

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID
FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA



TESIS DOCTORAL

**Construcción discursiva de la imagen de Rusia en la
prensa británica y estadounidense en el año 2005. Un
estudio contrastivo**

**The discourse construction of the image of Russia in the
British and American press in the year 2005. A contrastive
study**

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ABSTRACT

The discourse construction of the image of Russia in the British and American press in the year 2005. A contrastive study.

Key words: Russia, history, stereotype, discourse, framing, threat, Communism, Putin's authoritarianism.

Linguistic expression and communication play a crucial role when it comes to understanding an image of a specific country, as well as the construction and interpretation of such image. The main goal in the present thesis is to carry out a contrastive study through the analysis of Russia's image construction as a threat in the newspaper articles from the British press *The Guardian* and the American press *The New York Times*. This study focuses on the contrastive written discourse for the analysis of the texts which includes Russia, Great Britain and the United States as the main actors in the frame of International Relations in the year 2005.

For the development of the aforementioned contrastive study, a general theoretical approach will be introduced to the concept of image applied to Russia, in order to understand how Russia's complex historical evolution as a nation has configured the Western representations of Russia and its image from a historical, socio-political and ideological points of view. Additionally, there will be a more specific section focused on the historical configuration of the British and American perception of the image of Russia. This will help us understand how the views of these countries towards Russia are reflected in the British and American press articles. All this is closely related to the stereotypes, which constitute a direct consequence of the innumerable differences that Russia has been manifesting throughout its historical evolution with respect to the Western world. As will be seen, this fact highlights even more Russia's anti-Western character. The next step will be to describe how such representations are reflected in the texts from the British and American digital press from a linguistic perspective.

For the discussion of the perception and interpretation of Russia's image as a threat, a special attention will be given to the concept of framing in relation to influence, persuasion, propaganda and manipulation of the news content. This stresses the high degree of criticism towards Russia from an ideological perspective. Such criticism is especially outstanding in the newspaper articles from the American press *The New York Times*.

From a methodological perspective, the thesis presents a detailed description of the corpus structuring of the articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, including the discussion of the quantification results from the data samples, reflecting the thematic relevance linked to the image of Russia. This relevance manifests Russia's threatening character projected mainly from the socio-economic and political spheres, with an emphasised criticism towards Russia as a nuclear threat, and also towards its historical past under the old communist regime.

A detailed description of the structuring of the British and American digital press is followed, with the incorporation of quantification results, and the analysis of the terms semantically related to the concept of *threat*. This analysis includes a series of examples taken from the press articles reflecting the image of Russia as a threat to democratic values, and also as a military, nuclear, ideological, imperialist, personalized, and domestic threat. The analysis is developed through the use of the different lexical-semantic and stylistic rhetorical features portraying Russia's image as a threatening country to the West in the newspaper articles from the British and American digital press. The linguistic analysing criteria are based on the models of the authors Fairclough and van Dijk.

The thesis concludes with final reflections on the perception of Russia by Great Britain and the United States, stressing the fact that Russia's unique and peculiar character makes it very difficult for these Western countries to change their perception of Russia and accept it as it is. This is mainly due to Russia's historical past marked by a repressive communist ideology, as well as the authoritarian character in the figure of the Russian president Vladimir Putin.

RESUMEN

Construcción discursiva de la imagen de Rusia en la prensa británica y estadounidense in el año 2005. Un estudio contrastivo.

Palabras clave: Rusia, historia, estereotipo, discurso, enmarcado, amenaza, Comunismo, autoritarismo de Putin.

La expresión lingüística y la comunicación desempeñan un papel crucial a la hora de comprender la imagen de un país específico, así como la construcción e interpretación de la misma. El objetivo principal de la presente tesis es realizar un estudio contrastivo a través del análisis de la construcción de la imagen de Rusia como amenaza en los artículos de la prensa británica *The Guardian* y de la prensa estadounidense *The New York Times*. Este estudio se centra en el discurso escrito contrastivo para el análisis de los textos, el cual incluye a Rusia, Gran Bretaña y Estados Unidos como los principales actores en el marco de las Relaciones Internacionales en el año 2005.

Para el desarrollo del mencionado estudio contrastivo, se introducirá un enfoque teórico general del concepto de imagen aplicado a Rusia, con el fin de comprender cómo la compleja evolución histórica de Rusia como nación ha configurado las representaciones del Occidente sobre Rusia y su imagen desde un punto de vista histórico, sociopolítico e ideológico. Adicionalmente, habrá una sección más específica centrada en la configuración histórica de la percepción británica y estadounidense de la imagen de Rusia. Esto nos ayudará a comprender en qué forma quedan reflejadas las percepciones de estos países sobre Rusia en los artículos de prensa británica y estadounidense. Todo ello está estrechamente relacionado con los estereotipos, que constituyen una consecuencia directa de las innumerables diferencias que Rusia ha venido manifestando a lo largo de su evolución histórica con respecto al mundo occidental. Como se verá, este hecho resalta aún más el carácter antioccidental de Rusia. El siguiente paso será describir cómo estas representaciones se reflejan en los textos de la prensa digital británica y estadounidense desde una perspectiva lingüística.

A la hora de hablar sobre la percepción e interpretación de la imagen de Rusia como amenaza, se prestará especial atención al concepto del enmarcado en relación con la influencia, persuasión, propaganda y manipulación del contenido informativo. Esto subraya el elevado grado de crítica hacia Rusia desde una perspectiva ideológica. Tales críticas son especialmente destacadas en los artículos periodísticos de la prensa estadounidense *The New York Times*.

Desde una perspectiva metodológica, la tesis presenta una descripción detallada de la estructuración del corpus de los artículos de *The Guardian* y *The New York Times*, con la inclusión de la discusión de los resultados de cuantificación de las muestras de datos que reflejan la relevancia temática vinculada a la imagen de Rusia. Esta relevancia manifiesta el carácter amenazante de Rusia proyectado principalmente desde los ámbitos socioeconómico y político, con una crítica acentuada hacia Rusia como una amenaza nuclear, así como hacia su pasado histórico bajo el antiguo régimen comunista.

Se procederá con una descripción detallada de la estructuración de la prensa digital británica y estadounidense, con la incorporación de los resultados de cuantificación y el análisis de los términos semánticamente relacionados con el concepto de amenaza. Este análisis incluye una serie de ejemplos tomados de los artículos de prensa que reflejan la imagen de Rusia como una amenaza hacia los valores democráticos, y también como una amenaza militar, nuclear, ideológica, imperialista, personalizada e interna. El análisis se desarrolla a través del uso de diferentes rasgos retóricos, léxico-semánticos y estilísticos que retratan la imagen de Rusia como un país amenazante hacia Occidente en los artículos periodísticos de la prensa digital británica y estadounidense. Los criterios del análisis lingüístico se basan en los modelos de los autores Fairclough y van Dijk.

La tesis concluye con las reflexiones finales sobre la percepción de Rusia por parte de Gran Bretaña y Estados Unidos, destacando el hecho de que el carácter único y peculiar de Rusia hace que sea muy difícil para estos países occidentales cambiar su percepción de Rusia y aceptarla tal y como es. Esto se debe principalmente al pasado histórico de Rusia marcado por la ideología represiva comunista, así como al carácter autoritario en la figura del presidente ruso Vladimir Putin.

I. INTRODUCTION

The present thesis develops a contrastive analysis of the discourse construction of the image of Russia as a threat in the newspaper articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* in the year 2005. It is structured in four interrelated blocks, of which the first two are theoretical, while the third one is more practical, for it covers the analysis of the newspaper articles. The fourth block focuses on the conclusions and final reflections of the main aspects developed in the thesis.

The first block is constituted by a broad theoretical framework, in which the concept of image is analyzed in relation to the evolution and historical configuration of Russia's identity as the Other from the Western perspective. We shall see how Russia's otherness has given rise to various stereotypes which, together with Russia's historical past, have significantly marked its image of a country foreign to the West, often regarded more Asian than European. In this sense, the role of Russia's historical past is key to the understanding of ideology, persuasion and propaganda as fundamental tools to capture the threatening image of Russia in the British and American newspaper articles. This first block equally includes the analysis of the concept of framing to reinforce this idea of Russia as the Other. The study of framing is projected from a social, communicative, and ideological dimensions, with the inclusion of propaganda and persuasion as the key discursive tools for the projection and interpretation of the image of Russia in the West.

The second block focuses on the methodological aspects of the analysis of Russia's image as a threat. This section includes the three stages of CDA following Fairclough's model. For the analysis of the text articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, only the first of the three stages will be discussed, in order to emphasize the lexical and stylistic features of the threat-related terms present in the texts. The analysis of the articles focuses on the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical aspects, which explains why the method of quantification reflects exclusively the terms related to the concept of *threat*. A future possibility remains open for a more in-depth analysis at the discursive level, covering not only the lexical, but also the sentence and discourse levels for a greater understanding of the issue.

Additionally, this second block also includes the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical criteria following van Dijk's model, with a special emphasis on the dichotomy *Us* vs *Them* to reinforce Russia's otherness. A detailed description of the most significant discursive elements is provided for the study of Russia as a threat. The analysis of the corpus selection and its relevance for the contrastive study of Russia's image as a threat

justifies the selection of the articles that clearly reflect the different areas of projection of Russia as a threat by Great Britain and the United States. I also justify the selection of 2005 as the year with the most significant broadcasts of various conflicts between Russia, Great Britain and the United States in the socio-political and economic spheres. The corpus analysis includes a discussion of the importance of the thematic relevance that has its reflection in the publication of some of the articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* the same day, date and month.

The third block focuses on the contrastive analysis of the threat-related terms in the texts from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*. It is about the practical application of the content covered in the theoretical framework, following the thematic relevance linked to the image of Russia as a military-nuclear threat, as an ideological, imperialist and domestic threat, as a personalised threat in the authoritarianism of the Russian president Vladimir Putin, and finally as a threat to the Western democratic values. My intention with this analysis is to show how the image of Russia as a threat was projected by the British and the US media in 2005. The most relevant examples from the press articles are included in the analysis for a better illustration of such projection. The threat-related terms appear quantified in the pie charts, and the results are expressed in terms of concordance hits reflecting the frequency use of these terms in the texts. An additional analysis of some of the synonyms and other threat-related terms linked to Russia is also included in this third block of this study.

The thesis concludes with a brief allusion to everything discussed throughout these pages, and with some final reflections on the difficulty that the Western countries such as Great Britain and the United States (especially the latter) have always had in establishing relationships with Russia. This explains the fact that Russia still continues to be perceived and treated mainly as a nuclear and ideological threat, and therefore, as a country which is light years away from becoming a true Western model for Europe and the rest of the world. As will be seen, the main reason lies in Russia's communist past, and in the authoritarian (or neo-authoritarian) figure of Putin, which reinforces the idea that Russia is still in need of becoming a fully democratic country. How will Russia's image continue to evolve? Time will tell.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The concept of image

1.1. Definition

How is a country perceived? Which are the mechanisms conditioning the formation and consolidation of such perception? How does this perception correspond to the country's reality inside and outside its borders? These are some of the questions posed by the authors such as Semenenko (2008), which lead us to the concept of image.

Image can be defined as our mental representation of a particular country and its people (Арнольд, 2010; Sidorskaya, 2015). It is a rather abstract and complex term based on a high degree of subjectivity. It plays a fundamental role because it conditions the country's identity. Everything depends on how that identity is conceived by the others when referring to the image of a particular country (Taras, 2013).

1.2. Russia's identity and image in terms of power

The historical and cultural background of a country play a significant role affecting its image as a sociopolitical actor. Russia's extremely complex history has hugely contributed to the creation of the image of a country very difficult to understand and to cope with, due to the multiple differences with respect to the West. Therefore, it is worth highlighting the importance of Russia's historical past for the comprehension of its image.

According to Taras (2013), from its early formation and throughout its historical development, Russia's image and identity have been understood and represented in terms of power. Russia's power, within the context of International Relations, is made reference to as "imperial" or "great power" (Taras, 2013: 1), characterizing Russia as a strong country. In this sense, the terms power and image play a key role to understand the way Russia has been perceived by the Western world (Neumann, 1996).

Russia's image of a strong country is reflected in the term *derzháva*, translated as "power, might, or dominion" (Taras, 2013: 1). It equals to greatness, is strongly connected to the national identity of Russia, and highlights the image of Russia as a magnifying empire, a great and powerful country within its borders. Such greatness, however, has not been perceived the same way by the Western countries like Great

Britain and the United States, who have been regarding and treating Russia as an imperialist, threatening, expansionist and revanchist country (Taras, 2013).

For a better understanding of Russia, it is important to take into account the different interpretations of its long and very complex history. This can be achieved by considering the evolution of its identity as a nation, as well as the Western perception of that identity as the Other. It is equally important to take into account a series of cultural, historical and political aspects as the basis which the construction of Russia's image has been forged upon (Taras, 2013; Malinova, 2013).

1.3. The evolution of the image of Russia: a historical perspective

The representation of a country results from a variety of "historical, social and political factors" in a constant process of interaction and change. Such process leads to "a series of images, stereotypes and expectations" about that particular country (Clarke, 1990: 68). Russia has been known for its very complex historical and cultural development, and therefore has always been seen as a challenge and an object of comparison on the part of the West (Semenenko, 2008; Malinova, 2013; Neumann, 1999). Russia has always been perceived as the Other and this idea reinforces the Western perception about its own character and civilisation identity (Semenenko, 2008; Malinova, 2013). No matter how the world has evolved and how modern it has become, the opposition *Us* (the West) vs *Them* (Russia and the East) has to do with multiple cultural and historical differences of various civilizations which are still vividly present today (Neumann, 1999; Malinova, 2013). Below is a brief description of the most relevant aspects of the origins of Russia's otherness and identity formation throughout its historical evolution as a nation.

1.3.1. From early Rus to the 17th century

The gestation of Russia's identity began between the years 1552–56, when it became an empire under the reign of Ivan IV ("the Terrible" or "*grozny*, meaning "threatening" or "forbidding"). The capturing of the Tatar cities of Kazan and Astrakhan, with the incorporation of the non-Orthodox and the non-Russian speaking population, led Russia to its first imperial expansion which resulted in the acquisition of "an imperial identity before it developed a national individuality" (Prizel, 1998: 157). There were two major historical events making a difference in the course of Russia's image and identity

development: the first one is related to the subjugation and unification, by the lords of Moscow, of the different “East Slavic lordships against the dominance of the Mongol-Tatars from Central Asia” (Beller and Leerssen, 2007: 226-27); the second one has to do with the Moscow claiming the development of “the imperial dignity unto them as the ‘Third Rome’ after the fall of Constantinople in 1453” (Beller and Leerssen, 2007: 227; Golubev, 2013: 58; Fernández Riquelme, 2014). Thus, the Russian sovereign established himself as a Tsar, seeing himself exclusively as “the Byzantine emperor” and “as the imperial protector of Orthodox Christendom” (2007: 227).

The Russian Orthodox Church played a significant role in shaping and configuring Russia’s national identity by instilling “a sense of otherness” in Russia as opposed to “the rest of European civilization” (Prizel, 1998: 155). On the one hand, Russia used its religiousness “to define the rest of Christendom as the “other”, and by so doing “claimed the right to project its influence beyond its frontiers” (Prizel, 1998: 33). On the other hand, Russia equally used its minorities to justify its legitimacy as an empire. This way of using minorities for domination and expansion purposes was a constant which lasted throughout the Communist period until the dissolution of the USSR. All of this resulted in “Russia’s lack of Western political and economic credentials and the destructive legacy of the Soviet militarized economy and its messianic mission” (Clunan, 2009: 80).

Additionally, “the status of the Russians as Christians” (Neumann, 1999: 68) was more than dubious due to their strong links “with non-Christian people”, more specifically “with representations of Muslim political entities” (1999: 68). Hence, the long-lasting identification of the Russians with Scythian, Tatar (or Turk) and Kalmuck people. Russia was seen as a country emerging from an Asian civilisation, frequently compared with the Ottoman Empire (Neumann, 1999). This led to the first representation of the Russians as “Asiatic” and “barbarous” (Neumann, 1999: 68–69; Fernández Riquelme, 2014; Bonnett, 2004; Brower and Lazzerini, 1997), which had originated at the end of the 15th century and had developed well into the 20th century, and is still present today.

This barbaric character attributed to the Russians made them look as people with “their characteristic lack of civility” (Neumann, 1999: 69). The Russian people were equally attributed this idea of being “constructed as body and nature” (related to the metaphor of the Great Bear) as opposed to the European nations “constructed as mind and civilization” (Møller, 1993: 108; Neumann, 1999; Anderson, 1958). To the Western view, Russia was characterised by this lack of “political organization and no cultural or intellectual achievement. The autocratic Tsar was seen either as a rough-hewn warlord or as an Asian-style despot” (Beller and Leerssen, 2007: 227). This fact led to the

representation of Russia as an authoritative nation governed by “the despotism of Russian rulers” (Neumann, 1999: 71; Fernández Riquelme, 2014). From this point on, the barrier between Russia and the Western Europe would be more and more prominent in the centuries to come.

