviet Union, held at Queen's University, May 1996.
ISBN 0-88911-745-4

1. Regionalism – Former Soviet republics – Congresses.
2. Former Soviet republics – Foreign relations – Congresses.
I. MacFarlane, S. N. (Stephen Neil), 1954–
II. Queen's University (Kingston, Ont.). Centre for International Relations

DK293.C654 1997 947.086 C97-930536-8

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Cover Design by Lacha Tchantouridze

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CHAPTER THREE

## Principal Directions of Russian Foreign Policy in the CIS

*David M. Law*

### Introduction

Reconsolidation of decisionmaking power within the CIS under Russian leadership has come to be seen as increasingly likely, both in Western and Eastern circles. However, the way in which the process might enfold remains ill-defined. This essay attempts to put a little fill in this vacuum. It reviews the forces working for and against reconsolidation, and assesses how they may impact on relations between Moscow and the republics over the shorter and longer term. It pays particular attention to the policy of the Russian Federation toward the CIS.[1]

### The Evolution of the Russian Approach to the CIS

Russia and the CIS are only five years old, but their interrelationship has already moved through several phases. The first could be labelled devolution and decomposition. As with most things in recent Russian history, the story began with Mikhail Gorbachev's revolution from above. *Perestroika* was bound to have repercussions for relations between the Soviet centre and the union republics. This became apparent at the latest in March 1990 with Lithuania's stage-setting declaration of independence and thereafter with Moscow's increasingly harried efforts to shift responsibility downwards in a desperate effort to avoid destruction of the entire Soviet enterprise. In July 1990, for example, the Politburo signalled its preparedness to bow to pressures from below when it accepted a Gorbachev proposal to include representatives from all republics.

It was in this period that the republics finally began profiting from the substantial autonomy which they had received in Stalin's 1936 constitution and had enjoyed only in nominal terms. While Gorbachev pursued his efforts to negotiate a confederal union treaty which would maintain an overall coordinating role for the centre, a number of the republics started developing their own foreign and security policies.[2]

The failure of Gorbachev's efforts to preserve the union was a case of the impossible confronting the inevitable. This was particularly evident in the all-union and later republic-level referenda of 1991. Results varied significantly from republic to republic, and what exactly happened at the ballot box may never be known.[3] What seems clear, however, was that the public's first priority was to destroy the communist system and for this purpose it was prepared to risk losing the union. As for the republican political elites that had not managed to make the jump to post-Soviet entrepreneur, championing the destruction of the union must have appeared a promising avenue — and perhaps the only one — to professional survival.

Thus, the first period of Russian foreign policy predated the establishment of Russia as a sovereign state. It was revolutionary, disintegrative, partly formative and, in the first year of the CIS, consistently chaotic. The creation of the CIS itself reflected this when the announcement of the first post-Soviet unity project by the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus was greeted by an almost frantic bandwagoning effort on the part of other republics — all bar Georgia and the Baltics — which had only recently proclaimed their independence.

This phase extended into 1992, a year marked by enthusiasm about the newly won republican freedoms but also by apprehension about the destabilizing potential of the new sovereignties. As for the CIS as an instrument of policy, official Russian opinion seemed to be of different minds: was the Commonwealth solely a device designed to limit the damage stemming from the union's multiple divorce, or should it — could it? — become the vehicle of a new process of integration.[4]

Despite the confusion prevailing in this first phase of Russian foreign policy, it coincided with a general policy line that had integration into the West as a primary goal and a readiness to meet the United States more than halfway on most issues, serving as the compass pointing in this direction. In the official Russian scheme of things, the CIS was of course important, but the defining dimension was the relationship with the West, and particularly the US.

However, this approach had a short shelf-life. The second phase involved the gradual emergence of a distinct Russian foreign policy. Through 1993, there were increasing signs in Moscow of the revival of a centralizing, Russia-focused bureaucracy seeking to expand opportunities for manoeuvre in foreign and security policy. Although the West and the US remained central foreign policy issues, the emphasis was increasingly on Russia playing hard to get, rather



than Russia trying hard to please. Acting out of weakness, Moscow sought to stake out positions on issues that had some credibility on historical, ethnic, geographical, and "once-greatness" grounds, and in the process to create bargaining chips that could be traded in for more important Western favours, essentially financial.[5]

