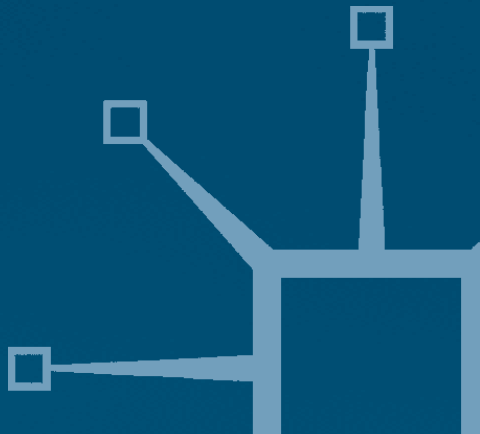


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Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era

Reality, Illusion and Mythmaking

Bobo Lo



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Also by Bobo Lo

SOVIET LABOUR IDEOLOGY AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE STATE

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- 1.2 million by April 1999 [see *The Military Balance 1999–2000*, p. 104] were more nominal than real: many of the positions cut were occupied by ‘dead souls’ (rather than live bodies) and therefore naturally redundant, while certain groups of military and other ‘force’ personnel were not counted in official statistics. Similarly, while there was much fanfare about the transition of the armed forces to a four-service structure – army, navy, air force and strategic forces – there is no evidence to suggest that this has led to an increase in efficiency or capabilities. Although the prospects for meaningful reform appear more promising under Putin, the International Institute of Strategic Studies rightly points out that ‘[m]ilitary reform continues to lack not only economic resources but also the human talent capable of implementing radical modernisation’ [*The Military Balance 2000–2001*, p. 109].
7. A very well-respected defence correspondent remarked to me that the most significant aspect about the Military Doctrine was the fact of its existence.
 8. The very different priorities of the two Presidents were reflected in their public comments following the signing of the initial Union Treaty in May 1997. Yeltsin stressed the importance of the provisions on freedom of speech and press, unrestricted party political activity, the sanctity of private property, protection of investor rights and support for ‘free economic competition’. Lukashenko, on the other hand, placed most emphasis on the intended establishment of supragovernmental Union ‘organs of power’. Much of the Russian media were in no doubt that Lukashenko retained aspirations of one day heading a new Russia–Belarus Union state [see Polezhaev, 1997b, p. 1].
 9. Although the term, ‘hegemony on the cheap’, was used by R.W. (‘Johnny’) Apple [2000, p. 112] in relation to American foreign policy, it also fits Moscow’s approach to CIS-related issues.
 10. The rouble devaluation impacted on the structure of Russia’s external trade by making Western imports less affordable than local and CIS-origin items. As a result, the share of total Russian imports from the CIS increased steadily from 26 per cent in 1998 to 27.6 per cent in 1999 to 34.4 per cent in 2000. Belarus was the principal beneficiary of this new environment, supplanting Ukraine as Russia’s largest trading partner in the former Soviet Union in 2000 [*Tamozhennaya statistika ...*, 2000, pp. 7, 9; 2001, pp. 7, 9].
 11. In 1654, Tsar Aleksei Romanov accepted the proposal of Bogdan Khmelnytsky, the *hetman* of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, to place himself and his followers under Russian suzerainty.
 12. The last nuclear weapons components in Ukraine were transferred to Russia in June 1996 [Evstafiev, 2000, p. 220].
 13. There were several important outcomes arising from the accords of 28 May 1997. The first was the fact that the two sides were able to reach agreement, a positive result stemming from Moscow’s decision to adopt a more cooperative approach to relations with Ukraine. Second, the legal status of Crimea and Sevastopol was resolved, signifying substantive Russian recognition of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. Third, the apportioning of the Black Sea Fleet was finalized, along with issues of joint basing, access and leasing arrangements. Finally, progress was made in rescheduling and relief of Ukraine’s debt to Russia [see Sherr, 1997, pp. 33–47 for a good summation of the costs and benefits of the accords for both sides].
 14. Garnett and Legvold [1999, p. 4] note that under Aleksandr Lukashenko Belarus became subject to critical scrutiny by the West not only for its