1.3.2. The 18th century

The 18th century was important for Russia in its process of “emulation of the West European model (mainly French)” (Prizel, 1998: 166). There was a myriad of different representations about Russia throughout the century, associated mainly with the figure of Peter the Great (Neumann, 1999). With his ascension to the throne, there was this image of him as a barbarian wanting to follow the European model in the process of modernising Russia. Thus, for the first time, the term “Russia” and its image as a powerful country came into scene in a simultaneous way “in the European system of states” (Neumann, 1999: 75). This implied a turning point in the development of Russia’s image in the West, since “the point of his interest in Russia was not to treat that country in its specific otherness, but to subsume it under the European same” (Neumann, 1999: 76). Hence, the famous metaphor referred to Russia as a “window on the West” (1999: 76).

The concept of ‘the West’ was developed in Russia in the middle of the 18th century “as one of the key terms in an ongoing debate over the country’s destiny and identity”, thus becoming “an indispensable tool in the argument about whether Russia should be Europeanised” (Bonnett, 2004: 44). This perspective of driving Russia closer to Western Europe was established by a group of wealthy Russians inspired by Peter the Great, who were trying “to cast themselves within an increasingly normative image of European culture and colonialism”, since they regarded “the majority of the country as peripheral, uncivilised and Asian” (Bonnett, 2004: 45). To them, the Western model was seen as an important outlet for Russia to become part of the Western world (Becker, 1991).

However, by the end of the century, the “Russianness” had set in and it was clear that “Russia would not be able to implement the Western model” (Prizel, 1998: 166). The modernisation reforms under Peter the Great are closely related to the idea of “Russia as a learner” of the Western European ideals and values (Neumann, 1999: 107) with two main implications: first, the country’s success in its process of learning made it less threatening to the other countries; second, Russia’s status of a learner meant for its people a situation of tension in which the country had to assume the role of an

apprentice and at the same time preserve its power in the eyes of the other countries (Neumann, 1999).

This “ambiguity concerning Russia’s role in Europe created in the Russian psyche a strong dependence on Russia’s military powers in order to compensate for the sense of inferiority *vis-à-vis* the West” (Prizel, 1998: 172). Thus, expansionism was regarded by most of the Russian nationalists as “a way of affirming Russia’s status as a great European power” (1998: 173).

The first representations of Russia as a significant expansionist threat was evident in the context of the Great Northern War (1700-1721), in which the Russian tsars were fighting over the Swedish Empire in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe (Augustyn et al., 2008; Neumann, 1999). The main idea behind this war was to secure “the overall European balance of power that centered on the Baltic Sea” (Neumann, 1999: 76-77), in which Russia played a significant role in its first expansion towards the south of Europe. Once Russia took control over the northern part of Europe, there was a fear that it would take control over the Baltic Sea, thus becoming “a direct military threat to Europe” (1999: 77). This historical event marked the first clear East/West dichotomy, which would prevail to this day (Neumann, 1999).

1.3.3. The 19th century

Within the context of the Napoleonic Wars (1800-1815), Russia was regarded during its first military expansion as “a power grasping for hegemony [...] in the manner of a barbarian at the gate”, originating a tremendous “Russophobia in France and Britain respectively” (Neumann, 1999: 98; Neumann, 1998; Augustyn et al., 2008). The metaphor of the barbarian at the gate prevailed throughout the entire 19th century and is still present these days.

In its second military expansion, Alexander I brought Russia to the front ranks of the European powers, defeating Napoleon’s Grand Army in 1812 and then, following the Congress of Vienna in 1815, made it part of the Holy Alliance of conservative powers. The alliance with Great Britain, Austria, and Prussia against France (the Quadruple Alliance) had consolidated its status “as a great power” (Neumann, 1999: 86). Russia’s hegemony in Europe was growing significantly, which developed an image of “a rival to the other great powers” such as Great Britain and Germany (Neumann, 1999: 88).

One of the main aspects characterising the image of Russia throughout the 19th century is the inclusion of various plans for constitutional reform, as well as the debates over how best to Europeanise the country” (Sakwa, 2008: viii). At the end of the century, when nationalism became a potent global force, the Russian people were ill-prepared to separate their own identity from that of the empire in general and its Slavic core in particular” (Prizel, 1998: 174-75). This situation resulted in further attempts to modernise Russia “within the framework of autocratic government, a combination that collapsed early in the twentieth century” (Sakwa, 2008: viii).

The question of Russian Europeanness (Bonnett, 2004) was central in the context of a high ethnocentrism dominating Europe at that time, especially the “anti-Russian feelings” dominating the 19th century British public opinion (Naarden, 1992: 50). The Western European countries felt superior to the rest of the world, thus excluding any nation which did not fit into their Western parameters. Russia’s inclusion in the circle of the Western European countries was doubtful, due to the presence of the different national minorities of Asian origin. Russia is a vast country summoning “multiple images” such “as a European or Slavic or Eurasian or Pacific rim or Muslim state” (Taras, 2013: 3). Moreover, “Russia’s ambiguous presence on Europe’s border” (Neumann, 1999: 92) was a direct reference to its links with China. This ethnic diversity kept on stressing once again “the Asiatic nature of Russia as a whole” (Neumann, 1999: 90) through the “metaphors of the Russians as nomadic barbarians” (Neumann, 1999: 91).

1.3.4. The 20th century

1.3.4.1. The collapse of the Russian empire

At the beginning of the 20th century, Russia kept its imperial status which lasted until 1905 (Bonnett, 2004). The fact that Russia’s capability of growing and expanding was already more than evident in the years prior to the First World War was undeniable in the eyes of the British (Wohlforth, 1987). Its military power remained strong until the Russian empire collapsed during WW I coinciding with the revolutionary period in which the Bolsheviks were trying to reshape and modernise the Soviet society (Sakwa, 2008; Bonnett, 2004). The Western model was more than needed to improve the situation of the Russian working class. This explains why in the early years of the Bolshevik revolution a considerable importance was given to the idea of “‘the West’ and ‘Westernisation’ as positive and necessary models for revolutionary Russia” in relation

to “the cancerous presence of ‘Asianism’ in Soviet society” (Bonnett, 2004: 53), since ‘Asianism’ was conceived “as the feudal and backward ideology of ‘Oriental despotism’” (Bonnett, 2004: 49). This idea had prevailed throughout the mid-1920s.

The Western countries, on the other hand, saw the situation otherwise. In their eyes, the Bolshevik’s idea of modernising Russia was perceived as a revolutionary radicalism, for they understood the proletariat as “the symbolic bearer of socialist modernity to ‘less advanced’ peoples” (Bonnett, 2004: 47). Moreover, Lenin had created “a non-market and anti-liberal socialist path of modernisation” (Sakwa, 2008: viii), which ended up rejecting the Western model (Neumann, 1996). This was negatively affecting the representation of Russia, because “communism in general and Bolshevism in particular reflected ‘the dominance of [Russia’s] half-Asiatic Slavic peasantry’” (Grant, 1925: xxviii). This meant that, if Russia did not fully adopt the Western model of civilisation, its people would be stereotyped as “dark people” (Chamberlain, 1987 a: 248). The stereotype of Russia as a dark nation is reflected in the atheism, a very distinctive feature of a Communist society which did not “represent a continuation of pre-modern notions of Western Christendom” but implied “a direct response to the rise of the USSR” (Bonnett, 2004: 43-44).

During World War II, “Stalin fused the Russian idea with that of the USSR, depicting the war as a struggle for the preservation of the Russian culture against German hordes” (Prizel, 1998: 190). He took Lenin’s model of the “non-market and anti-liberal socialist path of modernisation” (Sakwa, 2008: viii) inherited from the later Bolsheviks (Bonnett, 2004). His model “represented a peculiar mix of Western technical modernisation ‘from above’, while rejecting the Western spirit of modernity” (Sakwa, 2008: viii), a perfect way to legitimise the authority by completely discarding the Western civilisation (Bonnett, 2004). Russia was far away from being considered European in the Western sense due to Stalin’s open rejection and hostility towards Western Europe, thus making Russia look like “a separate civilisation”, “the antithesis of the West” (Bonnett, 2004: 55; Kotkin, 1995).

1.3.4.2. The Post-war period

After the Second World War, The initial West/East separation had evolved to a military and ideological confrontation between the former USSR and the US during the Cold War era, in which the former Soviet Union, despite its authoritarian regime, was considered to be much more advanced than Western Europe in terms of its political and economic model (Neumann, 1999). This explains the fear towards Russia and its power

due to the recurrent image of “an Asiatic/barbarian political power that had availed itself of the opportunity offered by the Second World War to intrude into Europe by military means” (Neumann, 1999: 102; Gilbert, 1975) using the mentioned model with a strong totalitarian or authoritarian nature, as opposed to the democratic West. The metaphor of the barbarian at Europe's gate is applied again throughout this historical period, stressing the idea of “a part of the West occupied by the Russians” (Neumann, 1999: 103).

At the end of the Cold War, Russia was still regarded as the continuation of Communism after “the fall of the Soviet Union”, with “corrupt dictators” impeding the country's economical, social, political, educational, military and technological advancing (Smith, 2011: 3; Brown, Solovieva & Eggett, 2007; Malia, 2000; Engerman, 2003). Many Americans believed that, for democracy to be able to survive the serious challenges imposed by the war, it was necessary to be as well informed as possible about all the issues surrounding that conflict in order to “make good political decisions” (Baran and Davis, 2013: 110). This included an extreme importance of what the leaders did to avoid threats coming from abroad. From this point of view, it was beyond essential to be up to date with all the information coming from the elites in case there was a possible confrontation between the United States and the former Communist USSR. This led to an urgent need to restructure the country and find new ways to improve its image.

From the second half of the 1980s until the 1990s, the European model seemed to be the definite solution to Russia's problems (Bonnet, 2004; Neumann, 1999). The attempts to modernise Russia were based on a clear distinction between Europe and the West, because the Western world, led by the United States, was conceived as “a negative and ideological force” (Gorbachev, 1987: 191). Besides, it was also “trying to ‘exclude’ the Soviet Union from Europe” (1987: 191) seen “as the natural home of Soviet citizens” (Bonnett, 2004: 59). Russia was European. However, “the collapse of the Soviet system” (Sakwa, 2008: ix) was precipitated, which, in the end, led to the “disintegration of the state in 1991” (2008: ix).

In the 1990s, despite some socio-political and economic achievements, the country still was under a great instability as a political actor, and was also regarded as fearful and even dangerous, to the point of being viewed as a threat in the years following the 1990s (Siderskaya, 2015; Громыко, 2008). Nevertheless, despite Russia's loss of its imperial status (Sakwa, 2008), its identity prevailed.

Russia saw its end as an empire and “a smaller Russian Federation emerged to find its way in the world” (Sakwa, 2008: ix). The question of Russia's identity continued to prevail. Should Russia “return to Europe”? (Prizel, 1998: 214). Should it rebuild the

Soviet Union? Should Russia be a liberal market democracy or a post authoritarian regime attempting to modernize along Chinese lines? Despite the establishment and foundations of a new democratic model, “the 1990s have now gained almost mythical status in contemporary Russia as a period of disaster and collapse” (2008: ix) causing “massive disruption to the prevailing Soviet identity” and producing “for many a sense of loss” (Clunan, 2009: 53).

The collapse of communism gave rise to hostility towards the West, with a great feeling of resentment over “the West’s “betrayal” of Eastern Europe at Yalta, and the perceived failure of the West to appreciate Russia’s sacrifices for the cause of freedom. Furthermore, “as Owen Harris points out, the West itself has ceased to exist as a cohesive political entity since the disintegration of the Soviet bloc. This has deprived the Eastern European countries of a fixed reference point from which to redefine their national identities and has instead further complicated the relationships between Eastern Europe and the West” (Prizel, 1998: 28-29).

1.3.4.3. The onset of the new millennium

At the onset of the year 2000, the representations of Russia have not become favourable. Between 2000 and 2005, Russia was mainly perceived as an authoritarian (Hahn, 2004; McFaul, 2004), or semi-authoritarian country (Ottaway, 2003) and “significantly off a democratic pathway” (Whitefield, 2009: 93), for “democratization has failed in Russia” (Fish, 2005: 81). The image of Russia as a clearly non-democratic country is still dominant in the current Western societies and mass media.

With the coming of Vladimir Putin to power, even though the process of an “accelerated modernisation” took place “from above”, the model proved “to foster bureaucratic authoritarianism and inhibit the growth of inclusive government and popular accountability” (Sakwa, 2008: viii). In a very similar way to Peter the Great’s initiatives to modernise Russia, Putin’s model has been characterised as a “modernisation without modernity”, “a type of superficial Westernisation in form created without the critical spirit, pluralism and political diversity that distinguishes Western modernity at its best” (2008: viii).

Putin’s insistence upon solving Russia’s problems in his own terms resulted in the perception of the Russian president as a strong and neo-authoritarian figure in the Western media. He is often referred to as a ‘soft dictator’ due to “his assertions about the need for a ‘dictatorship of law’” (Sakwa, 2008: 93) in order to “restore the ability of the

state to act as an independent political force, no longer at the mercy of oligarchs, regional bosses or foreign interests” (2008: 162). This directly applies to the media freedom since, according to Putin, media freedom is not his direct responsibility. Instead, it is abused “by regional barons and oligarchs” (2008: 154–55) for commercial and corporate interests.

On the other hand, Putin regards democracy as the result of people’s choice and not as something to be imposed from the outside. Order and an efficient governance can only be achieved through a strong state, a fact that explains the allusions to Russia as a “managed democracy and sovereign democracy” (Neumann, 2013: 35). “Only a strong and democratic state can defend the civil, political and economic freedoms of the population” (2008: 138). This idea “refuted the interpretation of the end of the cold war as a victory of ‘the West’ and the defeat of ‘totalitarianism’/the USSR/Russia.

At the same time it questioned the claim that authoritarianism was an attribute of Russia” (Malinova, 2013: 82-83). Thus any criticism toward Russia and its democracy is “an attempt to limit Russia’s sovereignty, to pressure the Kremlin into acting against the country’s national interests in the international arena or even to change the political regime” (Feklyunina, 2013: 96). All this constitutes a huge minus for a positive image of Russia in the West, since it severely contradicts the principles of people’s choice freedom. Besides, in the eyes of the West, the consolidation of a strong and centralised state is synonymous with going back to a repressive regime, a fact that puts people’s loyalty above their trust (2008).

Despite Putin’s orientation toward the West and his pragmatism, his “idea” for Russia rested squarely on what he termed “belief in Russia’s greatness.” (Clunan, 2009: 92-93). In emphasizing such greatness, “Putin was filling the psychological need to assert Russia’s distinctiveness from other, lesser, European countries. Putin skillfully assembled “patriotism,” “belief in the greatness of Russia,” “statism,” and “social solidarity” as “foothold[s] for the unity of Russian society” drawn from the past, including the acceptance of the “universal values” of private property and entrepreneurship drawn from the West. Here we see efforts to preserve Russia’s distinctive traditions while accepting elements of Western universalism and the demand of Russia’s assumption of its rightful place among the group of great powers and in the West, all while being not fully Western” (2009: 92-93).

The historical past is still haunting the Russians, who do not seem to be able to break with it due to the absence of a model that would fit the present and be valid for the future. The most important question is “whether or not Russia will continue to build its national identity as a part of the Western family of nations, even if this process would require it

to accept the loss of empire and a reduced, though still very significant, role within the international system” (Prizel, 1998: 238). If this happens, such “process will increasingly fuse the notion of the Russian ethnic identity with that of a Russian state” (1998: 238).

In the last two decades of the present century, there have been dramatic long-term changes regarding the way Russia has been perceived by the Western world. These changes have not led to a more positive view of the country, but instead have made the situation more difficult, since the image of Russia itself became more complex due to its demonising and romantic sides: the first one is often associated with the idea about Russia as an Empire of Darkness, Reign of Despotism and Tyranny, while the second one carries an implicit notion of Russia as an industrious student ready to learn assiduously from the West and follow the US model of development (Журавлева, 2012).

On the other hand, despite Russia’s “propensity to expand” (Wohlforth, 2001: 214), its geopolitical formula to “conquer or be conquered” (2001: 217), it did not manage to “adapt efficiently to the interaction required of it and instead stuck to practices that came to be viewed as barbaric, awkward, or inept by Europeans” (Neumann, 2013: 26). This fact is what keeps on causing the difficult relationships between Russia and the Western world these days.

Currently, in the West, Russia is still associated to this idea of the already mentioned Empire of Darkness, Reign of Despotism and Tyranny. At the same time, it is equally perceived as an industrious student ready to learn assiduously from the Western model of values and civilisation (Figes, 2021). There is once again this allusion to Russia as an apprentice of the West. Nevertheless, the country has not yet been able to fully internalize these values. Will it remain an eternal apprentice?