The first concrete sign of a rebirth of Russian foreign policy came in January 1993 with the issuing of the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation. Although the document, prepared by the Russian foreign ministry for submission to the Duma, ranged across most dimensions of Russia's international situation and foreign and security policy, it laid a heavy stress on the CIS. Its most salient aspects in this regard were:

- The objective of the Russian Federation was to bring relations with Commonwealth countries "to the level of full-scale interstate relations."
- Russia would aim to develop activity on the bilateral level as the precondition for the emergence of a credible multilateral structure. At the same time, it would strive to enhance multilateral forms of interaction.
- Variable geometry was acknowledged to be a suitable principle for the CIS.
- Russia would work to obtain recognition of the CIS as a regional international organization.
- Priorities in CIS cooperation were to strengthen the "unified military-strategic space," build a viable structure for mutual economic relations, develop safeguards for human rights, create a single legal jurisdiction, and enhance technical and cultural cooperation.
- Russia would pay special attention to developing relations with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.
- Countries contiguous to the CIS were of key importance to the future of the CIS; Russia would seek to shape its relations with them accordingly.
- The cohesion of the Russian Federation depended on that of the CIS, and vice versa.

In regards to two further points, there was considerable ambiguity. One concerned the use of force, and the other the role of extra-regional actors in the CIS. According to the Foreign Policy Concept, "voluntariness" was to be the principal criterion for association with, and involvement in, the CIS. At the same time, the Concept recognized the use of force to be legitimate in "extreme cases," defined as including the need to affirm the principles of international law, including the rights of minorities, and to achieve stable neighbourly relations.

Two observations were made in this connection. First, whereas the military power at Moscow's disposal was recognized to have been devalued on the global level, it was said to have become more significant on the regional and local planes. The second observation was that the leading democratic states had an interest in the stability of the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and were prepared to support a strengthened Russian role in supporting that stability

The Concept — so assumed its architects — gave "Russian foreign policy sufficient room for maneuvering," and potentially a very broad rationale for using force within the CIS.

On the question of external involvement in the CIS, there was also ambiguity. Three examples were particularly revealing. Neighbouring states were described as trying " to use the disintegration of the USSR to strengthen their own positions," and in certain cases to "realise plans for forming broad communities under a national or religious banner." At the same time, their activities in CIS countries were qualified as neither unnatural or necessarily negative, as they reflected "the objective processes underway in the world" and moreover could bring valuable economic and technical assistance.

On the level of individual states, this translated, for example, into Iran being identified as a "tangible factor of uncertainty in the system of regional international relations" and as belonging to a region "which was directly tied to certain internal conflicts in the CIS." Turkey, on the other hand, was identified as a country that could "exert a possible positive influence on Russia's southern Commonwealth neighbours in the matter of formulating a civil society there."

As for the United States, the Concept envisaged its more active inclusion in the settling of conflicts and protection of human rights in the CIS and the Baltic countries. It also warned, however, of American efforts to "take Russia's place in the countries of its traditional influence" under the guise of mediation and peacekeeping efforts. Similarly, while the Concept confirmed that cooperation with NATO and involvement of CIS states in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council were desirable, it committed the Russian Federation — in one of the few openly pugnacious statements in the Concept — to "actively oppose any attempts to increase the military-political presence of third states in the countries contiguous to Russia."

In the two years following the Concept, Russian foreign policy worked largely within its parameters. In the CIS, the focus was on bilateral relations but there was also much flexibility on display in the multilateral arrangements devised for individual issues.[6] While the process was more voluntarist than non-voluntarist, there were some notable exceptions. A voluntarist approach was clearly not operative in the Caucasus — the area with the strongest combination of high economic stakes and centrifugal drag. Here Moscow clearly resorted to pressure tactics and fanned conflict in an effort to reduce the republics' freedom of action and bind them more closely to Russia. And as anticipated in the Concept, the leading democracies remained largely silent.

## Strategic Reorientation

Signs of further reorientation in foreign policy appeared in 1995, as the country geared up for the December parliamentary elections. President Boris Yeltsin



and then Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev came under fire in the Duma for failing to stand up for Russian interests in the CIS and toward the West in general. In response, they attempted to take a more overtly nationalist stance on issues and policies across the board. The strong showing of the communists in the Duma elections and the enhanced concern about the outcome of the June presidential elections were the catalyst that sealed this shift. In January, Kozyrev, the erstwhile Mr. "Da," was replaced by an individual in the mould of the man who inspired the nickname "Mr. Nyet." The new foreign minister, Evgenii Primakov, will presumably not turn out to be an Andrei Gromyko. Critics of the government will, however, find him much more difficult to challenge on grounds of competence or loyalty to the country.