- 'increasingly marred human rights record, but also from its substitution of authoritarian for constitutional government'. The latest (September 2001) Presidential elections, in which Lukashenko won in the first round with more than 75 per cent of the vote, were marked by claims of widespread electoral abuses, including the stuffing of ballot boxes. Significantly, the OSCE declined to endorse the elections as democratic [Bogdanovich, 2001, pp. 57–8].
15. Although Lukashenko claimed to support the Russia–NATO Founding Act, he criticized Yeltsin for failing to consult or inform Minsk before announcing that Moscow would remove warheads from missiles targeted at NATO member countries. The Belarus president accused Russia of not considering his country's interests in proposing the initiative, and described this behaviour as 'not that of an ally' (*ne po-soyuznicheski*) [Poletaev, 1997, p. 3].
 16. The Russian Foreign Ministry was especially upset by Azerbaijan's decision to sign the so-called 'Contract of the Century' [see comments by MFA spokesman Mikhail Demurin, in Mekhtiev, 1994, p. 3]. This contract, which envisaged joint exploitation of Caspian Sea oil with a group of Western companies (including British Petroleum and Amoco), disregarded the MFA's legal stance that none of the littoral states (Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) could exploit the energy resources of the Caspian Sea – 'indivisible' and under 'common ownership' – without obtaining prior consent from all the others. With good reason, the MFA position – demanding a right of veto in all but name – was widely viewed as a transparent attempt to maintain Russian control over Caspian energy development while simultaneously preventing the United States from expanding its presence in the Transcaucasus. Unsurprisingly, economic actors – Chernomyrdin, Lukoil – welcomed the opportunity to become involved in the 'Contract of the Century', while more geopolitically driven interests, such as then FIS chief Primakov, emphasized the danger to Russia's national security interests [Mekhtiev, 1994, p. 3]. In the end, the matter was effectively resolved by increasing Lukoil's share in the Caspian Oil Consortium and ensuring that much of the oil produced would be transported to the West via southern Russia [Bovt, 1995, pp. 1, 4].
 17. The most contentious issue here concerned the Baku–Ceyhan pipeline project which, when completed, would carry Caspian Sea oil to the West via Georgia, bypassing both Iran and Russia. Moscow's concerns that others were intending to 'edge Russia out of the energy-rich Caspian region' [Varlamov, 1999, p. 5] were heightened by the signature of an accord on the project between President Clinton and the leaders of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey in Istanbul in December 1999.
 18. Charles Krauthammer [1991, p. 25] distinguished between 'real and apparent multilateralism'. The former involved a 'genuine coalition of coequal partners of comparable strength and stature,' such as the coalition between the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union during the Second World War. By contrast, 'pseudo-multilateralism' occurred when 'a dominant great power acts essentially alone, but, embarrassed at the idea and still worshipping at the shrine of collective security, recruits a ship here, a brigade there, and blessings all around to give its unilateral actions a multilateral sheen'. Although Krauthammer was of course referring to the United States, the same mentality was evident in Moscow's approach towards peacekeeping in the CIS, in other words, where it was the primary actor.