1.4. The basic components of Russia’s image

1.4.1. The Otherness: Russia as “other”

The formation and representation of a country’s image is closely related to the visual and written expressions used for an image construction. It also makes reference to the opposition between the Self and the Other. This opposition can be equated to that of *Us* vs *Them*, and it is still present to this day (Журавлева, 2012).

The history of the national and group identity of Russian society had played a key role in the formation of Russia's image as the Other. So did the development of its peculiar system of norms and values, which suffered a huge dehumanisation due to the strong

influences of the former communist regime. This led to viewing *Us* as the Good and humane, as opposed to *Them* representing the Bad, alien, and dangerous. In many instances, the opposition *Us vs Them* is synonymous with that of West vs East.

The representation of Russia as an Eastern country has been present for nearly two hundred years, so from the beginning, it has been considered as outside Europe (Bonnett, 2004). Thus, from the Western perspective, the Eastern world has always been perceived as very different and thus foreign, alien. Unless Russia ceases playing this role of the Other, the West will continue treating it as a fearful enemy (Надскакула, 2010; Semenenko, 2008).

1.4.2. The British perception of Russia

Great Britain (and the rest of the English-speaking world) belongs to the group of countries whose national identity is based on political institutions with a strong sense of rationalism and universalism originated in the 18th century (Prizel, 1998). From the beginning, the United Kingdom and the United States have been characterized by their deep missionary feeling based on this great need to assert their parliamentary model and their impartial legal system through their territorial expansionism. Their ultimate purpose was to promote and secure universal peace and prosperity to the rest of the world. All of this had a huge impact during the process of the British empire formation, as well as in the early stages of the US territorial formation and consolidation (Cobden, 1980). This fact explains the constant criticism towards Russia's lack of democracy based on Putin's authoritarianism.

Historical relations between Russia and Great Britain have been quite turbulent and very asymmetrical. This makes it impossible to talk about both countries on equal terms. This asymmetry is reflected in the creation of different stereotypes related to Britain's deep and genuine hostility. According to Clarke (1990: 70) a series of historical facts such as the Russian revolution and its repercussions on the allies, Russia's characteristic ideology, and the Romanovs fate, had all of them contributed to a wave of negative representations about Russia throughout the 20th century characterised by "distaste and a suspicion". Such attitude led to constant ups and downs in terms of diplomatic relations, which were "broken and re-established", and also in terms of political ones, with dialogues which were usually "initiated, interrupted and restarted". Very often open military confrontations gave way to a formal military alliance" (Keeble, 1990: 17).

Additionally, the relationships between Russia and Great Britain have been based on a perpetual antagonism and mutual distrust between both countries. Such confrontations are reflected in clearly opposed political regimes. From the very beginning, the former Soviet Union has been perceived as an extreme totalitarian Communist power. To this day, Russia is still regarded as extremely totalitarian or Communist by a great portion of the British public opinion, despite its manifest transformations throughout the past decades (Clarke, 1990; Jones, 1977). On the other hand, Great Britain's hostility towards Russia has been marked by a series of stereotypes, one of which is based on seeing Russia as a great ideological threat resulting from its communist influence.

The origins of such a hostile approach towards Russia date back to 1917, coinciding with the already discussed Bolshevik plan of modernization after WWI, based on the establishment of their own form of government to secure the worldwide recognition. This led to an open hostility between both countries which had increased enormously in the 1920s, deepening in the interwar period, due to Russia's growing power (Clarke, 1990; Ross, 1984; Ovendale, 1975). A strong alliance with the United States was the only way for the British to secure their position (Keeble, 1990; Reynolds, 2006). The British saw in Russia a clear ideological rival threatening the structure of the already weakened British empire, which had come to an end half a century ago. This implied that the historical memory of its confrontation with the Russian Empire was still alive (Keeble, 1990; Reynolds, 2006). In what way?

The British establishment had experienced humiliation twice: after WWI, Great Britain handed over its position of world superiority in favour of the United States, and after WWII, Great Britain was officially left out of the game in favour of the USSR-USA tandem in the international political scene. The former Soviet Union was perceived as a Russian Empire in a new disguise, which made it even more painful to admit that the confrontation of both empires, initiated in the 18th century, ended up with the victory on the enemy's side (Громыко, 2008).

Russia's victory in WWII led to rising tensions with Great Britain and the United States. It was the beginning of the Cold War period. The British emphasized their image of Russia as an expanding military, nuclear, ideological and imperialist threat (Reynolds, 2006; Wohlforth, 2001; Taras, 2013). Such representation of Russia is clearly reflected in the metaphorical expressions used by Churchill when referring to Russia as 'a mortal danger to the free world' (Colville, 1985; Churchill, 1948-54: iv. 584, vi. 90, 400) behind the 'iron curtain' (Reynolds, 2006), not forgetting 'the poor little English donkey' caught between 'the great Russian bear' and 'the great American buffalo' (Charmley, 1993: 548).

The aftermath of the communist regime collapse in 1991 explains the British satisfaction with the dissolution of the former Soviet Union (Keeble, 1990; Reynolds, 2006). Russia became a defeated country. The feeling of superiority was beginning to grow among the British, especially within the members of the British political class. This image of a defeated and weakened authority, a savage, underdeveloped, non-European, and alien country, was the main refrain of relations between Russia and the Western world in general. A lesser interest towards Russia, in addition to its diminished popularity, has deeply grown in the British consciousness (Громыко, 2008).

In the past decades unto the present, the relationships between both countries have been developing within the climate “of mutual mistrust based on distant wariness” (Pravda and Duncan, 1990: 3). To the eyes of the British, Russia still bears its imperial character under an authoritarian regime based on the totalitarian Soviet system “suppressing individual rights and values” (Pravda, 1990: 3-4). It is regarded as a threat mainly due to its “imperial ambitions” (1990: 3-4) and also due to its “insecure and ambitious international power” (1990: 3-4), as is reflected in its inefficiency as a democratic country.

1.4.3. The US perception of Russia

When discussing the historical evolution of Russia’s image and national identity, we have mentioned the importance of Peter the Great as the initiator of the process of Russia’s modernisation, following the Western model. Such modernisation project provided a ray of hope for the US own development as a nation, which would not begin until the late 1870s. It was regarded as an example to follow. However, the continuous failures in the attempt to bring Russia to the Western world caused that romantic view of Russia to fade away, leading to much more pessimistic representations about Russia (Журавлева, 2012; Рукавишников, 2005).

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a myriad of different images of Russia came into scene in correlation with the interests of the American society, which was undergoing a tough transformation of its own ideology, traditions and values in the context of its socio-historical and cultural development. It was not just how the US perceived Russia, but also how they saw themselves and the world surrounding them, in the process of their formation as a world leading nation (Журавлева, 2012; Leerssen, 2007).

The way Russia was perceived by the US in the past two centuries leads to a better understanding of Russia's present relevance in today's US discourse, as reflected in Russia's different threatening manifestations in the examples from *The New York Times* and also from *The Guardian* (as discussed in the analysis and results sections 1.4.1–1.4.6.). Additionally, it also leads to the understanding of the extent to which the myths, and the deeply-rooted and consolidated stereotypes about Russia have influenced Russia's image formation and perception in the United States, with recurrent references to the Russian Empire, the former USSR or the post-Soviet Russia (Пукавишников, 2005).

The first representations about Russia in the United States took place at the end of the 1890s, and were related to Russia's territorial expansionism. From a geographical point of view, the American West was compared to Siberia, with the living conditions of the Russian settlers resembling those of the American settlers in the West of the Mississippi river. Russia was growing as a territory. Therefore, as in the British case, this association of Russia with imperialist expansionism has dominated the US discourse to the present day (Журавлева, 2012), as can be seen in the analysed articles from *The New York Times* (analysis and results sections sections 1.4.1–1.4.6).

Russia's growing expansionist power led the American people to believe in their own right to spread their democratic model to the rest of the world (Журавлева, 2012). This is related to the already discussed 18th century rationalist and universalist principles. It was more than necessary to promote the message of "truth, justice, and freedom", especially when fighting a totalitarian regime (Baran and Davis, 2013: 44). Such need became manifest at the end of WWI, when propaganda was used to manipulate the masses' perception of reality (Marshall, 2013; Baran and Davis, 2013). It was in that context of events when the Russian Other was becoming part of the still forming American conception of the 'I' (Журавлева, 2012). From that moment on, the US representations about Russia gradually became more and more pessimistic and had been dominant throughout the 20th century, especially after WWII and throughout the Cold War era (Журавлева, 2012).

The repercussions of WWII brought "a series of events that profoundly changed the global distribution of power" (Painter, 1999: 4). According to the National Security Council Paper No. 68 printed in 1950, after "the collapse of five empires – the Ottoman, the Austro-Hungarian, German, Italian, and Japanese – and the drastic decline of two major imperial systems, the British and the French", the world saw "the end of the European era and the rise to dominance of two continental-size superpowers, the United

States and the Soviet Union” (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1997: 234-85).

In the mid-20th century, the United States became a very powerful country because of the “wartime mobilization and production” making the US economy almost double in size (Painter, 1999: 5; Reynolds, 2006). Additionally, there were also important transformations between 1945 and 1991 regarding the weapons technology development, and the relationships between the industrialised countries, and the countries from the Third World (Painter, 1999). This led to the Cold War era, a historical period which had been marked by extremely tense relationships between the former USSR and the US (Painter, 1999). It was a time of the arms race, since “a large part of Soviet military power in Eastern Europe posed a potential threat to Western European security” (Painter, 1999: 5; Neumann, 1999).

The Soviet security measures were perceived as countermeasures to the eyes of the Western countries, whose sole intention was to keep their world supremacy (Judge, and Langdon, 1996). In the analysed examples of Russia as a military and nuclear menace (analysis and results section 1.4.1.) it can be seen how the representation of the Russian nuclear power was seen as “expansionist, in Europe and elsewhere”, which made the country to be regarded as a serious “political threat” (Neumann, 1999: 104).

With regards to the former Soviet Union, “its power largely concentrated along its borders in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and northeast Asia” (Painter, 1999: 5). The country ended WWII in a prestigious position due to its victory over the Nazis (Painter, 1999), which “solidified support, or at least tolerance, for continued communist rule and provided a sustaining myth for the communist regime” (Painter, 1999: 9). Its “military capacity lagged behind that of the United States” (Painter, 1999: 5). This was the first reason to regard Russia “as the new ‘totalitarian’ threat to peace, capitalism, and democracy” (Reynolds, 2006: 306). In Reagan's words, Russia was an “evil empire, the source of most of the world’s problems” (Painter, 1999: 95).

Another reason to consider Russia as a threat to the West was the loss of the WWII by the Germans and the Japanese, which enabled Asia “to offer the Soviet Union and its ideological allies plentiful opportunities to expand their power and influence into central and Eastern Europe” (Painter, 1999: 15, 17). Such power and influence had their strong roots in the former communist regime, characterised by its “denial of political and civil rights” and perceived “as a strategic threat because of its connections with Soviet power, and as an ideological and economic threat because of its hostility to private property and free markets” (Painter, 1999: 19). The United States and its European allies feared that “Soviet domination of Eastern Europe could limit access to needed markets,

foodstuffs, and raw materials, as well as pose a security threat to Western Europe” (Painter, 1999: 17). Thus, very much in the line of Kennan’s thoughts, the Soviet Union was represented as “an intractable foe” and therefore, there was a need for a policy elaboration to contain “the spread of Soviet power and communist influence” (Painter, 1999: 18), which could “turn the global balance of power against the United States” and jeopardise their “economic and political freedom” (Painter, 1999: 18).

In the 1950s and throughout the 1960s, a very deep “anti-Soviet sentiment” was developing due to “the fragility of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe” (Painter, 1999: 37), as a result of a growing “political instability” (1999: 37). On the other hand, fearing the dangerous Soviet nuclear expansion, the US main objective was to contain at all costs the possible heading of the Soviet strategic forces towards the US and other parts of the world (Painter, 1999).

The American perception of Russia after the end of the Cold War was quite similar to that of the British. From the disappearance of the Soviet Union until the present days, the relationship between Russia and the United States has been shifting from the status of completely confronted actors to a more cooperative behaviour. This is especially noticeable in the cooperation between both countries, in relation to nuclear safety and the fight against terrorism. However, the dominant US representation about Russia is still that of a dangerous country in need to be watched and put under control (Красных, 2001).

During the Gorbachev presidency, there was a timid closeness between the former Soviet Union and the United States, stressed by a series of “important arms control agreements” (Painter, 1999: 95). However, the economic situation in the post-Soviet Russia was deteriorating, which made the gap between Eastern and Western Europe wider, thus increasing the “opposition to communist rule” (1999: 106). Besides, the communist control of Eastern Europe had substantially diminished the former Soviet Union’s political legitimacy. This put an end to the whole regime at the onset of the 1990s.

In 1991, the former Soviet superpower was dissolute, which led to a critical situation regarding Russia’s national identity (Petersson, 2013; Malinova, 2013). The country became known as the Russian Federation and was undergoing a political and socio-economic instability which inevitably led to its dissolution. According to Flikke (2006), one of the key elements leading to the dissolution of the former USSR is based on the lack of a stable and central presence of the Democratic Russia movement in the Russian political arena (in spite of its enormous efforts in leading Russia towards the Western model), and also on “the lack of reciprocity” (Neumann, 1999: 169). All this explains why Russia has kept on being seen as the Other by the US and the Western Europe alike.

As in the British case, the relationship between Russia and the United States has always been swinging from the status of completely confronted actors to a more cooperative behaviour in the different spheres of human activity. This is clearly reflected in several instances in which Bush had admitted Putin's willingness to cooperate against world terrorism, to establish nuclear agreements with the Middle East for peaceful purposes, and so on. However, at the same time, there was always a criticism towards Putin's measures regarding these aspects. Such attitude is related to this idea of Russia as a country with a "cultural predisposition towards strong personalised leadership" (Sakwa, 2008: 90). Considering everything Russia went through after the fall of communism, the only possible solution to restore Russia's image and greatness lied in the choice of "a strong leader with a vision for the country's future" (2008: 91). Nevertheless, the absolute concentration of power in the hands of a president for a long period of time is something that has always contradicted the Anglo-Saxon concept of checks and balances. Additionally, Putin's way of conducting Russia towards democracy, including the lack of media freedom, is another big minus for a positive image of Russia in the West.

1.4.4. The concept of stereotype and its link to Russia's image

The term "stereotypes" comes from the Greek words "stereo-s" ("solid") and "typos" ("a model"), which means fixed mental images, cognitive structures, or "representations of objects in our mind"¹. Stereotypes are negative and prejudiced representations of a country and its people (Nikitina, Mohd Don, and Sau Cheong, 2015; Semenenko, 2008). They are also subjective but less abstract than images, and result from our individual experiences within a specific social context (Semenenko, 2008; Smith, 2011).

Stereotypes often allude to negative images of the Other. Every time we watch the news, read reports and articles of the press, there is this concept of the Other present from the very beginning, especially when applied to countries like Russia (Le, 2006). When we hear and read about that specific country, there is a mixture of feelings and opinions concerning the government, as well as the public opinion. In this sense, stereotypes are simplified presuppositions about a country based on the collective perception of that country. These presuppositions serve as a perfect target for attacking a stereotyped country (Petersson, 2006).

¹ (Nikitina, Mohd Don, and Sau Cheong, 2015: 2; Gardini, Cornoldi and De Beni, 2006: 141; Hamilton, Stroessner & Driscoll, 1994).

Stereotypes are “pictures in our heads” (Lippmann, 1965: 3), through which we perceive reality using our own culture as a stereotyping model (Lippmann, 1965; Lebedko, 2016). In this sense, when we build a stereotype we are influenced by our society and by the experience of a single person or a group. Hence, it follows that there is an association with positive or negative experiences when we use and apply the stereotypes within a specific social context (Semenenko, 2008; Smith, 2011). The ability to modify and overcome the consolidated stereotypes varies from person to person within the process of individual or social development (Пантин, 1996). Below are some examples of the most common stereotypes of Russia.

1.4.5. Russian stereotypes

The past representations of Russia play an extremely important role when determining the mass media information regarding the economic, social and political aspects of the country (Feklyunina, 2012; Tsygankov, 2012). When we hear or read the news about Russia projected by the Western mass media, the stereotypes play a crucial role in the interpretation of Russia’s image on the part of the audience, which is far from rational in most of the cases, tending to be interest-subjected, or rather subjective in general terms (Semenenko, 2008).

One of the most typical stereotypes about Russia is based on the representation of its people as barbarians alien to the civilised world (Figes, 2021). In this sense, Russia is typically conceived as an Eastern country, a stranger to Europe (Bonnett, 2004; Neumann, 1999). This has a close relationship with the metaphor of the already mentioned barbarian at the gate which originated during Russia’s military expansion in the Napoleonic Wars and lasted throughout the 19th century (Neumann, 1999; Augustyn et al., 2008).