Primakov's top priority seems to be reconsolidation, but without resorting to the racist or imperialist rhetoric of the government's main opponents, or the methods that might follow were they to take power. During the 1996 presidential election campaign, Russian Communist Party leader, Gennadii Zyuganov, called restoration of the old Soviet bloc as one entity "a historical necessity." For Zyuganov, *Soviet reunion* is an integral part of a broader program which would involve restoring public control over the economy, peacefulness, and propriety on the streets and in the regions, as well as political discipline — in other words, "authoritarianism with a younger, smiling face," namely that of the younger generation of *apparatchiks* who have made their way with him in the communist movement since the CPSU's collapse.[7] From the perspective of Spring 1996, the Liberal Democratic Party of Zhirinovsky with its revanchist and virulently Russians-first pitch was less of a concern than the Russian Communist Party. But Yeltsin seemed to have understood that he could pick up votes from the LPD in the parliamentary and presidential elections by demonstrating success in consolidating the CIS.[8]

What is Primakov's approach? Essentially it would seem to be to effect major changes in relations with key countries around the CIS periphery as a way of checking centrifugal tendencies within the CIS. This would appear to have three main dimensions to it, involving NATO to the west; China to the east and south; and Iran to the south. NATO's plans to proceed with enlargement have proved useful to Yeltsin in the past.[9] It was not by accident that Yeltsin pointed to CIS reconsolidation as a likely consequence of NATO expansion after the release in September 1994 of the NATO Study on Enlargement, which confirmed that NATO would take in new members.[10] Nor was it a coincidence that the Chechnya action was launched immediately after the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in December 1994 that approved the study. In general, the campaign against enlargement has given Yeltsin some much-needed room for manoeuvre in dealing with his critics in the Duma. If NATO does not expand, the suggestion will be that he has won a major foreign policy victory. If NATO does eventually expand, it will be a limited process, at least initially confined to the Visegrad 3 (Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary), and possibly

Slovenia. This may enhance centripetal forces within the CIS, and give Moscow more leverage in its dealings with the westernmost FSU states, and particularly Ukraine.

What NATO can do for reconsolidation in the West, the People's Republic of China (PRC) may be able to do in the east and south. The closer relationship which emerged from the Sino-Russian Summit of April 1996 should support efforts to counteract centrifugal pulls in the Asian expanses of the federation, as well as bind the Central Asian states more closely to Moscow. Both Russia and mainland China are concerned about their ability to maintain order in contiguous frontier areas. Russia's most immediate problem is maintaining central control over Russian territory in the Far East. Over the longer term, it must contend with the possibility of the defection of one or all Central Asian states. In Xinjiang, the PRC has to contend with its own turcophone "separatist" threat. The five-nation Agreement on Confidence Building in the Military Field along Border Areas, for the signing of which the presidents of Tajikstan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan joined Yeltsin and his Chinese hosts during the summit, is designed to ease long-standing tensions along China's northern borders and should support these objectives.[11]

The strategic partnership to which the two countries committed themselves at the summit may never amount to much. Even well short of that, however, the new relationship could end up strengthening both Russia and the PRC and give them additional flexibility in addressing their foreign policy agendas. Although Yeltsin made a point of underscoring his ideological differences with the Chinese leadership when in Beijing, on several issues Moscow's interests run parallel to Beijing's.

Russia seeks support for its campaign to control Chechnya. The PRC seeks support for its campaign to control Taiwan. Neither is comfortable with the notion of the United States being the world's only remaining superpower. Both share an interest in weakening it or at least throwing it off balance, in Russia's case because of Washington's role in NATO enlargement decisionmaking and in the PRC's because of its ability to be the spoiler in China's own version of reconsolidation. The two countries are also increasingly important trading partners. Russia feels that it needs good relations with the PRC to gain access to the Asian economic zone. For the PRC, closer ties with Russia can make it just that much more difficult to isolate the communist giant over the conduct of its foreign or domestic policies.