19. Understanding that control of these would reinforce its primacy in the region as the pivotal power, Moscow insisted on exclusively Russian peacekeepers and even rejected the presence of European observers [Plekhanov, 1994, p. 3].
20. It should be acknowledged that Primakov faced enormous difficulties in mediating between Saddam Hussein, UNSCOM and the American and British governments during 1997–98. The Iraqi President frequently denied UNSCOM access to suspect sites and harassed its inspection teams; UNSCOM under Richard Butler's leadership was regarded by many, particularly in the Russian Foreign Ministry, as heavily biased; and Washington and London resisted moves in the UNSC to close the Iraqi nuclear and missile files or soften the sanctions regime (that is, to show Baghdad 'a light at the end of the tunnel'). Given all the problems, the failure of Primakov's efforts was inevitable – leading to Operation Desert Fox in December 1998 and the subsequent indefinite suspension of UNSCOM operations.
21. The term, 'Near Abroad', is seen as increasingly anachronistic, even offensive. These days, it is usual in Russia to use the more neutral (and factual) description of 'Commonwealth of Independent States'.
22. For example, Russia voted against resolutions in the UN Human Rights Commission condemning abuses in China and East Timor respectively [*see* Chudodeev, 1995, p. 4; Yusin, 1999e, p. 4].
23. Karen Brutents [1994, p. 4] and former Ambassador to Israel Aleksandr Bovin [1997, p. 3] were among the few to argue that Russia could and should assume a primary mediating role in the Middle East Peace Process.
24. This was a constant refrain in my conversations with relevant MFA officials during 1996–99.
25. Somewhat curiously, Brzezinski [1997, p. 56] made much the same suggestion.
26. Yeltsin's *Midnight Diaries* are especially revealing of this elitist mentality. For example, he takes great pride in Russia's acceptance into the G-8 – 'the elite club of states' [2001, p. 136] – as reinforcement of its status as 'one of the most influential countries in the world' [*ibid.*, p. 137].
27. During a time almost exactly contemporaneous with the period of multi-polar foreign policy, Asian diplomats frequently expressed to me their irritation that Moscow continued to see Asia as a relative backwater, one whose main purpose was as an instrument to play off against the West. There was a strong sense that Russia was not serious about deepening its involvement in Asia, whether through multilateral fora such as APEC and the ARF or in bilateral relations with individual countries (for example, the ASEANs).
28. In referring to the United States as the 'foremost... cultural power' in the world, I do not in any way mean to suggest that American culture is qualitatively superior to others, simply that, good or bad, it dominates the globe.
29. A senior diplomat at one of the Western European embassies in Moscow complained to me in 1999 about the Russian elite's Americacentrism, adding that it reflected an enduring (and tiresome) geopolitical obsession.
30. The Russia–EU PCA treaty, signed in June 1994, did not enter into force until 1 December 1997.
31. Typically, Yeltsin [2001, p. 258] pinned the blame for the NATO intervention squarely on the United States, alleging that '[t]he Americans found it necessary to stimulate North Atlantic solidarity by any means,' and that Washington was afraid both of 'the crisis in postwar values' and 'the growing strength of European independence'.

5 The Geopolitical Strain

1. The 'implosion' argument was favoured by Yeltsin and his supporters in the West. It was embodied in the 'truth' that a weak Russia would be a 'constant source of danger to the security of mankind' [Yeltsin, 1994a, p. 1].
2. As Alex Pravda [1992, p. 255] put it, '[w]hat distinguished Gorbachev from his predecessors was not so much that he placed domestic priorities first... The real distinction of Gorbachev's strategy lay in the fact that he radically realigned foreign policy to facilitate rather than avoid domestic change and sustained this radical international realignment to help drive fundamental transformation at home'.
3. Interestingly, in a meeting in early 2000 with Australian Embassy representatives, Kozyrev suggested that it had been inevitable that the West would take advantage of Russia's weakness.
4. Although it had been evident for some time that NATO would seek to include Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic into the alliance, the catalyst for the debate in Russia appears to have been Yeltsin's suggestion during a visit to Warsaw in August 1993 that Moscow would not stand in the way of Polish accession [Dannreuther, 1999–2000, p. 151]. Yeltsin later retracted his comments in a letter to President Clinton, and by November the mainstream Russian position had been firmly established [see Primakov, 1993, pp. 1, 3].
5. The term, 'culture of envy', was used by Hedrick Smith [1991, pp. 199–200] to describe the 'collective jealousy [in Soviet society] against those who rise above the crowd'. However, it seems perfectly applicable to the foreign policy context where American successes post-Cold War have evoked very similar sentiments, especially in the light of continuing Russian difficulties and setbacks over the same period.
6. The liberal scholar, Yurii Davydov [1996, p. 9], was one of a small minority to underplay the importance of NATO enlargement, claiming that it would become 'peripheral' in the event of the emergence of 'special relations' between Russia and NATO and, subsequently, 'a new system of European security'; see also Parkhalina [2000b, p. 39].
7. According to the highly flexible (and indeed ambiguous) wording of the Founding Act [1997, p. 5], the PJC would 'provide a mechanism for consultations, coordination and, *to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate* [author's italics], for joint decisions and joint action with respect to security issues of common concern. The consultations will not extend to internal matters of either NATO, NATO member states or Russia.'
8. I am indebted to Alexei Pushkov for this insight.
9. The USA–Japan Security Treaty posed quite a dilemma for some senior MFA officials. On the one hand, they acknowledged privately the Treaty's positive contribution towards security in Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific more generally. On the other hand, they disliked the fact that in doing so it cemented and legitimized the American security presence in the region.
10. Consistent with this approach, Russia rejected attempts at the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit to introduce the principle of 'consensus minus one' [Gornostaev, 1999d, p. 6].
11. According to a study by Dean Wilkening [1998, p. 101], the Russian strategic force would be 'largely obsolete by 2005, with the exception of the bomber force'.