Authors such as Semenenko (2008) mention a series of other common stereotypes having negatively marked Russia’s image. One of them is the stereotype of a terrifying and evil bear, which has been deeply rooted in the consciousness of the Western European countries and is still present to this day.

Figure 1

The well-known stereotype of the Russian bear²



Another typical stereotype alludes to the character of the Russian people often regarded as a lazy nation, alien to the spirit of entrepreneurship, undisciplined, unpredictable, slavish, aggressive, authoritative, and tending to subordination, among others.

A further example of a stereotype towards Russia is that of a pre-revolutionary or post-soviet devil characterised by a Stalinist totalitarian regime imposing violence and a direct governmental control over society. This is linked to the idea of a country's strong and potentially threatening military and expansionist power.

After the demise of the Soviet Union, the stereotypes related to the separation from the enemy (Russia) did not disappear (Brown, Solovieva, & Eggett, 2007). One of the most "common stereotypical misconceptions" about Russian society was to still regard it as a continuation of Communism after the fall of the former USSR, with "corrupt dictators" impeding the country's economical, social, political, educational and technological advancing (Smith, 2011: 3). There was an urgent need to restructure the country and find new ways to improve its image.

² <https://www.balkanicaucaso.org/eng/Areas/Russia/The-Russians-the-theme-of-Russian-interference-in-TV-series-207066>

1.4.6. Summary of the various images of Russia

As mentioned earlier when discussing the concept of stereotype and its connection to the image of Russia (section 1.4.4), stereotypes come from a perception based on personal experiences and knowledge passed on from generation to generation, thus shaping the image of a given country. Russia has a very complex set of different stereotyped representations or images for the most part, which explains why it has always been seen as a fearsome threat to the West.

According to Smith (2011), much of the stereotypes related to Russia's image originated after the Second World War, and have persisted to this day. The great problem in understanding the Russian character lies in a large number of differences with respect to the Western world, a fact that was reaffirmed at the end of the aforementioned war. An example of this is the immense resistance and enormous endurance of the Russian people in circumstances such as those they had to endure during the blockade of Leningrad and throughout the course of the war. This resistance is also reflected in forced labour in which many women took part, especially during the war, because men had to enlist in the army to fight the Nazis. These and other countless examples have created a perception of Russia by the Western world as a formidable and at the same time uncivilized power, a perception which is far from real.

Another of the characteristic images of Russia is related to the concept of the scapegoat, very common during the communist regime, based on perceiving everything foreign to the Western world as something devilish. This was a common feeling present in the context of the Cold War, where the US strongly feared the former USSR's military and nuclear power. To justify such fear, there was a need to form a stereotype based on the image of a scapegoat country to be viewed as full of inferiority, aggressiveness, one-sidedness and dishonesty (Davis, 1947).

It is also worth highlighting the positive qualities of the Russian people, known for their great historical and cultural legacy, as well as for being a hard-working and sacrificed nation with a great sense of patriotism, discipline, and competitiveness. When speaking of the different representations of a country, it is essential to bear in mind that they are the product of a subjective interpretation, which does not always correspond to that country's reality, as in the case of Russia (Smith, 2011).

2. Framing and mass media

2.1. Russia's national identity and mass media in globalisation

We live in a globalised world, which means that the way we receive information is highly conditioned by the different social, political and cultural phenomena happening worldwide. This leads to a unified perception and approach towards reality within each society, which implies thinking and behaving in a unanimous way, despite our different cultural and social backgrounds (Kornetzki, 2012). This unanimous perception and interpretation of reality constitutes a common denominator when it comes to the ultimate interpretation we give to the variety of daily events happening in a systematic way.

In multicultural societies of postmodern era, it is very hard to support a global socio-cultural environment. This is mainly due to the presence of the topic of national identity in the context of public policy. These days, it is possible to observe the presence of the exceptionally positive representations of the different countries, with a special focus being made on the inclusion and promotion of the positive practices on the part of the different governments in the frames of the public policies. In this sense, technological growth is a key priority for a national identity to take place and develop in a healthy way, as well as to support the local cultural traditions. This can only be achieved if national governments act as generators of individual values through the materialisation of the individual's creative potential (Семененко, 2008). In the case of Russia, however, this did not prove to be totally successful.

When Communism and its dominant ideology collapsed, there was a terrible confusion regarding the national identity among the citizens of the former Soviet Union. They were questioning their role and place in the world, a fact that, compared to other countries, made them feel significantly vulnerable to the overall globalisation process. All the main aspects of liberalism such as the economic values of capitalism, free market, political values and freedom of speech greatly influenced the national character of today's Russia and its society thanks to the news media (Kornetzki, 2012). For a better understanding of Russia, it is important to analyse the insights of Russia's image construction, which result not only from the diverse sociocultural and historical elements, but also from the globalisation impact on Russian mass media (Rantanen, 2002). Hence, the importance of the contrastive study of the media texts from the British and the American digital press in the present thesis.

2.2. Definition of framing

In social theory, framing is related to “how individuals, groups, and societies organize, perceive, and communicate about reality”. It is a “schema of interpretation, a collection of anecdotes and stereotypes that individuals rely on to understand and respond to event”³. As individuals we constantly project into the world around us the interpretive frames that allow us to make sense of it. Like stereotypes, framing has a subjective and inter-subjective character, acting as a mental filter deriving from biological and cultural influences and manifesting itself in thoughts or in interpersonal communication.

2.2.1. Social and communicative dimensions of framing

From a social point of view, framing involves mass media, political actors, different organisations and institutions, among others. According to Nelson, Clawson, Oxley (1997) news media consistently frame all news issues by foregrounding specific values and facts and emphasizing particular definitions, interpretations and evaluations.

In the context of the practices of news production, political newspapers play an important role in frame building. The most relevant aspects of news production that may influence how journalists frame a given issue are the following:⁴

- general societal norms and values,
- external pressures from interest groups, government bureaucracies, elites and policy makers
- ideological or political orientation of journalists.
- organizational pressures and constraints
- professional routines

Of these, only ideology and external pressures will be considered in this study.

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_\(social_sciences\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_(social_sciences)).

⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_\(social_sciences\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_(social_sciences)) accessed 20/08/21

2.2.2. The question of objectivity and transparency

Where is the boundary between the truth, the lie, and the freedom of communication? How does the information coming from the news affect and condition our thoughts and perception of events? How trustworthy do the media appear to be? How effective is mass media when transmitting the news to the audience? In order to answer to all these questions, we need to take into account a series of aspects which significantly condition our understanding and approach towards the information from the news and other types of media.

Apparently, the information is presented to us in an objective and impartial way, that is, it is obtained through reading. But when the analysis and interpretation of such information come into play, objectivity seems to be gaining a more relative approach. Besides, objectivity is also questioned when considering the way in which the news are projected by the author. Therefore, when speaking about objectivity, we should ask ourselves to what an extent the writer is being objective when transmitting the message and how objective we are when we receive it.

Hackett and Zhao (1998) make reference to the notion of regime of objectivity, which embodies cognitive and evaluative dimensions of the news. Thus, the journalist becomes a figure with a legitimate authority intermediating between the public and world events, presenting the news universally and neutrally. However, this is just from a theoretical perspective, since there is always a dominant ideology which ultimately questions objectivity. This relates to the concept of transparency, which refers to the public availability of sources, as well as the interests and methods which influence the information we receive, without excluding a possible bias of the author when interpreting the information (Lesage and Hackett, 2014).

According to Baran and Davis (2013), individual differences play a crucial role in our understanding and perception of reality within a particular social context. They are closely related to our psychological construction, which is specific to each individual, and which conditions the way we see things. On the other hand, social categories are equally important when approaching the news. If people share similar financial, religious, political and other backgrounds, they will react in a similar way to the same news content (De Fleur, 1970). This leads us to the dichotomy of representation vs communication, which is essential in order to understand the process of a country's image construction.

2.2.3. Representation vs Communication

Representation “is oriented to self” (Kress, 2010: 51), is developed in social environment, and deals with the individual and their interests in projecting a specific information according to what is relevant for that person, whereas communication “is oriented to an other”, that is, builds up the social environment, and is connected to the interaction between the individual and the outside world (2010: 51).

Representation and communication are closely related to one another. The continuous reconstructing of the social environment on the part of communication affects social relations and the environment itself. When the environment undergoes transformations, so do power distributions, creating communicative obstacles from a political perspective. This is due to the fact that representation is in a constant process of remaking the sources of meaning and the latter end up shaping the ones who remake such sources. “Through their effects on power and identity, *communication* and *representation* are both *political* processes”, since both are seen as altering the present power arrangements in a different way (Kress, 2010: 52).

2.2.4. Framing and ideology

Political newspapers are used as a means to reflect power and a particular ideology. Ideology is an important source of social and cultural values. Since we are dealing with group relations and interests, ideologies have a polarizing structure between *Us* and *Them*, which explains its importance as a reflection of a group and their members' attitudes and the way of thinking within a particular social structure (van Dijk, 1995a, 1995b).

As social beings, we may feel more comfortable in a particular group or organisation. Thus, our ideological perception needs to match that of the group we belong to (Wodak, 2001; Hussain, 2015). Any group tends to emphasize the positive aspects of the in-group and the negative aspects of the out-group (Le, 2006). If all the group members think alike and share the same values, this group is described in positive terms, while everyone opposing such values is seen as an outgroup, enemy or opponent, and is therefore perceived negatively (van Dijk, 1995).

Figure 2

The Ideological Square⁵



As shown in Figure 2 above, our mental representations of a particular group will have an inevitable repercussion on our way of using certain linguistic devices to reflect our attitudes (van Dijk, 1995). For instance, we can find different linguistic means reflecting our negative evaluations about a particular person or thing. Such means are typically hyperboles used to emphasise someone's negative behaviour, and also metaphors and comparisons used to highlight "us as victims and them as evil aggressors"(van Dijk, 1996: 16). All this will ultimately be reflected in the discourse, highlighting a considerable degree of subjectivity when writing an opinion or discussing a subject of a specific nature (Billig et al., 1988).

2.2.5. Framing and external pressure: interest elite groups

After the fall of Communism, Russia became the subject of Western political discourse. The Western countries began to show greater interest in Russia's image (Semenenko, 2008). Russia was regarded as a powerful country. Therefore, the representatives of the dominant Western elite groups (British and American economic interest groups, government bureaucracies, and policy makers) decided to use Russia as an instrument to promote their own interests with the help of mass media. This fact explains why Russia has always been the epicentre of various ideological confrontations, especially after the fall of Communism.

⁵ (van Dijk, 2011a: 396).

The fact that Russia has been historically a country totally opposed to the Western world, as well as to its democratic principles and values, has aroused interest on the part of the dominant Western elites to know Russia better and understand its nature. However, once these elites realized Russia's great potential, they wanted to impose their model of values and democratization. Since they did not manage to achieve it, they began to apply all kinds of negative stereotypes to Russia. Hence, the Western press, one of whose functions is to support the interests of these elites, took it upon itself to make this propaganda of Russia as a potential threat, using Russia's communist past and the country's enormous generalized instability in the 1990s. The only interest of the Western elites (especially the US one) was to impose their socio-political, economic and cultural model on Russia as they have done with the rest of the world. (Шанованов, 2000).

On the other hand, the lack of desire of the Western elite groups to consider Russia's interests and thus to establish a friendly relationship with Russia significantly threatens the stability between both worlds. This alters in a significant way Russia's image construction from positive to negative. Hence, the prejudice-filled stereotypes of Russia as a potential threat or enemy full of imperfections and other significant drawbacks. A clear example of this is a radical change in the Western perception of Russia from 2002 onwards. Russia, from being a powerless and an incapable country in the 1990s, has acquired the stereotype of a dangerous and unpredictable country with an aim to impose its conditions and power over the helpless Europe and the rest of the world (Semenenko, 2008).

The historical evolution of Russia (as discussed in section 1.3⁶) reflects its distinct image of a country with a completely different socio-political structure compared to that of the Western countries. This has a direct consequence on the ways of approaching the different problems and solving them. Such re-evaluation on the part of the Western elite groups regarding Russia's image has led to a regeneration of an anti-Russian rhetoric which fosters an endless number of overall negative representations about Russia. What seems to matter in the end is a one-sided, uniform Western perception of Russian society and government, and the lack of ability and desire to consider a truly existing cultural and socio-political diversity of Russia as a whole (Semenenko, 2008). This leads us to the field of propaganda and its role in the Western mass media in relation to Russia's image construction (Nye, 2004).

⁶ p. 14.

2.2.6. Framing, persuasion and propaganda

A particular way of framing or enclosing a news issue can change the reader's perception of it without having to alter the actual facts conveyed. This implies that, communicatively speaking, framing is intrinsically related to the notions of influence, persuasion, propaganda and manipulation, which can be considered to constitute a *continuum*.

Persuasion is “a process aimed at changing a person's (or a group's) attitude or behaviour toward some event, idea, object, or other person(s), by using written, spoken words or visual tools to convey information, feelings, or reasoning, or a combination thereof”⁷. Persuasive communication can be targeted at cognition, attitude and behaviour.

- Cognition: Persuasion can be used to change individuals' beliefs about an object or an issue, which includes attributes, interpretation, definition, outcome, etc.

- Attitude: Persuasion can be used to change individuals' attitude toward an object or an issue, which refers to the categorization of an object or an issue along an evaluative dimension (from negative to positive).

- Behavior: Persuasion can be used to change individuals' behavior, which is the overt actions regarding an object or an issue⁸.

Recent research has shown that persuasion is basically the result of cognitive and affective processes. Their main characteristics are⁹ :

A rational appeal uses logical arguments and factual evidence (statistics, personal testimonies, etc.) to persuade individuals that the advocacy is viable and likely to result in the obtainment of goals. The cognitive response tradition of persuasion claims that the persuasive effectiveness of a message is a function of the individual's cognitive responses to the message [...] Generally speaking, the success of a rational appeal thus depends on the strength and quality of arguments in the message through textual coherence accompanied by a well-constructed implicit or explicit argumentation which favours an immediate acceptance of the facts described in a text.

⁷ Business Dictionary. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persuasion> Retrieved July 2021.

⁸ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08b6d40f0b64974000b44/Persuasionweb.pdf>

⁹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08b6d40f0b64974000b44/Persuasionweb.pdf>

An emotional appeal is designed to arouse emotions among the recipient and use the emotions as the basis for persuasion. The most widely applied emotional appeal in persuasion is *fear* appeal. The term is sometimes interchangeable with the term *threat* appeal when the emphasis is on the informational content of the message, rather than the arousal it activates among the recipients.

Propaganda, on the other hand, is “communication that is primarily used to influence an audience and further an agenda which may not be objective and may be selectively presenting facts to encourage a particular synthesis or perception, or using loaded language to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is being presented.”¹⁰ In the news elaboration process it is an influential communicative strategy used to influence upon the audience (Baran and Davis, 2013). The main purpose in any propaganda is to generate expectations in such audience and to influence their ways of thinking and decision-making (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992). More precisely Nelson (1996: 232-233) states that:

"Propaganda is neutrally defined as a systematic form of purposeful persuasion that attempts to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of specified target audiences for ideological, political or commercial purposes through the controlled transmission of one-sided messages (which may or may not be factual) via mass and direct media channels".

Propaganda may determine the process of construction of an image by orienting the focus of the message on a particular topic and making it relevant through discourse strategies. A vital aspect which conditions the understanding and interpretation of a textual content lies in the “strategic control of knowledge” (van Dijk, 1996: 15–16). For instance, the image of the former Soviet Union as an evil and dictatorial empire originated from the horrors of communism under Stalin. Such image was kept during the Cold War era due to the consolidation of the communist regime. As a result, Russia has been remembered and viewed as an authoritarian country with lack of freedom of expression. Thus the Western dominant elites have felt threatened by Russia.

The example above leads us to the understanding of propaganda from a dual perspective: on the one hand, we have a propaganda of a negative image of Russia opposed, on the other hand, to the propaganda of a positive image of the United States. The Americans have always felt the need to spread their model of freedom and democratic well-being to the rest of the world (Журавлева, 2012). To show the world the effectiveness of their model of democratic principles and values, they felt in urgent need

¹⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>

to promote their message of “truth, justice, and freedom” (Baran and Davis, 2013: 44) in order to fight the former Soviet totalitarian regime. Such need became manifest at the end of World War I, when propaganda was used to manipulate the masses’ perception of reality (Marshall, 2013; Baran and Davis, 2013).

The news content manipulation is done by displaying a specific information more or less prominently in news reports, headlines, leads, or photographs. Conversely, if journalists or their specific interest groups want less or no attention paid by the public to certain aspects of a news event, such information will be less prominent or absent in the news articles (van Dijk, 1996). This clearly applies to what Semenenko (2008) regards as an indirect way of hiding information from the audience. The reason is either to increase the audience’s interest in a particular topic, or to protect the interests of the Western elite groups by keeping that information secret.