The third relationship which Russia can use to establish a prophylactic corral around the republics is with Iran. Both countries have been on the weaker end of a relationship with the United States, particularly in their Middle East dealings. Working more closely together can help change that. Iran wants an end to US pressures on third parties to blackball it because of its purported terrorist record. Russia does not want to be cut out of the Arab-Israeli peace process. Both countries are historically pro-Armenian, and have tended to favour Armenia



in its conflict with Azerbaijan. Both want to keep Azerbaijan in its place, primarily reflecting oil interests in the Russian case and out of concern over Azerbaijan's potential interaction with Iran's substantial Azeri population in the Iranian one. Both are concerned about the influence that Turkey can exert in Azerbaijan, and more generally in the Caucasus and through Turkey, the influence of the United States.

This is the kind of policy that was to be expected with the promotion of Evgenii Primakov to the foreign minister slot. A scholar of the Middle East, former intelligence chief and early opponent of NATO enlargement, Primakov knows the limits on Russia's ability to project force and can be expected to put political initiatives first. In response to a query about the objective difficulties in store for him in his new job, Primakov emphasized the need "to prevent the defence of Russian interests from evolving into a confrontation with those whom you do not let infringe on these interests."[12]

## Sources of and Obstacles to Reconsolidation

In part, the pressures for reconsolidation reflect the inherent dialectics of transition: first, the Soviet Union was destroyed; there followed a period of rupture; and then an effort to recreate the union in a different form. But there are also a number of very practical, and in part contradictory, considerations at stake.

Several groups in Russian society can generally be assumed to favour reconsolidation for *socio-economic reasons*. The end of the Soviet Union meant severe hardship for pensioners and those near retirement age, workers in state enterprises, particularly those reliant on production links and markets overlapping republican jurisdiction in the former Soviet economic space, the military, especially those stationed outside Russia, and not to be forgotten, those communist *apparatchiks* who did not manage to convert themselves into post-Soviet parliamentarians or members of the Russian mafia.[13] The motives of individuals within these groups differ widely. Generally, however, a major factor in such groups' support for reconsolidation is the assumption that it will be accompanied by a restoration of their former socio-economic status.

Second, there is an *identity dimension*. This plays an especially important role in Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, which together are the home of more than three-quarters of the 25 million Russians living in the near abroad.[14] This diaspora constitutes a powerful lobby for reconsolidation, as well as providing a useful pretext for those favouring reconsolidation for self-interested reasons. There can be no doubt that Russians in the near abroad have lost several advantages as the newly independent states have begun to assert the identities of their dominant nationalities.[15] Beyond this, a residual Soviet identity has survived in the hearts and minds of millions of citizens of the federation. Those

in mixed marriages now have to cope with the fact that part of the family has its roots outside the federation and perhaps that the children of their union are forced by the new circumstances into making uncomfortable choices about identity. In addition, there are those for whom identity has always been and can only be Soviet, because of the commitments and choices made though a lifetime career — among them — the unreconstructed *apparatchiks*, the war veterans, the cultural workers who owe their careers to Sovietism and who have suffered greatly with its demise, and russified experts originally from the other republics who have resided over many years in Moscow. As a subset of the identity dimension, Russian *language* and *culture* represent an integral part of the cultural baggage of the overwhelming majority of former Soviet citizens. This is a factor of special importance for the interaction among economic and political elites.

A further consideration is the production, transportation, and communication links inherited from Soviet times — the energy grids, the pipelines, the telephone lines, the interdependence of enterprises spread throughout the former Soviet Union — the totality of the *physical infrastructure and economic circuits* built under Soviet communism and still standing. Much of this structure links parts of former Soviet space to the Russian centre and to one another through the centre. Where there is no substitute for this legacy and no prospect for its early replacement, it can act as a powerful force for reconsolidation.

The *chronic weakness of government* in the CIS provides what may be the strongest argument for reconsolidation. Russia, having inherited the bulk of the Soviet bureaucracy can, for all its own weakness, deliver services and perform functions that will remain beyond the reach of other successor states for several years to come. There is thus an objective need for the centre's expertise and contacts, for its ability to secure borders, to provide nuclear protection, to perform peacekeeping duties, to negotiate with the US, the IMF and the EU, and the like.

For all these reasons and the compelling fact of *contiguity*, the CIS states constitute a region. Circumstances that might eliminate this reality are difficult to imagine. Quite another question is, however, just how compact and cohesive this region could become in time.