12. On several occasions during 1999 Russian officials suggested to me that they favoured a reduction of benchmark levels to as low as 1000 warheads. Although the failure under Yeltsin to ratify either START-2 or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty suggested a reluctance to engage in arms control, in truth the delay owed more to the President's inability to focus on these issues as well as the intrusion of domestic political factors in foreign policy (see Chapter 2).
13. Notwithstanding their strenuous objections to NMD, Russian officials admitted privately that it posed no direct threat to Russia's nuclear strike capabilities.
14. In two major trials in 2000, the 'hit-to-kill' ground-based interceptor failed to hit its designated target [Bowen, 2001, p. 499], although a subsequent test in 2001 proved more successful.
15. In theory, the Russian government had a number of 'asymmetric responses' at its disposal: non-ratification of START-2; withdrawal from the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR); the construction of an indigenous missile defence system; the conversion of the new generation single-warhead Topol-M into a multiple-warhead missile (or MIRV – multiple independent re-entry vehicle) [see Gulko, 1999, p. 2]. The practical difficulties were enormous, however. With the growing obsolescence of its nuclear arsenal, non-ratification would have been highly counterproductive; withdrawal from the MTCR would have excluded Moscow from participation in the international control regimes that were part of playing the 'good international citizen'; and developing a national missile defence system would have entailed exorbitant costs with no early prospect of success. The 're-mirvization' of the Topol-Ms was technically feasible, but would have been in flagrant breach of START-2 rules, with consequences potentially far worse than those resulting from simply non-ratification of the Treaty.
16. The need for revised flank limits was reinforced by chronic political and inter-ethnic instability in the Transcaucasus.
17. The benefit to Russia of a system of national and territorial ceilings in place of the bloc-to-bloc (NATO–Warsaw Pact) structure was that the former restricted NATO's flexibility in moving troops and treaty-limited equipment (TLE) to its new member-states. Under the old bloc-to-bloc arrangement, NATO would have been able to do this because the total number of its TLE would have remained well below the levels allowed under the CFE Treaty.
18. In the margins of the Yeltsin–Jiang Zemin Summit in Moscow in April 1997, the leaders of the five states adjoining the former Sino-Soviet frontier – Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – signed an agreement on confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the border regions. This built on progress achieved during Yeltsin's visit to Shanghai one year earlier, in which the various parties undertook not to use force against one another and to refrain from aggressive or unpredictable military actions. Although the Moscow agreement was more concrete in that it established ceilings for ground troops and certain types of matériel, its significance was political rather than military-strategic. In Russia's case, for example, economic constraints had already compelled it to initiate reductions to levels lower than required under the agreement [Bulavinov, 1997a, p. 2].

Although the status of three islands in the Amur river has yet to be definitively resolved, the Yeltsin–Jiang Zemin Summit in Beijing in November 1997 effectively removed the common border as an issue of serious contention. The Presidents' joint statement:

announced triumphantly that all issues relating to the demarcation of the eastern section of the Russian–Chinese state border ... have been resolved, and that [this section] is clearly marked on site for the first time in the history of the two countries' relations. The sides also stated their readiness to complete demarcation work on the western section of the Russian–Chinese border ... in accordance with the agreed timetable [*Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 11 November 1997, p. 7].