As can be inferred from the preceding definitions, there is a very close relationship between propaganda and persuasion, which are crucial in promoting the ideological beliefs of the dominant elite groups (van Dijk, 1988). Through persuasion, the readers end up accepting the news content without further questioning. However, despite the obvious relations between persuasion and propaganda (often in terms of degree) propaganda has some essential and distinctive features:¹¹

- a strong ideological bent.
- its institutional in nature.
- it involves mass persuasion.
- tends to rely on ethically suspect methods of influence and therefore is associated with a pejorative meaning.

Manipulation stands at the extreme end of the cline. It can be defined as “a type of social influence that aims to change the behavior or perception of others through indirect, deceptive, or underhanded tactics”¹².

There are different forms of persuasion and manipulation of the information in order to satisfy specific interests of the dominant groups. Behind all news, there is a clear intention which is to exert influence upon the reader, focusing exclusively on the most relevant aspects depending on what is convenient to project, regardless of what the reader’s thoughts or opinions are concerning the content.

¹¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08b6d40f0b64974000b44/Persuasionweb.pdf>

¹² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/> retrieved July 2021

2.2.7. Framing and discourse

The fact of sharing a language and participating in a given language community plays a crucial role in how an individual perceives and understands the meanings assigned to words and phrases. In this sense, all the relevant lexical-semantic, stylistic and rhetorical features are of crucial importance for influencing a reader of a particular news story (Nelson et al., 1997; Druckman, 2001; Entman, 2007).

In the context of mass-media communication a frame allows for encouraging certain interpretations and discarding others. Framing can be positive or negative depending on the information and the way it is presented to the readers. This will be directly related to the analysis of Russia's image construction. Kuypers (2010, 2009), considers that framing is essentially a rhetorical phenomenon created by discourse:

"Framing is a process whereby communicators, consciously or unconsciously, act to construct a point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be interpreted by others in a particular manner"¹³

Kuypers (2009:181) assumes that frames are powerful rhetorical schemas that "induce us to filter our perceptions of the world in particular ways, essentially making some aspects of our multi-dimensional reality more noticeable than other aspects. They operate by making some information more salient than other information".

This process is done through the journalist's choice of topics, words and images, as well as the use of stylistic and rhetorical features. Authors choose certain words to write the story and apply the needed persuasive effects to favour some interpretations and discard others. For example, if an author decides to write about Russia's lack of democracy, his argumentation would have to be convincing enough to make us believe what he thinks about it (Kress, 2010; Entman, 1993). This would influence upon our perception of Russia (Gronbeck 1998; Lang and Lang, 1989; Le, 2006).

¹³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_\(social_sciences\)#As_rhetorical_criticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_(social_sciences)#As_rhetorical_criticism)

2.2.8. Formal aspects of framing

Following van Dijk (1988) and Tuchman (1972), political newspapers have a hierarchical structure based on the ordering of the content, its schematic structures, and a layout which includes headlines and leads. The most significant aspects of the news content usually appear in the first place in any news elaboration process. This is done through a series of relevant persuasive features of the news discourse (Черняевская, 2006). To successfully persuade the reader, such features need to make the content properly understood, learnt, believable, and consequently incorporated into the reader's cognitive schemata. The three main persuasive features are:

- the emphasis on a particular event,
- the emphasis on the stated facts related to that event, and
- the attitudinal and emotional dimensions.

The emphasis on a particular event (related to the first distinctive cognitive feature in relation to framing, persuasion and propaganda discussed in section 2.2.6.) is achieved through the following rhetorical strategies:

- a detailed description of such event, with the use of evidence from reliable sources such as authorities, professionals, historical documentation.
- certain signs to make the events more accurate and precise (for instance, date/s, year/s, time, etc.).
- the use of direct quotes from different sources, in case there are opinions involved in the news discourse.

The emphasis on the stated facts related to the specific event (related to the rational appeal in relation to framing, persuasion and propaganda equally discussed in section 2.2.6.) can be achieved making reference to previous events as causes or conditions to predict possible or real events in the future. Such emphasis can also be achieved when the evidence of the stated facts appears to be familiar, even if it is totally new to us as readers. Finally, such emphasis is equally possible when facts appear organised in well-known particular structures.

The attitudinal and emotional dimensions of the content (related to the emotional appeal in relation to framing, persuasion and propaganda discussed in section 2.2.6.) can be achieved when the facts become part of the readers' consciousness thus arousing in them moderately strong emotions. It is important that emotions are moderate, for, if they become too intense, the content may be discarded altogether. In this sense, the quotes from the different sources regarding a specific event (or events) are essential

for their veracity. Additionally, the readers' personal experience based on their past memories (on their personal thesaurus) is equally important for the understanding and use of evaluative adjectives, metaphors, among others.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section begins by focusing on the presentation and description of the stages of CDA based on Fairclough's model (with a special emphasis on the first stage). In addition to the mentioned stages, there will also be a description of the basic tools of CDA based upon van Dijk's model of lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical analysing criteria. It is a synthesis of the main ideas about the steps to be followed in the contrastive analysis of the threat-related terms. Additionally, a special attention will be paid to the contextualization of the articles in the British and American press, in relation to the thematic relevance of the concept of threat present in the text articles. A description of the corpus and articles structure will also be developed in this methodological section, in relation to the aforementioned thematic relevance of the concept of threat. Finally, there will be a comparative presentation of the threat-related terms following their use of frequency, as well as their classification in word categories, mainly nouns, adjectives and verbs.

1. The stages of CDA

There are three stages of Critical Discourse Analysis (hence, CDA) based on Fairclough's model (1989), which are connected to the different linguistic features of the newspaper articles.

The first stage alludes to the ideological differences embodied in the texts which condition the various representations of the image of Russia. This stage also includes ideologically significant meaning relations between words (synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy) and is characterised by the presence of euphemistic expressions, formal and informal words and their expressive values, metaphors, among others. The present thesis will focus mainly on this first stage of CDA, since it is largely dedicated to the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical analysis of the threat-related terms of Russia's image construction, in connection to the concept of framing and its practical application to the analysis of the news articles.

The second stage includes grammatical features such as nominalizations, active/passive sentences reflecting the main processes and participants in the texts, as well as positive and/or negative sentences, the use of the different modes (declaratives, grammatical questions, imperatives), pronouns, and features of relational and expressive modality.

The third and final stage focuses on the sentence level, and is therefore related to the way simple sentences are linked, the use of logical connectors, and the degree of sentence complexity (coordination, subordination, or both). This stage also focuses on textual structures based on the type of conventions used by the author for interaction purposes.

2. Basic tools of CDA

2.1. Analysis process

The contrastive analysis of the newspaper articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* is divided in two main parts. The first part introduces and describes the importance of headlines as linguistic tools projecting the image of Russia as a threat to the West. The headlines are also used to anticipate the content of the texts related to such image. The second part of the analysis focuses specifically on the study of the threat-related terms depicting Russia as a threatening country. This study follows the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical analysing criteria based on van Dijk's model (van Dijk, 2006c, 125–126; van Dijk, 2011a: 397), as shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

Lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical analysing criteria based on van Dijk's model¹⁴

- **Context:** Speaker speaks *as* a member of a social group; and/or addresses recipient *as* group member; ideologically biased context models: subj. representations of communicative event and its participants as members of categories or groups.

- **Text, discourse, conversation:**

Overall strategy: positive presentation/action of Us,
negative presentation/action of Them

- Emphasize *Our* good things, and *Their* bad things, and

De-emphasize *Our* bad things, and *Their* good things

MEANING

O Topics (semantic macrostructures)

- Select/Change positive/negative topics about Us/Them.

¹⁴ (van Dijk, 2006c: 125–126; 2011a: 397).

- **Context:** Speaker speaks *as* a member of a social group; and/or addresses recipient *as* group member; ideologically biased context models: subj. representations of communicative event and its participants as members of categories or groups.

- **Text, discourse, conversation:**

Overall strategy: positive presentation/action of Us,
negative presentation/action of Them

- Emphasize *Our* good things, and *Their* bad things, and

De-emphasize *Our* bad things, and *Their* good things

MEANING

O Topics (semantic macrostructures)

- Select/Change positive/negative topics about Us/Them.

O Local meanings and coherence

- Positive/Negative Meanings for Us/Them are
 - Manifestation: Explicit versus Implicit
 - Precision: Precise versus Vague
 - Granularity: Detailed/fine versus Broad, rough
 - Level: General versus Specific, detailed
 - Modality: We/They Must/Should...
 - Evidentiality: We have the truth versus They are misguided
 - Local coherence: based on biased models
 - Disclaimers (denying Our bad things): 'We are not racists, but...'

O Lexicon: Select Positive/Negative terms for Us/Them (e.g. 'terrorist' versus 'freedom fighter')

FORM

O Rhetorical structures

Emphasizing or de-emphasizing Our/Their Good/Bad things
by

- Forms: Repetition
- Meanings: Comparisons, metaphors, metonymies, irony; euphemisms, hyperboles, number games, etc.

SEMANTIC STRUCTURES: MEANING AND REFERENCE

- **Negative topics** (semantic macrostructures) – any overall discourse topic describing *Them* as breaching our norms and values: deviance, threat, insecurity, criminality, inability, etc.
- **Level of description** (generality vs. specificity) – *Their* negative properties or actions tend to be described in more specific (lower level) detail than *Ours*.
- **Degree of completeness** (at each level of description) – More details will be mentioned, at each level of description, about *Their* negative properties or actions.
- **Granularity** (preciseness vs. vagueness) – *Their* negative properties or actions tend to be described with more precise terms than *Ours*.

For the contrastive analysis of Russia's image construction, a special attention will be paid exclusively to the most relevant criteria linked to the description and illustration of the threat-related terms with the common and prevailing denominator: the opposition of *Us* versus *Them*.

From the textual-discursive perspective, the first criterion is the positive representation of *Us* (the West) as opposed to the negative representation of *Them* (Russia), stressing the good things as *Our* versus the bad things as *Their*. This criterion is related to the already discussed perception of Russia as the Other in section 1.4.1. (the basis of the Western fear towards Russia), followed by a series of criticisms and historical justifications of why Russia is and should be treated as a threatening Other.

From the lexical-semantic perspective, the next criterion focuses on the semantic structures of the newspaper articles and is closely related to the previous one, since it equally makes reference to a series of topics linked to the positive *Us* and negative *Them*. More specifically, this criterion focuses on the level of description of the articles, which goes from a very general presentation of the information to a more specific and detailed description thereof. In this sense, the choice of words belongs to the semantic field of the threat-related terms for a stronger emphasis of the positive *Us* and the negative *Them*.

Finally, from the point of view of the rhetorical structures, the emphasizing of *Us* and de-emphasizing of *Them* is shown mainly through the use of comparisons, synonyms and related words to the idea of threat, and metaphors.

The methodological basis of this study lies in the contextualization of the articles within the newspapers and the press in general, followed by a comprehensive description of the structure of the articles, including the information layout and the most salient stylistic features in political newspapers. The data analysis is carried out using the software AntConc for the discussion of the concordance hits to the threat-related terms (as will be seen in Figures 26 and 27). The corpus comprises the overall number of articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, as well as the quantification of the most relevant threat-related terms illustrated in the semantic networks (as will be shown in Figures 32 and 33).

2.2. Contextualization of the articles: establishing topic relevance

The contextualization of the articles, i.e., their organization, their frequency and their relative location regarding other news sections, constitute an important choice for creating framing, and particularly for establishing topic relevance, thus exerting influence upon the perception of the potential readers. As shall be discussed within the section of corpus description, with a specific reference to the structure of political articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* (sections, 4, 4.1 and 4.2.), one of the variables for topic relevance is frequency, that is, the number of times the articles about Russia appeared published in the British and American press covering the same news or event.

The significant amount of articles reflects the abundant coverage of all the events related to the conflictive relationships between Russia, Great Britain and the United States in the year 2005, as well as a series of significant domestic issues inside Russia. The importance of the year and the use of the chosen articles for the analysis are explained in terms of Russia's socioeconomic and political relevance at the time, and also in terms of continuous conflicts between Russia and these two Western countries reflected in the press texts throughout that year. The reason for the choice of the articles published that particular year is because all of them stress the topic *threat* related to the most significant events having happened at that moment.

Such conflicts revolve around the most troublesome topics such as the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the ongoing conflicts between Russia and the US regarding the democratic development of Russia and its neighbouring countries, the issues between Russia and the Middle East (Israel and Palestine) concerning terrorism and the use of nuclear weapons, Russia's role in the Chechen conflict, the oligarchy issue, and Russia's attitude towards its historical past and its impact upon the relationship with the Baltic states and Poland. These topics are still present in the current Western discourse, and therefore still arise concerns in the West about Russia's future.

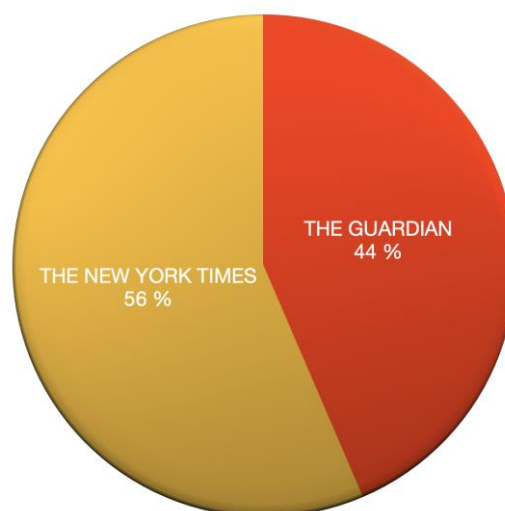
3. Justification of the corpus

As can be seen in Figure 4 below, the corpus is built up of 124 articles: 54 from *The Guardian* (44% of the corpus) and 70 from *The New York Times* (56% of the corpus). The quantitative superiority of the number of articles in the *New York Times* is due to a greater presence of texts that point to Russia as a threat, especially in the nuclear and ideological spheres, as will be seen specifically in the analysis sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2.

Figure 4

The total number of articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* analysed in the year 2005

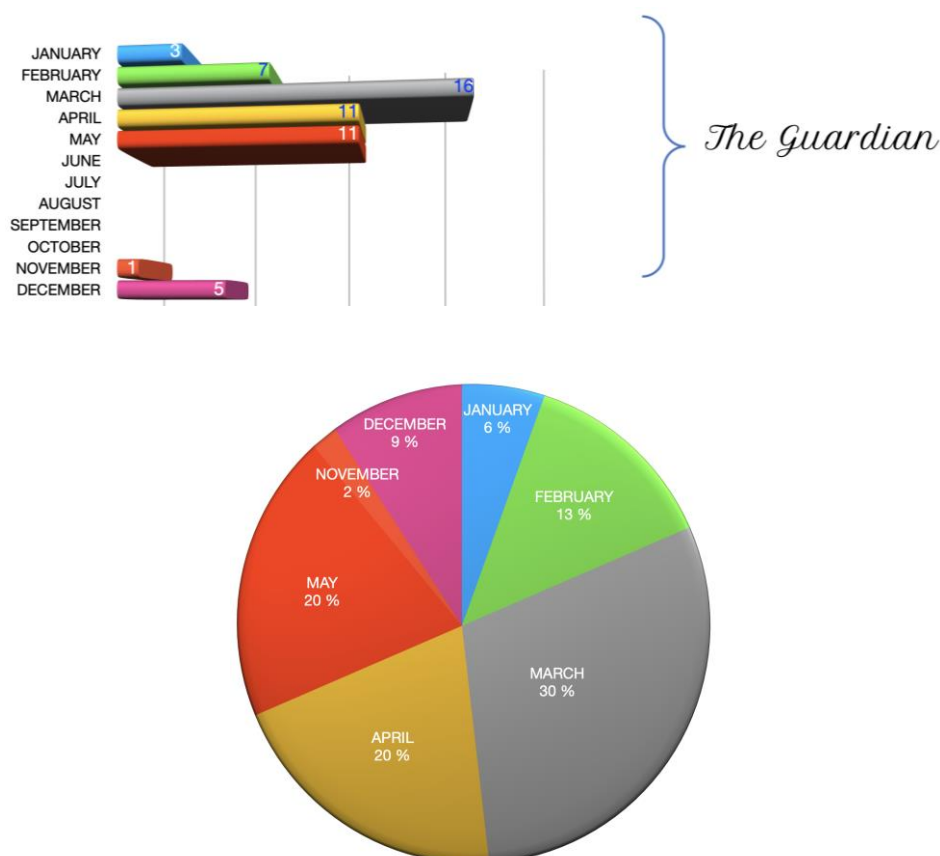
MONTHS	THE GUARDIAN	THE NEW YORK TIMES
JANUARY	3	1
FEBRUARY	7	6
MARCH	16	11
APRIL	11	8
MAY	11	17
JUNE	0	2
JULY	0	5
AUGUST	0	1
SEPTEMBER	0	3
OCTOBER	0	0
NOVEMBER	1	3
DECEMBER	5	13
TOTAL AMOUNT OF ARTICLES: 124	54	70



The total number of articles from the British and American press published throughout the year 2005 appear described in more detail in Figures 5 and 6 below.