## Underlying Counterpulls

Several forces work against a restoration of the dominant centralizing role that Moscow enjoyed in Soviet times and a strengthening of Russia's decisionmaking prerogatives at the expense of the other republics. The sheer size of the CIS — and of the Russian Federation, for that matter — militates against the concentration of powers at the centre. A reconstituted union incorporating all CIS members would be the largest country in the world, replacing Russia in the top



spot. The larger a country, the greater the objective need for a devolution of decisionmaking prerogatives. This is true of Russia now, where there has been a natural increase in the powers of the regions since the demise of the Soviet system; it would be even more true of the larger and even more complex CIS.

Economic and technological change also acts as a check on the recentralization of political and economic decisionmaking. One of the reasons why the Soviet system failed was that as its economy became more mature, its inefficiency grew more debilitating, and it became more vulnerable to the increasingly pervasive forces of international competition. What proved to be a lost cause in the 1980s is not likely to be any more winnable in the 1990s. Moreover, it is difficult to see what would generate the resources required to bankroll a recentralized economic policy relying on the resuscitation of surviving Soviet enterprise and command decisionmaking practices. Holdovers from the Soviet economy with a chance of survival are generally those that have been given a new start with the injection of foreign capital and new managerial approaches. An additional consideration is that already in several republics, investment and trade patterns suggest that the non-Russian foreign presence is rapidly overtaking the presence of firms with productive relationships with the Russian Federation.[16] Barring major political reversals, this trend will become progressively stronger.

The information revolution was instrumental in destabilizing the control systems of the Soviet system and ultimately making them dysfunctional. Its impact has only been reinforced over the last decade, as parts of Russia have been colonized by new technology. This is as yet a weak phenomenon and should not be overstated. However, ongoing technological change promotes decentralization, diversification, devolution, and democratization of access to information. These are the very antithesis of the centralization of productive forces, standardization of procedures, concentration of political decisionmaking and state control of information that characterized the Soviet system (and tended in much diluted fashion to shape the role of the state and the structure of the corporation under capitalism).[17]

Support for recentralization of decisionmaking is also undercut by the centre's track record in Soviet and even imperial times. Moscow is strongly identified with the suffering and abuse that was an integral part of the Soviet system and that flowed from the command approach to all aspects of daily life. The disastrous experience of Soviet peoples and elites under this system acts as a powerful deterrent to any new centralizing experiment.

A further difficulty is raised by the ideological profile of a reconsolidated union. Communism in its Soviet heyday provided a basis for political activism across national and ethnic divides and acted as a unifying force within the governing elite: Soviet nationality policy was terribly oppressive, but it did not prevent non-Russians from regularly acceding to the post of general secretary. At the same time, the suffering experienced by Russians and non-Russians

alike in the name of communism was so intense and long lasting as to make it extremely unlikely that this system could succeed in rallying a political majority under post-Soviet conditions. Russian nationalism, the other main ideological option on the table as the guiding principle of reconsolidation, would face a similar difficulty. In fact, both communist and nationalist reconsolidation would be likely to evolve in the direction of national-socialism, embodying as under Hitler and Stalin in the 1930s and 1940s, centralized political control and institutionalized racism.

This is a difficult enough prospect to imagine in the Russian Federation with its 130 nationalities. It would be even more foreign to the reality of the CIS. Indeed, polling evidence suggests that while there is support for "returning Russia to the status of a great and respected power," there is much less for a restoration of the former Soviet Union. The former choice scored between 41 percent and 54 percent in polls carried out in the Russian Federation in the first three months of 1996. The option of "restoring the former Soviet Union" received consistently less than one-third of the support for a great Russia (and tended to fall as the election campaign progressed).[18]

Poll choices relating to socio-economic justice placed at least twice as high as the option of restoring the former Soviet Union. In addition, the number of respondents favouring Soviet restoration was a bit less than half of the communists' score in the December parliamentary elections and of the scores they registered in the lead-up to the June presidential elections.

This can suggest two very different possibilities. One is that a significant group of citizens of the Russian Federation, while not terribly interested in a reconsolidation process that would result in the restoration of the USSR, believe that this is the only way that their socio-economic and identity concerns can be satisfied. Another is that the style of reconsolidation which enjoys the most support in the federation is one in which Russia would take the lead, but without the trappings of Soviet rule. However, this again raises the question of the feasibility of Russian hegemony and identity as the rallying point and ordering principles of a new Union.