19. That said, they also complicated the ongoing dispute with Turkey over Russia's 'southern flank' in the CFE context [Alexei Arbatov, 1996, p. 115], in the process reminding Moscow of the nexus between domestic and external policy. The internal security objective of suppressing the Chechen rebels acquired an external dimension rooted in a formal reading of the concept of balance of power.
20. Russia was especially interested in expanding the quadripartite (USA, China, North and South Korea) talks on the Korean peninsula to include other parties – Russia, Japan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This was a constant theme in my discussions with the MFA's First Asia Department (China and the Koreas) during 1996–98. By 1999, the Russian position had softened somewhat, with officials saying that Russia would support the Four-Party talks while remaining 'ready to assist' in the (anticipated) event that these would achieve no progress.
21. Similarly, the continuing deadlock in the Korean quadripartite talks was seen as strengthening Russia's case for closer involvement in Northeast Asian security affairs. Deputy Foreign Minister Karasin [1999, p. 6], for example, argued that Russia could play a significant role as a moderating influence on North Korea and, more generally, in enhancing regional stability.
22. Attendance by leaders of the GUUAM member-states acquired an extra edge in the circumstances of NATO military operations against Milosevic and Moscow's consequent boycott of the NATO Summit.
23. The term 'Finlandization' referred originally to the international position of Finland after the Second World War. Although it was not a Soviet satellite or client state, it kept its distance from Western security and economic structures such as NATO and the EU.
24. There are no truly reliable figures for Russian military exports to China, given both the unpredictability of payment arrangements as well as the sensitivity and secrecy surrounding the subject. Most reputable estimates put the figure at around US\$ 1 billion per annum.
25. Recognition of this reality was reflected, for example, in Communist leader Zyuganov's attendance at the 1996 Davos World Economic Forum.
26. The nexus between domestic reforms and foreign policy under Gorbachev might be taken as implicit confirmation of the increasing importance of economic priorities. However, the emphasis in the 'new thinking' of that time

- was more civilizational and political, focusing on general themes such as 'modernization' [Pravda, 1992, p. 255], 'convergence' and 'civilization' [Brown, 1997, p. 224] rather than on specifically economic objectives.
27. Not the least of these critics was Yeltsin himself. In connection with the rise of anti-Western sentiment during the Kosovo crisis, he [2001, pp. 271–2] raised the spectre of Primakov 'uniting the politicians who dreamed of a new isolationist Russia and a new cold war'.
 28. The Australian government, for example, opposed Russian membership of APEC mainly because of two reasons: (i) the very modest level of Russian economic involvement in the Asia-Pacific region; and (ii) fears that Russian accession would change the nature of APEC from an almost exclusively economic grouping to one whose agenda would become increasingly political/strategic.

6 A Question of Priorities – the Practice of Foreign Policy

1. Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) commits all Parties 'to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control'. The article was introduced in September 1967 by Mexico and supported by a number of other Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS) to put pressure on the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to contribute to nuclear non-proliferation. Since that time, interpretation of Article VI has been the subject of constant wrangling, with the NNWS regularly accusing the nuclear weapons states of failing to meet their obligations under the Treaty [Timerbaev, 2000, pp. 102–3].
2. A liberal journalist claimed to me in late 1999 that Yeltsin had publicly undertaken to ensure Duma ratification of the START-2 bill on 17 separate occasions.
3. A Duma source told me that it had been intended that START-2 would be ratified on the last Friday in December – Christmas Day 1998.
4. MFA and Duma sources at the time confirmed to me that START-2 ratification had been all but approved when NATO launched its air-strikes.
5. As noted to me by a Duma source. In concrete terms, Russia has already missed a CWC deadline to destroy one per cent of its Category I chemical weapons by 29 April 2000. The construction of destruction facilities is also at a nascent stage: work has begun on one site, but two others remain at the planning stage [see 'Chemical Weapons Implementation', 2001].
6. It is less clear whether the transfer of Russian missile technology to Iran actually violated the MTCR. Alexander Pikayev [1999, pp. 208–9] considered that the main American concern was 'not so much with a limited leakage of fragmented missile hardware and blueprints, but rather with the prospects that through scientific and university cooperation with Russia, Tehran would be able to build a community of professional missile experts, which represents the main prerequisite for obtaining indigenous missile capabilities'. The latter activity, he noted, might be beyond the scope of the MTCR and therefore permissible under international law.
7. Throughout the 1990s, Russia was the main supplier of oil to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). That said, total trade turnover was modest and

declining – US\$ 384 million in 1998, US\$ 297 million in 1999 and US\$ 251 million in 2000 [*Tamozhennaya statistika ... 2000*, p. 9; *Tamozhennaya statistika ... 2001*, p. 9].

The main Russian economic priority in Iraq was recovery of the Soviet-era debt, estimated at around US\$ 8 billion. Additionally, Iraq's position as a major oil producer appeared to offer the promise – once UN sanctions were lifted – of considerable opportunities for Russian companies, particularly in the reconstruction and development of industry infrastructure.