Figure 5

**Total results of the monthly publication of the articles
from *The Guardian* in the year 2005**

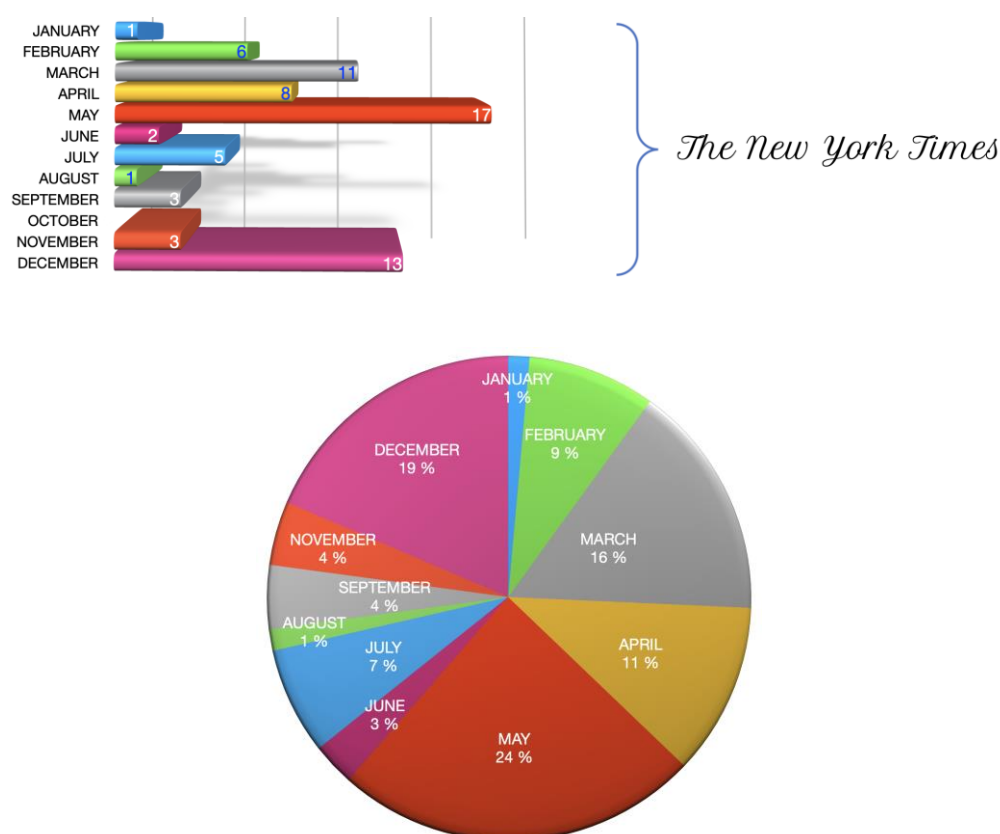


The pie chart in Figure 5 above offers the overall monthly results to the corpus articles from *The Guardian*. It can be seen that the highest amount of articles is reflected in the month of March, with 16 articles published, which is 30% of the corpus. In April and May we find an equal number of 11 articles published (20% of the corpus in each case). There were 7 articles published in February (13% of the corpus), 5 articles published in December (9% of the corpus), 3 articles published in January (6% of the corpus), and just 1 article published in the month of November (2% of the corpus). There were no articles published between June and October related to the topics associated to Russia's image as a threat.

The pie chart in Figure 6 below offers the overall monthly results to the corpus articles from *The New York Times*. As opposed to the results offered from the British press in Figure 5, the overall number of articles from the American press is notably higher due to a bigger number of articles (as reflected in Figure 4 above).

Figure 6

**Total results of the monthly publication of the articles
from *The New York Times* in the year 2005**



The highest amount of articles is reflected in the month of May, with 17 articles published, which is 24% of the corpus. In December we find 13 articles (19% of the corpus). There were 11 articles published in March (16% of the corpus), 8 articles published in April (11% of the corpus), 6 articles in February (9% of the corpus), 5 articles in July (7% of the corpus), 3 articles published in the months of September and November (4% of the corpus in each case), and 1 article published in the months of January and August (1% of the corpus in each case). There were no articles published in October related to the topics associated to Russia's image as a threat.

These results constitute a manifestation of the most discussed topics at the time, such as the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the ongoing conflicts between Russia and the US regarding the democratic development of Russia and its neighbouring countries, the relationship between Russia and the Middle East (Israel and Palestine) concerning the question of terrorism and the use of security weapons, Russia's role in the Chechen conflict, the oligarchy issue, and Russia's attitude towards its historical past and its impact upon the relationship with the Baltic states and Poland. It is important to highlight that the mentioned topics reflect an equal repercussion in both the British and the American press. The following section below offers a more detailed description regarding the structure of the articles and their classification into categories, sections and subcategories in relation to the topics mentioned above.

4. Corpus description: The structure of political articles

4.1. *The Guardian*

As can be seen in Figure 7 below, the structuring of the articles in *The Guardian* shows six tabs with the categories *News* (formally *World*), *Opinion*, *Sport*, *Culture*, *Lifestyle*, and *More*. This last tab is an additional category covering various sections with different news contents.

Figure 7

The structuring of articles in *The Guardian*¹⁵

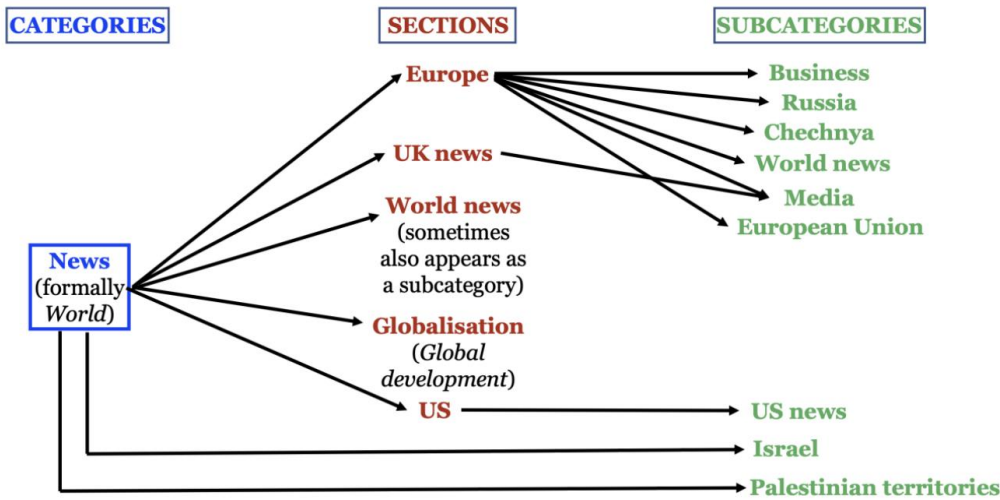
Support the Guardian						The Guardian For 200 years News website of the year	
Available for everyone, funded by readers						International edition	
Contribute → Subscribe →							
News	Opinion	Sport	Culture	Lifestyle	More ^	Search jobs Holidays Digital Archive Guardian Puzzles app	
Coronavirus	The Guardian view	Football	Books	Fashion	Video		
World news	Columnists	Cricket	Music	Food	Podcasts		
UK news	Cartoons	Rugby union	TV & radio	Recipes	Pictures		
Environment	Opinion videos	Tennis	Art & design	Love & sex	Newsletters		
Science	Letters	Cycling	Film	Health & fitness	Today's paper		
Global development		F1	Games	Home & garden	Inside the Guardian		
Football		Golf	Classical	Women	The Observer		
Tech		US sports	Stage	Men	Guardian Weekly		
Business				Family	Crosswords		
Obituaries				Travel			
				Money			

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/international>

The articles analysed here belong mainly to the sections and subcategories under the category *News*. It comprises the sections *Europe*, *World news* (which is also a subcategory), *US*, *UK news*, and *Global development*, as shown in the graphic in Figure 5 above. The subcategories are *World news*, *Russia*, *Business*, *US news*, *Chechnya*, *Israel*, *Media*, *Palestinian territories*, and *Globalisation* (now *Global development*) and *European Union*. Subcategories and the sections *Europe* and *US* can be seen once the links to the articles are disclosed¹⁶. Figure 8 below shows a detailed illustration of the articles classified into sections and subcategories.

Figure 8¹⁷

Classification of the articles from *The Guardian*
into categories, sections and subcategories



The results from the graphic in Figure 9 below show that most of the articles are grouped under the section *World news* and *Europe* (48%), including the subcategories made reference to above. This is due to the already discussed topic relevance manifested in the events with significant repercussions, especially in Europe. This is reflected in the prevalence of the section *Europe* over the other sections such as *US*, *UK news*, and *Global development*. These topics are the Soviet occupation and a strong influence of the past Communist regime upon its neighbouring territories like the Baltic states, Poland and Georgia, terrorism and nuclear issues, the gas conflict with Ukraine,

¹⁶ There is a complete corpus of the articles from *The Guardian* (Appendix 3) and *The New York Times* (Appendix 4) with the categories, sections and subcategories in which the texts were published, including the days, dates, time and the year of publication.

¹⁷ Self-elaborated.

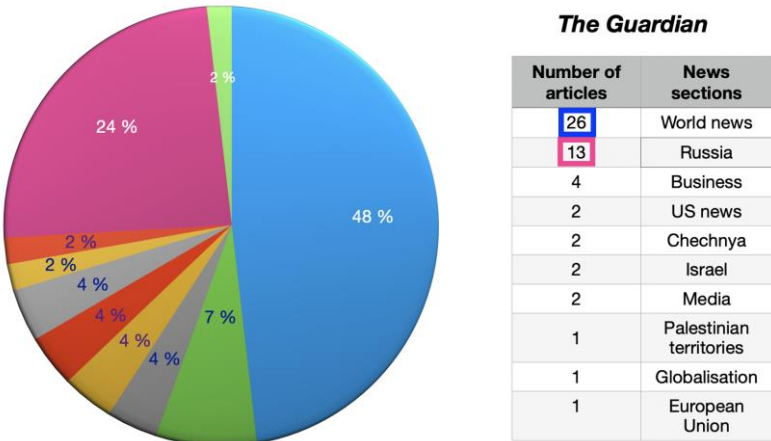
and the Chechen conflict connected to the Beslan school massacre. All of those topics meant a direct implication of Great Britain (and the EU) in its decision-making processes regarding the future relationships with Russia, and equally reflected a considerable degree of threat in the military and commercial relations with Russia (as in the case of the gas conflict with Ukraine).

All the news referring to the topics related specifically to Russia appear under the subcategory *Russia* and make reference to its image as a threat inside and outside its borders. They are in the second position constituting 24% of the overall number of articles. The covered topics are the Soviet Communist occupation of its neighbouring territories (with a special stress on Putin's authoritarian character in his determination to lead the country towards democracy in his own terms), the nuclear issue, the Chechen conflict, and the oligarchs prosecution.

The articles in the remaining subcategories such as *Business* (7%), *US news*, *Chechnya*, *Israel*, *Media* (4% each), *Palestinian territories*, and *European Union* (2%) contain a much lower number of articles, which implies either a repetition of the topic (or topics) already covered in other sections and subcategories, or a topic which is directly related to a specific event, country or territory. For example, all the news covering the nuclear issue and Russia's role in the Middle East with respect to terrorism and weapon security appear classified under the subcategory *Israel* and *Palestinian territories*. It is important to stress that, despite their low numeric value, these articles equally manifest the threatening image of Russia and are content-wise related to the articles from the previous sections and subcategories.

Figure 9

Total number of articles from *The Guardian* classified in the news sections



The articles published in January are related to Russia's domestic issues such as the lack of press freedom, and more specifically, the killing of the Russian journalists covering suspicious information regarding the Chechen conflict. Once again, the deaths of the journalists have also been widely broadcasted and commented on in the West.

The set of articles published in February focuses mainly on the US concern about Russia's democratic development, the oligarchs prosecution, and the relationship between Russia and the Middle East (Israel and Palestine) concerning the question of terrorism and the use of security nuclear weapons. Even though the number of articles is significantly low with respect to those published in spring, it is important to stress that the nuclear issue has been one of the mostly commented topics in the Western and worldwide media.

In terms of frequency the highest number of articles was published in March. These results indicate that the highly discussed topics and broadcasted events were mainly the Chechen conflict, Russia's attitude towards its historical past and its impact upon the relationship with the Baltic states and Poland, and the ongoing conflicts between Russia and the US regarding the democratic development of Russia and its neighbouring countries.

The months of April and May reflect an equal result in the number of articles. This implies that the most concerning topics reflected in the articles published in those months were the Western criticism towards Russia's democratic development, the nuclear issue, Russia's communist past and its repercussions in the country's present development, and Russia's relationship with the Baltic states. There were no articles published between June and October covering the discussed topics above.

There is one article published in November dealing with the historical confrontation between Russia and Poland regarding the Soviet nuclear strikes from the Cold War era. That was a more internal conflict and did not have the same repercussion as the overall nuclear issue.

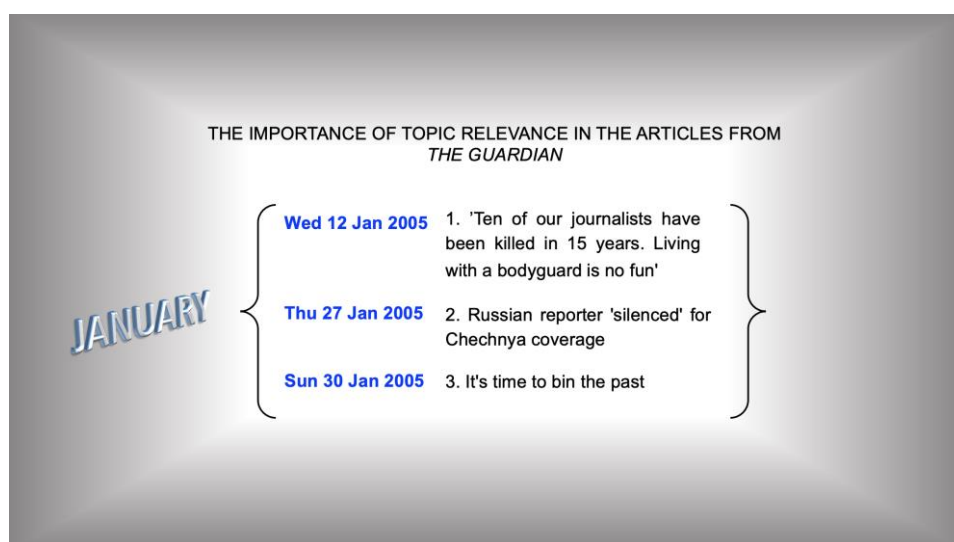
Finally, the month of December reflects the articles covering the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine. That conflict had a huge resonance in Russia, the neighbouring countries and also in the Western world (with an unfortunate outcome, the actual gas cut-off which took place in 2006).

The contrastive analysis of the articles from the British and American digital press highlights the most significant aspects portraying the image of Russia as a threat from the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical perspectives. As mentioned in the introductory section, the main goal in the present thesis is to reflect and stress all the elements projecting the threatening character of Russia and its perception in the eyes of Great Britain and the United States as an authoritarian, dominant and fearful country. Therefore, the idea is to analyse how all the previously described theoretical approach based on the historical configuration of Russia's image can be applied to the text articles. For a better understanding of this section, a list of the articles headlines from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* is provided when discussing the structure of political articles below.

The importance of topic relevance in the articles from *The Guardian* is illustrated in the complete list of headlines from the entire corpus (Figures 10–15 below). It is a more descriptive illustration of the graphic results related to the categories, sections, and subcategories explained above. The articles published the same day, date, month, year, and time are highlighted in yellow and reflect the topic relevance in those specific months. This does not mean that the rest of them have no importance at all, or have a minor importance. Rather, it is an indication of the need to stress the importance of the events that were happening in 2005.