A further consideration is that republican leaders have established their own power bases and interests since the collapse of the Soviet Union; they will not relinquish these willingly. Their reaction to the communists' grand-standing on the reconsolidation issue in March 1996 is a case in point. While Zyuganov and his allies managed to push through resolutions in the Duma reasserting the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and denouncing the treaty creating the CIS in 1991, the only republic not to protest was Belarus. The resolutions were roundly denounced as well by the federation council.[19]

The Belarus exception is instructive. In the Spring of 1996, Belarus President Lukashenka increasingly tried to move his country toward a union with Moscow in an attempt to overcome the abject economic circumstances facing his population. This came at an opportune moment for Yeltsin, as it deflected attention from Zyuganov's efforts to present himself and the Russian Communist Party as the champions of reconsolidation. But Moscow simply lacks the resources to throw a lifeline to Belarus's collapsing economy. President Yeltsin made this clear when he rejected Lukashenka's interest in a treaty foreseeing full economic union. Instead, Belarus was offered an economic union which in the view of the *Economist* "promised much but committed the signatories to little."[20]



For all these reasons, there is little to suggest that reconsolidation — other than on a voluntary basis — would be feasible under prevailing circumstances. A non-voluntarist approach would probably require high levels of force which, as the experience of the Chechnya conflict has underscored, is not something for which the Russian armed forces or the Russian population at large are materially or psychologically prepared. In polls carried out during the presidential election campaign, 60 percent of the electorate described putting an end to the war in Chechnya as the single most popular action that a Russian presidential candidate could take.[21] By extension, any major military action in the near abroad to impose reconsolidation would be at least equally unpopular, and most probably more so. Beyond this, there are insufficient funds to attempt to coax the republics out of their independence. Russian social forces in general want a strong Russia, not the restoration of a Soviet-like union. For these reasons, the approach adopted by the Russian foreign ministry in 1993 is likely to remain the guiding principle.