8. A point made by Vladimir Lukin in a conversation with the author in early 1999.
9. At the Krasnoyarsk 'no ties' summit in November 1997, Yeltsin and Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto agreed 'to make every effort' to conclude a peace treaty by the year 2000 ['52 goda sporili – reshili za 2 dnya', *Rossiiskie vesti*, 4 November 1997, p. 1]. This was widely interpreted – including by more optimistic members of the foreign diplomatic community in Moscow – as an indication that the two sides would soon reach an accommodation over the Northern Territories/South Kuriles – a prerequisite for the conclusion of any Peace Treaty. However, in our discussions with senior Russian Foreign Ministry officials at the time they insisted that Russia would, under no circumstances, give up the disputed islands. The subsequent course of developments was to prove them right. Although a joint sub-commission was formed at Deputy Foreign Minister level to consider the question, the drive for a territorial deal steadily lost momentum and, by the end of Yeltsin's presidency, had ground to a halt. Ultimately, the most the Russian government felt able to offer Tokyo was a kind of joint administration and development of the islands, with legal sovereignty remaining with Russia.
10. In this connection, Kosovo helped 'legitimize' Russia's conduct in Chechnya and, more generally, to reassert traditional understandings of sovereignty and especially non-interference after they had taken a big hit [see Putin, 2000a, pp. 157–8]. As Sergei Rogov [1999, p. 5] observed, 'the current war in Chechnya became largely possible because of the war in Yugoslavia; the West has no moral right to lecture us today'. Furthermore, the success of the NATO operation served as a model of what might be achieved through a new military campaign in the rebel province [Alexei Arbatov, 2000, p. 2].
11. When I was serving in Moscow during the second half of the 1990s, the most common juxtaposition of figures was fewer than 7 million Russians in the Far East as against 130 million Chinese in the provinces adjoining the Russian border.
12. Trenin [1999, pp. 41–2] expressed concern about Russia's reliance on nuclear weapons to defend itself in the event of future conflict with China. In his view, the 'enormous investments' necessary to implement such a strategy were 'not readily available'.
13. Although Yeltsin attended the Sharm esh-Sheikh 'Summit of the Peacemakers' in April 1996 and King Hussein's funeral in February 1999, on both occasions his reasons for visiting the region had nothing to do with a bilateral Middle East agenda.
14. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak [1997, p. 1] complained that 'Russia completely ignores us [the Middle East, including Egypt]'.

15. In a press briefing on 30 June 1995, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns claimed that Russia had undertaken not to negotiate any new arms contracts with Iran and also to terminate existing commitments 'within a few years' [State Department report of 30 June 1995, in www.fas.org/news/russia/1995/36333118-36372698.html].
16. The most important of these concessions was the agreement in March 1995 to establish four Russian military bases on Georgian territory [see Aves, 1998, p. 184].
17. Baku was one of the strongest critics of Russian policy in the FSU and was noticeably more successful than Georgia in retaining its freedom of manoeuvre. It successfully resisted attempts to station Russian troops on Azeri soil, was able to conclude the 'Contract of the Century' in the face of heavy opposition from Moscow, participated in NATO's PfP programme, and was a leading light in the GUUAM grouping. That said, under the leadership of former Soviet Politburo member Geidar Aliev, Azerbaijan was nevertheless much more sensitive to Russian concerns than it had been under his predecessors. It joined the CIS in November 1993 and was sufficiently cognizant of Russian strategic and economic interests to increase Lukoil's stake in the Caspian Oil Consortium and route the main pipeline for Azeri oil through southern Russia.
18. According to State Customs Committee statistics, EU countries account for about a third of Russian foreign trade [*Tamozhenmaya statistika ...*, 2001, p. 7]. Other sources give a figure of around 40 per cent [Portanskii, 1997, p. 1; *Strategic Survey: 2000/2001*, p. 122].
19. *The Economist Intelligence Unit* of 29 January 2001 noted that Russian WTO negotiators 'remain obdurate on subsidisation of agriculture, on protection of Russian services sectors, especially financial, and on export taxes'. Other continuing difficulties include Russia's slack approach to intellectual property rights (as the flood of pirated music and computer software testifies), lack of transparency in customs regulations and their enforcement, and the use of non-tariff barriers (such as arbitrary and redundant certification requirements) to minimize foreign competition in some areas, particularly food.
20. Russia's first attempts at providing an Individual Action Plan for trade liberalization were unimpressive. While some allowance should be made given the recentness of its accession to APEC, the main problem was that its membership was essentially a political decision, owing nothing to its modest economic credentials in the Asia-Pacific. Within the Russian government as a whole, there was insufficient expertise and interest to ensure preparation of a worthwhile IAP – particularly given other more pressing commitments such as WTO accession. During 1998–99, we in the Australian Embassy felt that our only serious interlocutor on APEC matters was the MFA's Department for Economic Cooperation, whose resources were severely overstretched. My diplomatic sources indicate that under Putin the situation has improved somewhat.
21. According to *The Economist Intelligence Unit* of 21 July 2001, Russia has received less than US\$ 20 billion in foreign direct investment over the past decade. On a per capita basis, this amounted to US\$ 136, compared to more than US\$ 1500 in the Czech Republic and nearly US\$ 2000 in Hungary. In his 2001 State of the Nation address, Putin [2001b, p. 4] noted that 60 per cent of investment in Russian industry had gone to the fuel and energy sector.