Figure 10

List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in January 2005



The first example of articles published the same date and month is found in the month of February. They were published on Saturday, 19th. This fact reinforces the already discussed importance of the topics, as well as their significance following their classification under the sections *World news* and *Russia* respectively:

Figure 11

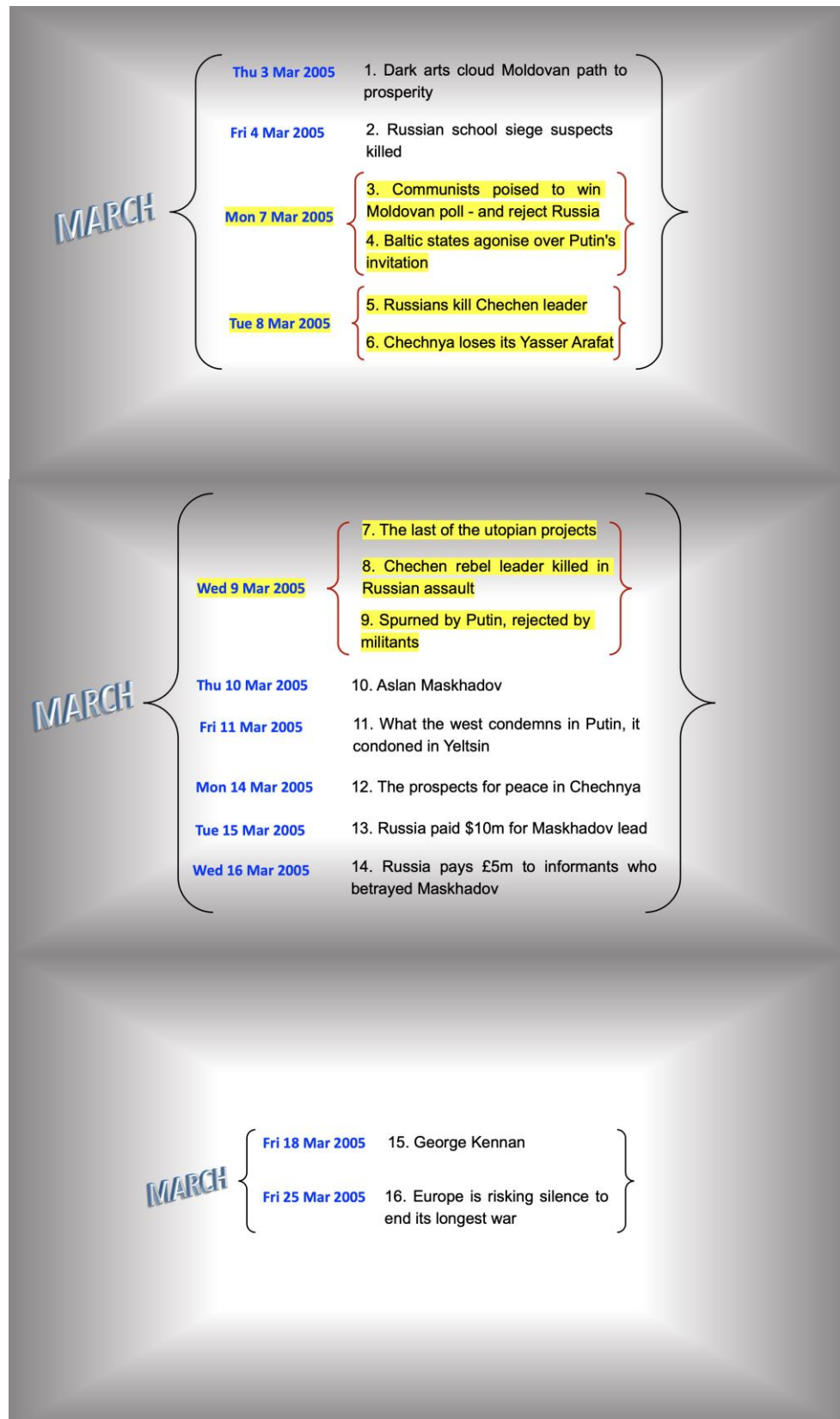
List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in February 2005



A similar situation applies to the month of March. Two articles appear published on Monday, 7th, stressing Russia's strong communist influence from the past over its neighbouring countries such as Moldova, and the historical confrontation with the Baltic states. The other two articles published on Tuesday, 8th reflect the topic of the Chechen conflict making a specific reference to the death of the leader Aslan Maskhadov. These articles are classified under the sections *World news* and *Chechnya*. The next three articles published on Wednesday, 9th are also related to the Chechen conflict and are classified under the section *World news* due to the news impact worldwide:

Figure 12

List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in March 2005



As for the month of April, the topics covering Russia's authoritarian character (manifested in Putin's way of conducting Russia towards a more efficient democratic model) is shown in the two articles published on Tuesday, 26th, while the articles published on Friday, 29th make reference to the topics such as terrorism and the nuclear issues. They are classified under the section *Israel* and *Palestinian Territories* respectively. These two topics have a considerable importance and are equally present in the articles under the sections *World news* and *Russia*. In fact, there is an article from *The New York Times* published on this same date (Friday, 29th April) equally making reference to the nuclear issue:

Figure 13

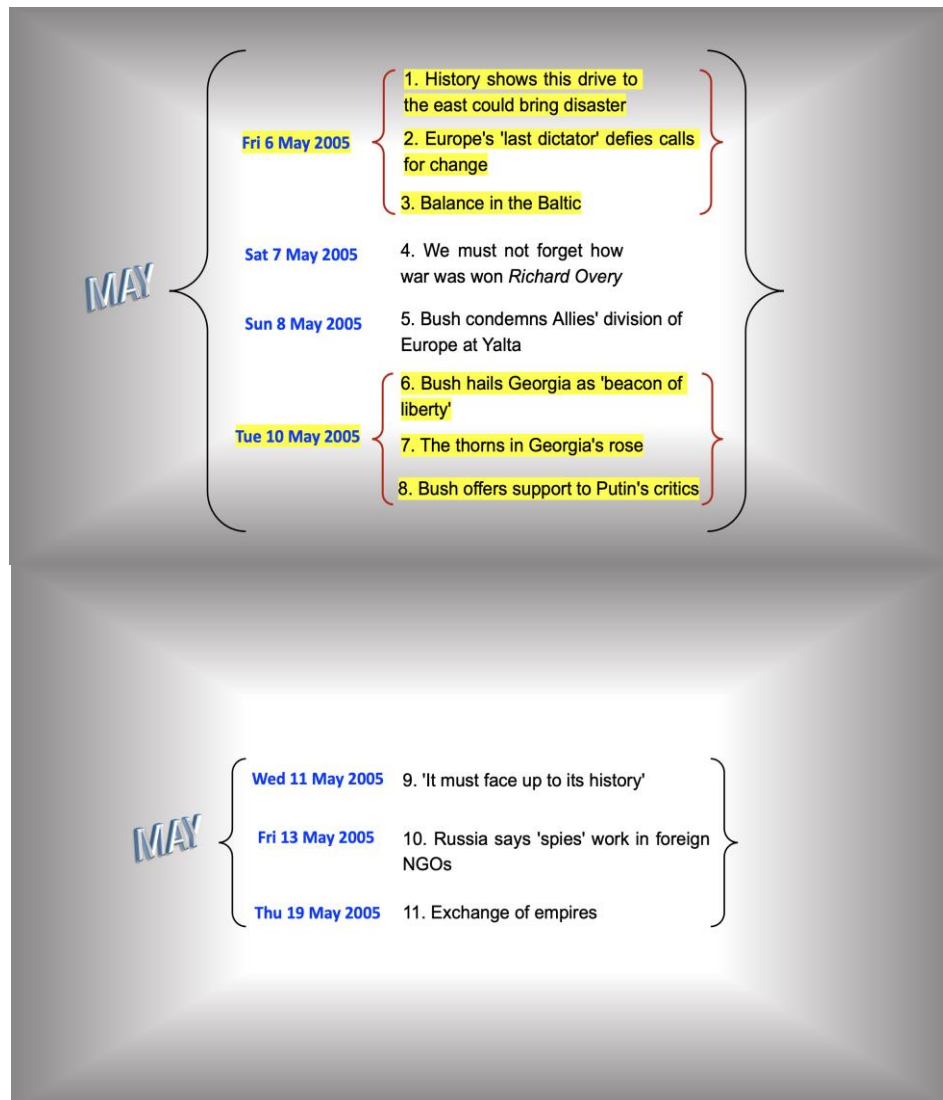
List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in April 2005



In the month of May, the three articles published on Friday, 6th make reference to the past Soviet occupation of the Baltic states and appear in the section *Russia*. Similarly, the three articles published on Tuesday, 10th highlight Russia's communist past and its strong influence over Georgia, as well as the US criticism towards Russia's inefficient democratic model:

Figure 14

List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in May 2005



There were no articles published between June and October.

Finally, the month of December shows the last two articles published on Sunday, 18th. They focus on the gas conflict with Ukraine and are classified under the section *Business*:

Figure 15

List of headlines of the articles from *The Guardian* published in November and December 2005



4.2. *The New York Times*

As opposed to the classification and categorisation of the texts in *The Guardian*, the organization of the articles in the American press is much more extensive, as shown in Figure 16 below. It is equally divided in a series of tabs like *News*, *Opinion*, *Arts*, *Living*, and *More*, with a series of sections covering the different news contents. The main categories appear with their correspondent sections.

Figure 16

The structuring of articles in *The New York Times*¹⁸

The New York Times				
NEWS	OPINION	ARTS	LIVING	MORE
Home Page	Today's Opinion	Today's Arts	Automotive	Reader Center
World	Columnists	Art & Design	Games	Wirecutter
Coronavirus	Editorials	Books	Education	Cooking
U.S.	Guest Essays	Best Sellers Book List	Food	Live Events
Politics	Letters	Dance	Health	The Learning Network
New York	Sunday Review	Movies	Jobs	Tools & Services
Business	Video: Opinion	Music	Love	Podcasts
Tech		Pop Culture	Magazine	Multimedia
Science		Television	Parenting	Photography
Sports		Theater	Real Estate	Video
Olympics		Video: Arts	Style	TimesMachine
Wildfire Tracker			T Magazine	NYT Store
Obituaries			Travel	Manage My Account
Today's Paper				NYTLicensing
Corrections				
Trending				

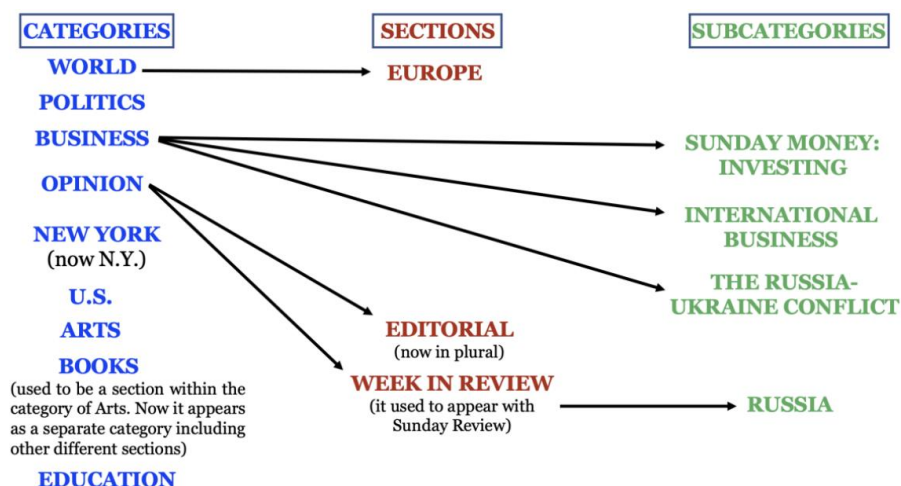
¹⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/>

The articles for the current analysis are grouped under the categories *World*, *Politics* (a new category), *Business*, *Opinion*, *New York (N.Y.)*, *U.S.*, *Arts*, *Books*, and *Education*. The corresponding sections to these categories are *Europe* (within the category *World*), *Editorials*, and *Week in Review* (within the category *Opinion*). Finally, the subcategories are *Sunday Money: Investing*, *International Business*, *The Russia-Ukraine Conflict* (within the section *Business*), and *Russia* (within the section *Week in Review*). These subcategories are very recent and did not exist previously.

The structure of *The New York Times* has gone through a series of modifications in the past five years. Some of the articles have been published in different subcategories to the existing sections. Subcategories are all positioned above the headlines (this can be seen by opening the link). Some sections do not appear under the particular categories but they can be seen in the links to the articles which they make reference to. Figure 17 below shows a detailed illustration of the articles classified into sections and subcategories.

Figure 17¹⁹

**Classification of the articles from *The New York Times*
into categories, sections and subcategories**



¹⁹ Self-elaborated.

The graphic in Figure 18 below shows that, similarly to the articles from *The Guardian*, the biggest number of articles in *The New York Times* belongs to the category *World* (43%) section *Europe*. Once again, this result shows the importance of the events related to Europe, reflecting a direct implication of Great Britain and the EU in their decision-making processes regarding the future relationships with Russia. This result also reflects a considerable degree of threat in the commercial relations with Russia (in the case of the gas conflict with Ukraine). The articles under this category cover the topics dealing with the Soviet occupation of its neighbouring territories (including a strong influence of the past Communist regime upon them), terrorism and the nuclear issues, the gas conflict with Ukraine, and the Chechen conflict linked to the Beslan school massacre.

The second position is occupied by the articles under the section *Politics* (16%), which includes all the texts covering the topics related to the US criticism towards Russia's lack of democracy, Russia's economic monopoly (in relation to the gas conflict with Ukraine), the nuclear threat, the historic conflict between Russia and the neighbouring countries, and the oligarchs prosecution.

The third position is occupied by the articles with a more economic approach and appear classified in the section *Business* (17%) including the three related subcategories *Sunday Money: Investing*, *International Business*, and *The Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. These articles cover the topics such as the gas conflict with Ukraine (in relation with Russia's main oil company Gazprom as an economic monopoly taking over the other Russian companies), and the overall difficult economic relations between Russia and its neighbours. There is almost no quantitative difference between these two sections, which means that, together with the section *Europe*, they embody most of the articles in the corpus covering the topic relevance in Europe and in the rest of the world.

The articles under the categories *Opinion*, *New York*, *U.S.*, *Arts*, *Book*, and *Education* have a significantly lower percentage with respect to the previously commented ones, but once again, this does not mean they are less relevant. The reason is the same as explained when analysing the corpus of the articles in *The Guardian*: they equally manifest the threatening image of Russia and are content-wise related to the articles from the previous sections and subcategories.

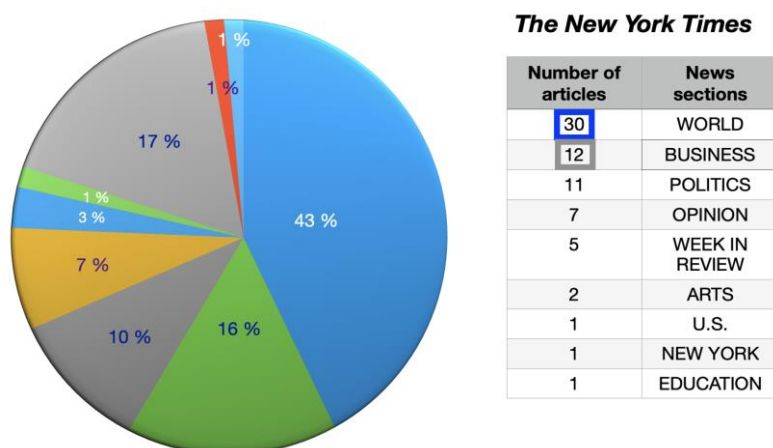
The articles published under the section *Opinion* occupy the fourth position (10%) and cover the topics such as Putin's authoritarian character in his determination to lead the country towards democracy in his own terms, the Chechen conflict, the oligarchs prosecution, and the Soviet Communist occupation of its neighbouring territories.

The next set of articles appears under the section is *Week in Review* subcategory *Russia* (7%). The topics are Putin's authoritarian character in his determination to lead the country towards democracy in his own terms, and Russia's communist past.

The last sections are *New York* (1%), *U.S.* (1%), *Arts/Books* (3%), and *Education* (1%). The articles from the section *Arts/Books* focus on Russia's democratic inefficiency (lack of freedom), and Putin's authoritarian character. The other three sections include one article each covering the topics such as the nuclear issue, the Soviet occupation of its neighbouring territories, Russia's communist past, and finally the Beslan school massacre.

Figure 18

**Total number of articles from *The New York Times*
classified in news sections**



There was only one article published in January, focusing mainly on Russia's authoritarianism and the Beslan massacre.

A substantial contrast with the British articles is reflected in the texts published in February, where the main topic is the US criticism towards Russia's democratic development. This, together with everything related to Russia's communist past, has always been one of the most discussed topics and the reason for such a big criticism towards Russia.

The number of articles published in March is relatively smaller than that of the British ones. The topic relevance, however, differs from that in the British articles, with a higher priority given to the Chechen conflict over other topics such as Russia's communist past and the gas conflict.

The fourth position goes to the articles published in April focusing mainly on Russia's democratic development and in lesser degree on the oligarchs prosecution and the military confrontation between Israel and Palestine.

The highest number of articles from *The New York Times* is found in the month of May (a visible contrast with respect to those found in *The Guardian*). There is no significant quantitative difference with respect to *The Guardian*. The main difference lies in the overall amount of articles, which is considerably higher due to the bigger concern and criticism towards certain topics on the part of the US such as Russia's communist past, and Russia's historical conflict with the Baltic states and Poland. They appear in most of the articles due to their resonance at that time. The nuclear issue and the gas conflict were covered in minor degree in that month.

The articles published in June focus mainly on the oligarchs prosecution and the Chechen conflict.