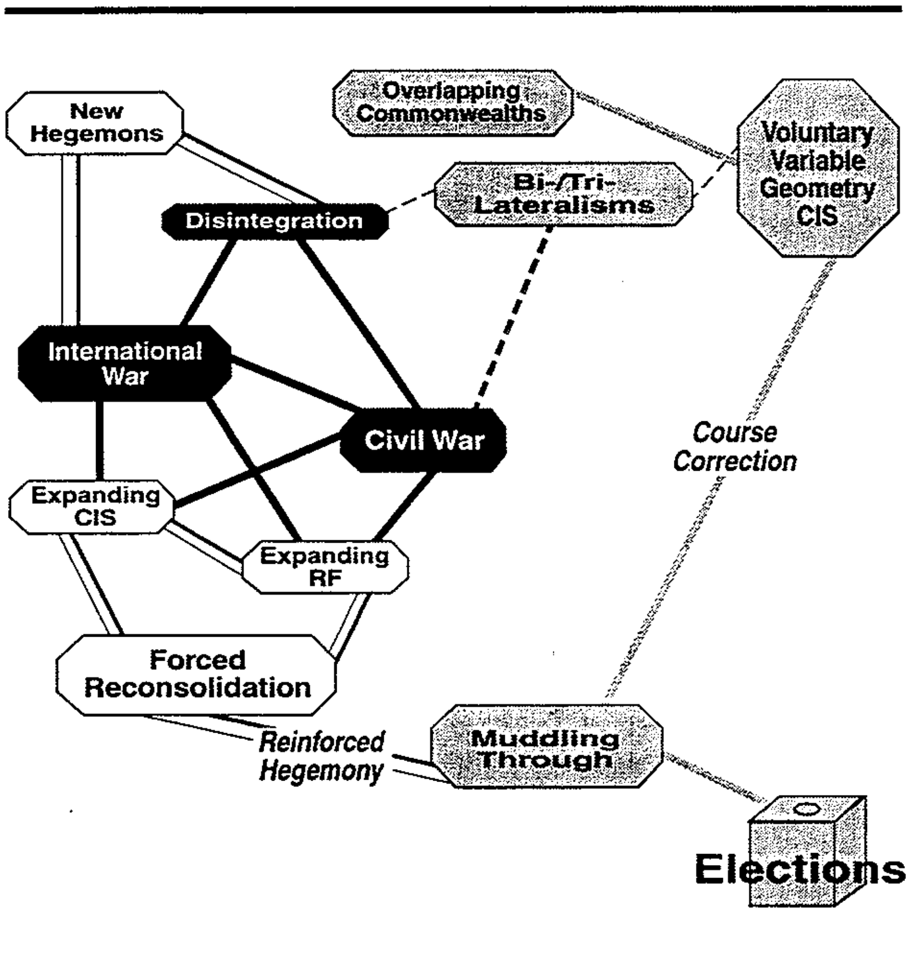
## Future Trends

This analysis suggests that over the short term Moscow is likely to continue on its present path in relations with the CIS. This does not exclude the use of force or bribery on a smaller scale, but neither is likely to lead to any new breakthroughs on the CIS front. More promising are creative foreign policy initiatives, such as those adopted in connection with NATO enlargement and relations with countries like the PRC and Iran. As long as "voluntarism" is Russia's operative concept, in the CIS however, the overriding reflex of the other republics will be to guard decisionmaking powers jealously. A communist president would be much less comfortable with this prospect than a centrist like Yeltsin. But he too would be obliged to work within the limitations he found before him.

What about the longer term trends? As the diagram suggests, at one point what might be called creative muddling through will hit a bifurcation point at which either the Russian hegemonic approach or an emerging federalism will begin to dominate.

Hegemony would require Russia to be a much stronger state than it is at present, equipped with more sophisticated and efficient tools of coercion. It

FIGURE 1




would require a new dictatorship. It could result in only a partial reconsolidation within the CIS, or one that reincorporated the Baltic states. It could also result in an expansion of the CIS west- and southwestwards, particularly if outside intervention in the former Yugoslavia were to drag on unsuccessfully, and even lead to an expansion of the centre's control into south Asia. But even then, or precisely because of that, this path would likely lead to conflict, within and beyond the CIS, and possibly to disintegration and the erection of new hegemonies within and overlapping former Soviet space.



The federalist path would also be complex, confusing, and long. It would require a much higher level of democratic development than presently enjoyed by Russia and the other CIS states. However, it would hold out the best chance of keeping violence to a minimum as post-Soviet space continues its reorganization. It probably offers the only prospect of ensuring over time the effective use of the considerable human and material wealth of the CIS and of protecting the diversity that may be its greatest asset. Further down the federalist path, the CIS might prove to be the nucleus of a web of intersecting and overlapping commonwealths, bringing together states for different purposes and in varying intensities.

## Notes

1. The denomination CIS, or Commonwealth of Independent States, is used to describe three different dimensions of post-Soviet reality. First, it can refer to the totality of post-Soviet space, commonly but not invariably, without the three Baltic states. Second, it can refer to the institution created in December 1991 which continues to operate in widely varying formats of participation as a function of the subject matter of inter-Republican consultations. Third, the CIS is used in the Russian Federation to refer to the other post-Soviet Republics and their interrelationships.

2. The republics varied considerably in the degree to which they asserted their autonomy from the centre in the year leading up to the dissolution of the union in December 1991. While Lithuania and Georgia led the charge to independence, with Ukraine not far behind, the Central Asian republics were on the whole far more circumspect.

3. See Galina Starovoitova, "Modern Russia and the Ghost of Weimar Germany," in *Remaking Russia: Voices from Within*, ed. by Heyward Isham (New York: Institute for East-West Studies, 1995).

4. See Stephen Shenfield, "The Post-Soviet Strategic Space: Trends and Problems," in *Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1994* (London: Centre for Defence Studies, 1994), pp. 83-93.

5. For an in-depth analysis of Russian efforts to turn strength into weakness, see S. Neil MacFarlane, "Realism and Russian Strategy after the Collapse of the USSR," in *Realism after the Cold War*, ed. Ethan Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno (forthcoming).

6. For example, the four-country customs union involving Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgizstan.

7. "Belarus and Russia: Trick or Treaty? *Economist*, 30 March 1996.

8. The LPD won 12.3 million votes in 1993 and 7.7 million in 1995. Zhirinovsky picked up 6.2 million votes when he ran for president in 1991. Robert Orttung, "Duma Elections Bolster Leftist Opposition, *Transitions*, 23 February 1996, pp. 6-11.