22. In the case of India, agreement to sell cryogenic engines and technology led to American sanctions in May 1992, jeopardizing lucrative contracts in the area of Russian–American space cooperation. By July 1993, the issue had been more or less resolved after Yeltsin agreed that New Delhi should receive the hardware only. This climbdown opened the way for the Russian space agency, Glavkosmos, to participate in American commercial satellite launches and joint manned space flight programmes [Pikayev, 1999, pp. 191–5]. Participation in such projects was placed similarly at risk by the porousness of controls over nuclear cooperation with Iran [Steinberg, 2000, p. 18].
23. In the summer of 1996, a Western European diplomat told me that his Ambassador had given an instruction to Embassy policy staff that ‘the Presidential elections shall be deemed fair’.
24. A Russian liberal friend of mine noted the emergence in the late Yeltsin period of a new type of liberal, the liberal-*derzhavnik*, who combined allegiance to economic liberalism with a belief in a strong state and an assertive foreign policy. Andrei Kolesnikov [2000, p. 9] described this in similar terms as ‘national liberalism’.
25. For example, the rate of GDP decline slowed considerably during 1995–97. After a fall of 12.7 per cent in 1994, the figures for 1995, 1996 and 1997 were –4.1 per cent, –3.4 per cent and +0.9 per cent respectively [Obzor ekonomicheskoi politiki ..., 1999, p. 584].
26. Kozyrev was the one prominent dissonant voice, noting that the EU, ‘that is, the whole of Europe,’ supported the operation: ‘It seems that everyone is marching out of step, and that only we are marching in step’ [Segodnya, 25 March 1999, p. 2].
27. It was a measure of the extent of liberal concern that prominent figures in the Union of Rightist Forces (Soyuz pravyykh sil – SPS) – including Gaidar, Nemtsov and Boris Fyodorov – felt moved to undertake a highly unusual and unsuccessful ‘peace mission’ to Belgrade a few days after the NATO attack. Their initiative was disowned by Foreign Minister Ivanov and harshly criticized by Communist leader Zyuganov [see Kamakin, 1999, p. 4]. Unsurprisingly, they were unable to secure a meeting with Milosevic.
28. This point was recognized even by vocal critics of NATO like Migranyan [1999, p. 6].
29. Although the ostensible reason for diluting Primakov’s authority in this way was his alleged failure to manage Russian policy responses satisfactorily in reality he was targeted because, with Duma and Presidential elections looming in December 1999 and mid-2000 respectively, he represented a serious alternative around whom non-Communist ‘democratic’ opinion might unite. As Yeltsin [2001, p. 268] recalled it, ‘[c]ould I allow Primakov to seize the political initiative slowly but surely and lead the country back to the socialism of yesteryear? No, I could not’.
30. A senior MFA official described the Chernomyrdin–Ahtisaari deal to me as a signal illustration of the dangers of allowing ‘non-professionals’ to conduct diplomacy.
31. In this connection, the takeover of Slatina airport (see note 10, p.179) was a most untypical example of foreign policy ‘activism’, motivated more by bluff than any desire for confrontation – particularly taking into consideration the

huge disparity in forces on the ground. In his *Midnight Diaries*, Yeltsin [2001, p. 266] writes:

...I decided that Russia must make a crowning gesture even if it had no military significance. It was not a question of whether we had won the main point. Russia had not permitted itself to be defeated in the moral sense ... This last gesture was a sign of our moral victory in the face of the enormous NATO military, all of Europe, and the whole world.