9. In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that Yeltsin even tried to help the issue along in the hope that it would provide a rallying cry for reconsolidating the CIS. In August 1993, eight months after the strong position taken in the Foreign Policy Concept against any " increase in the politico-military presence of foreign countries in countries contiguous to Russia," Yeltsin,

in a joint statement with Lech Walesa while on a state visit to Poland, stated that the Polish position on NATO membership "met with his understanding." This was interpreted at NATO, and in German circles in particular, as a Russian green light on membership expansion. Two months later Moscow sent a secret letter to certain Western capitals warning of the negative repercussions of enlargement. But by then, the internal NATO debate on expanding membership was well underway, as the author who was on the NATO planning staff at this juncture can attest. See also D. Law, "The Problems of Widening NATO," *Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1994* (London: Centre for Defence Studies, 1994), p. 141.

10. The discussion of possible reactions to NATO expansion were already well underway in Russian foreign and security policy circles by the time the NATO study was published. See, for example, Stanislav Lunev, "Russia's New Military Doctrine," *The Jameston Foundation Prism*, 1 December 1995. The author of this present article alluded to the possibility of CIS reconsolidation following an enlargement decision at an interparliamentary conference in Warsaw in May 1995. See D. Law, "Widen or Wither?: The Challenges of NATO Enlargement," *Competences and Responsibility of International Organisations for European Security* (Warsaw: Sejm Publishing House, 1995), p. 31.

11. Rod Mickleburgh, "Sino-Russian Summit a Bubbly Affair," *The Globe and Mail*, 26 April 1996.

12. See the interview with Primakov in *Obshchaya Gazeta*, 18-24 January 1996, quoted in FBIS-SOV-96-014.

13. Estimates of the decrease in production in the period from 1989 to 1994 range from 50 percent to 70 percent. See Philip Hanson, Structural Change in the Russian Economy," 26 January 1996, pp 18-21.

14. Allen Lynch and Reneo Likic, "The Russian Federation will Remain United," *Transitions*, 19 January 1996, pp. 14-17.

15. Constantine Dmitriev, "Hostages of the (Former) Soviet Empire," *Transitions*, 26 January 1996.

16. Approximately one-third of the total foreign investment into the CIS has been earmarked for Russia. In the first six months of 1995, the Russian Federation portion of Azerbaijan's total CIS import and exports was 30 percent and 35 percent respectively. Roughly one-half of that percentage are for the global Azerbaijan figures of June 1995. In the same period in Turkmenistan, only 10 percent of the former firms registered were Russian. See *Eurasian File*, published by the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TICA), for November and December 1995.

17. These points were explored in a paper entitled "The Changing Nature of States: Implications for Foreign Policy," presented by the author at a conference in Kiev in October 1994.

18. "Belarus and Russia: Trick or Treaty?" *Economist*, 30 March 1996.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

# Russia's New Military Doctrine and the Internal and Regional Use of Force

*Dale E. Roth*

## Introduction

On 11 December 1994, President Boris Yeltsin gave the order for the Russian Federation armed forces' invasion of the self-proclaimed independent state of Chechnya. The intent was to gain control of an internal conflict and ensure the integrity of the federation with a quick, decisive victory. What was to be a short-term military action, however, developed into a protracted conflict that continues to draw national and international criticism toward Russia. This paper will examine the conflict in Chechnya as it relates to Russia's current military doctrine, the use of force, and the armed forces' capability to achieve success. It will outline the implications of the analysis both for Russian policy in the broader Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region and for Russia's place in the regional structure of power. The paper will try to provide an awareness of the problems that Russia faces in balancing the objectives for the use of force with the capability of the force to achieve success. The paper relates closely to the theme of this volume in the following way. The kinds of internal application of force contemplated in the doctrine resemble closely the mission attributes of use of force in the "near abroad," and indeed, in this region the line between internal and external use of force is blurred, given the qualified approach of the Russian Federation to the sovereignty of the other CIS members. Consequently, much can be learned about probable uses of the military instrument in Russia's relations and its likely effectiveness from its internal use.

The first section describes military doctrine as it applies to the Chechen conflict. This section includes a description of the purpose and general tone of the doctrine, perceptions of military threat, and military roles and tasks to counter perceived threats. The second section presents aspects of Russia's internal