32. Following the signing of the Founding Act in May 1997, Yeltsin announced that Moscow would henceforth 'dismantle' its nuclear warheads targeted at NATO member-states. In fact, the consensus of experts at the time was that he confused 'dismantling' with 'de-targeting'. The latter was essentially meaningless because (i) Russian and NATO missiles were not targeted against each other in the first place; and (ii) missiles could be re-targeted in a matter of seconds [Bulavinov, 1997b, p. 6].

7 Towards Normalization? Putin and Beyond

1. Putin's experience in high-level government and foreign policy is by no means negligible – KGB colonel in East Germany; Deputy Mayor in St Petersburg with responsibility for foreign relations; head of the FSB and then, briefly, the Security Council. But both Yeltsin (First Party Secretary in Sverdlovsk and then Moscow, Candidate Politburo member, RSFSR President) and Gorbachev (First Party Secretary in Stavropol, Central Committee Secretary for Agriculture, member of the Politburo) had far greater experience at the highest levels of government before becoming Head of State. It should be recalled also that both undertook high-profile trips abroad before they assumed office: Gorbachev to the United Kingdom in 1984, and Yeltsin to the United States in 1989 and Japan in 1990.
2. Such foreign exposure as Putin has experienced before becoming President was essentially European: first, during his KGB posting; and then later as Deputy Mayor of St Petersburg.
3. In the elite survey conducted in April 2001 by the Russian Independent Institute for Social and National Questions and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 89 per cent of respondents considered that Russia should be able to raise its global standing. Compared to 1993, there was an increase in the number of those who believed it could once again assume superpower status. Interestingly, this view was favoured not just by supporters of the Communist Party and the LDPR, but also by respondents under the age of 40 [*Vneshnepoliticheskii kurs...*, 2001, p. 11].
4. The accidental sinking of the nuclear submarine *Kursk* with the loss of all hands in August 2000 was extremely badly handled by the Russian government in general, and Putin personally. However, despite his ill-advised decision not to return to Moscow from holidaying in the Crimea, Putin's public popularity rating remained largely intact. According to a VTsIOM poll taken shortly after the accident, 65 per cent of respondents approved of his performance as President [in Kovalskaya, 2000, p. 23].

5. Although the December 1999 Duma elections did not give the pro-government caucus an absolute majority, in practice the new balance of representation greatly favoured the Kremlin. The Communists and Agrarians (effectively rural Communists) retained only 130 seats in the new Parliament (down from 220 after the December 1995 elections), while the Luzhkov–Primakov party, ‘Otechestvo – Vsyā Rossiya’ – the main centrist alternative – fell well short of expectations in securing a modest 48 places. The latter’s subsequent merger with Putin’s party, ‘Edinstvo’, in December 2001 further strengthened the President’s position with the legislature.
6. While Putin’s rating has fallen to under 70 per cent on occasion, there have been many other times when it has exceeded this standard. For example, following his response to the 11 September terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Putin’s rating attained an impressive 77 per cent [Gallup poll, cited in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 4 October 2001, p. 1].
7. For example, the foreign policy influence of the Security Council is widely perceived to have fallen since Sergei Ivanov’s transfer from Secretary of the Council to Defence Minister.
8. The long-delayed ratification of these two agreements took place literally days before the start of the Sixth NPT Review Conference (Revcon) in April 2000. As a result, Russia was able to deflect onto the USA much of the criticism that the two former superpowers had not done enough to disarm under the terms of Article VI of the NPT – all the more so given the US Congress’s continuing failure to ratify the CTBT.
9. Although somewhat short on detail, the Russian proposals for cooperation in ‘non-strategic’ missile defence envisaged joint threat assessments, technical cooperation and technology sharing.
10. In fairness, it should be acknowledged that Putin has regularly emphasized the importance of legal reform in his annual address to the Federal Assembly.

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