Another difference with respect to *The Guardian* appears in the results of July. As already mentioned, there were no articles from the British press published that month covering the topics discussed here. The articles in *The New York Times*, however, cover the lack of democratic efficiency in Russia (in connection with the criticism towards Putin's authoritarian character) and terrorism in lesser degree.

As in the case of January, there was only one article published in the month of August equally covering Russia's authoritarianism and the Beslan massacre.

The months of September and November show an equal number of articles, as happens in January and August (the difference lies in the number). The articles published in September make reference to the authoritarian character of Russia and in minor degree to the Beslan massacre (this topic is related to the Chechen conflict and that is why it is not covered in the texts on its own). As for the articles published in November, each of them focuses on one single topic: Russia's communist past, the gas conflict, the Beslan school raid.

There were no articles published in October.

Finally, the month of December offers a significantly higher number of articles compared to *The Guardian* due to a bigger scope of topics made reference to, such as the nuclear issue, Russia's lack of democracy and its strong influence over the neighbouring territories, and the gas conflict with Ukraine. Regarding the gas conflict, the

US press focuses more on its economic aspect, criticising Russia for being a monopoly always wanting to keep financial benefits to itself.

In overall terms, it can be said that the topics in *The Guardian* are approached paying much more attention to the analysis of the ideological side of the news and media from a socioeconomic and historical perspectives. Such analysis is carried out with a high degree of systematicity (van Dijk, 1988).

With respect to *The New York Times*, it is equally necessary to discuss here the topic relevance manifested in the number of times the articles appeared published covering the same topic or event. As in the case of the articles from *The Guardian*, the importance of topic relevance in these articles is also illustrated in the complete list of headlines from the entire corpus (Figures 19–25). The figures below reflect the list of headlines to the articles published the same day, date, month, year, and time. The headlines also appear highlighted in yellow and reflect the topic relevance in those specific months. This does not mean that the rest of them have no importance at all, or have a minor importance. Rather, it is an indication of the need to stress the importance of the events that were happening in 2005.

Figure 19

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in January and February 2005



THE IMPORTANCE OF TOPIC RELEVANCE IN THE ARTICLES FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES		
JANUARY	JAN. 16, 2005	You Go Your Way, and Let Us Go Ours
	FEB. 12, 2005	1. Mounting Discontent in Russia Spills Into Streets
FEBRUARY	FEB. 20, 2005	2. Bush seeks to Begin a Thaw in a Europe Still Cool to Him
	FEB. 22, 2005	3. Kremlin Interference Seen as Critical Factor in Decline of Russia's Oil Output
	FEB. 23, 2005	4. BUSH IN EUROPE- DIPLOMACY; Bush May Feel Chilly Blast From Russians, Envoy Says
	FEB. 24, 2005	5. To Russia, With Tough Love
	FEB. 25, 2005	6. Bush and Putin Exhibit Tension Over Democracy

Figure 20

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in March 2005

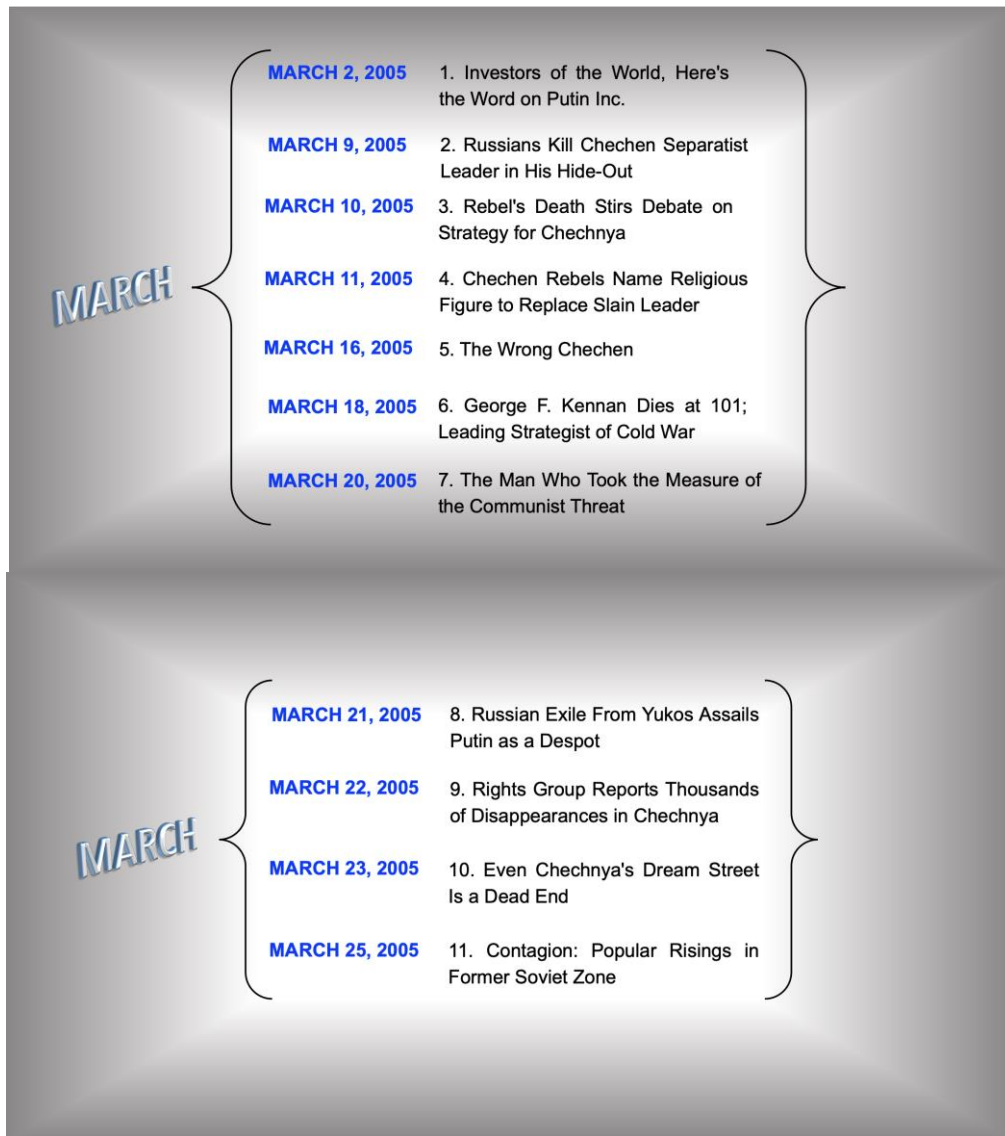
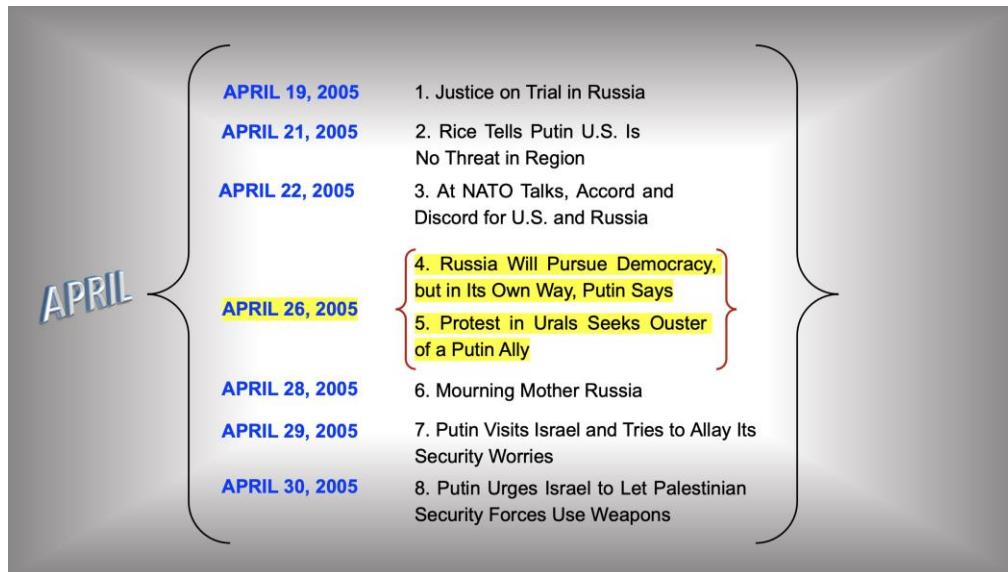


Figure 21

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in April 2005



In the US digital press, there are not as many examples of articles published the same day and date as in the British one, except for the month of May, which shows the biggest number of articles published in the year 2005. This is explained by the fact that the most of the broadcasted news at the time were all related to Russia's historical past and its relationship with Poland and the former Soviet republics, especially the Baltic states. Those topics had formed the breeding ground for a tough criticism towards Russia's authoritarian and arrogant image to the eyes of the West:

Figure 22

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in May and June 2005

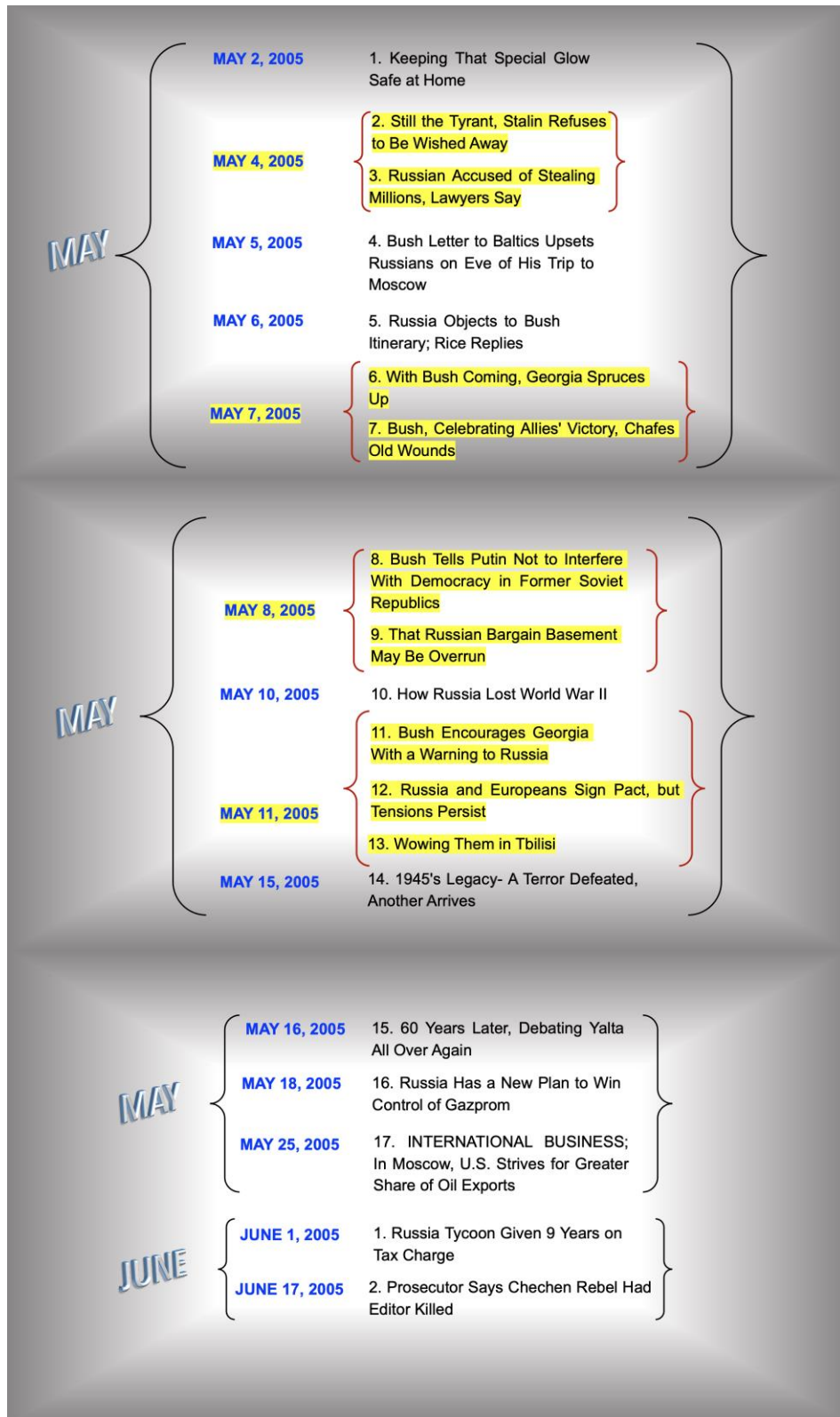


Figure 23

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in July and August 2005

JULY	JULY 1, 2005	1. BOOKS OF THE TIMES; In Russia, a Free Market, Less Freedom
	JULY 3, 2005	2. After Centuries of Enmity, Relations Between Poland and Russia Are as Bad as Ever
	JULY 8, 2005	3. Eastern Europe Considers More Trade With Russia
	JULY 16, 2005	4. Ill-Secured Soviet Arms Depots Tempting Rebels and Terrorists
	JULY 17, 2005	5. A Modern K.G.B. Colonel
AUGUST	AUG 13, 2005	Pervasive Corruption in Russia Is 'Just Called Business'

The criticism towards Russia and the figure of Putin as its authoritarian president is equally manifested in the articles published on September 18th. The first one appears under the section *Week in Review*, and the second one under the category *World*:

Figure 24

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in September and November 2005

SEPTEMBER	SEPT 1, 2005	1. School Siege Leader Calls Russia Unwitting Ally
	SEPT 18, 2005	2. The High Price of Standing Up to Putin
		3. Russia Hounds Human Rights Group That Gets U.S. Help
NOVEMBER	NOV 16, 2005	1. Soviet Leftovers, Where Statecraft Is Stagecraft
	NOV 18, 2005	2. Russia Plans to Use Turkey as Hub for Gas
	NOV 30, 2005	3. Investigation Says Russians Acted Ineptly in School Raid

There were no articles published in October.

Finally, the last month of the year 2005 offers four articles published the same day, two of them on December 4th, under the categories *Politics* and *World* respectively, and on December 27th, we find the last two articles under the category *Business*, sections *International Business* and *The Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. These articles focus mainly on Russia's communist influence in Central Asia (connected to Russia's relationship with its neighbouring countries), the nuclear issue, the tough economic relations with Estonia (a domestic issue) and the gas conflict with Ukraine:

Figure 25

List of headlines of the articles from *The New York Times* published in December 2005



5. The information layout

The specific construction of the newspaper headlines has different purposes. One of the main purposes is to draw the reader's attention. This is the case of the headlines from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* marked by a particular printing type.

Figure 26

Formal aspects of the articles presentation in *The Guardian*²⁰



Figure 27

Formal aspects of the articles presentation in *The New York Times*²¹



²⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/19/syria.iran>

²¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/26/world/europe/russia-will-pursue-democracy-but-in-its-own-way-putin-says.html>

As can be seen in Figures 26 and 27 above, from a formal point of view, the headlines in the articles from *The Guardian* appear in bold, whereas the headlines in the articles from *The New York Times* appear in bold and italics. Additionally, all the main words in the American press appear in capitals, except prepositions, linking words or connectors, and the *to* particle before the infinitives. In both cases, the publication date appears in the smallest printing type underneath the authors' names.

According to Clauso (2007), the other essential function of headlines is the announcing of the story's content to the readers, orienting the reception of the news by the reader, as a framing device. In terms of van Dijk (2008), the content organisation in political newspapers is structured upon "relevance, importance and recency" (van Dijk, 2008: 194). Their main function is to show the most salient topics by establishing an "initial summary" (van Dijk, 1988: 53), and thus expressing the semantic macrostructure of the text. Then we have the content summary which anticipates what the text may be about. The most important information in any news article always appears first, followed by the secondary or less important information. A thorough analysis of the headlines and their role in the articles from the British and American press will be carried out in the analysis section 1.3.

6. Russia as a military, ideological, economic and domestic threat

This section introduces the importance of Russia's image as a threat in the military, ideological, economic and domestic spheres, reflected in the overall results to the threat-related terms and their semantic equivalents. Of all the mentioned spheres, the image of Russia as a threat is most prominent in the military-nuclear and ideological ones, as shall be seen in this section. These results show the total number of concordance hits to these terms appearing in the tables (Figures 28–33) for a better understanding of their frequency use in the articles from the British and American press. Additionally, a data comparison of the overall results to these terms based on their word category classification is also included (Figures 30 and 33) for the corroboration of my hypothesis that Russia has been regarded by the British and the Americans mainly as a nuclear and ideological threat. A thorough analysis of all the threat-related terms is developed in the analysis section 1.4 of the present thesis.

The range of threat-related terms in the articles from *The Guardian* (Figures 28) and *The New York Times* (Figures 29), is shown in the frequency of use which evolves from the highest to the lowest positions. Therefore, the most prominent position is aimed at the terms with a higher frequency of use, while the terms with a lower or a minimum frequency of use occupy the last positions. The threat-related terms with the medium degree of frequency occupy intermediate positions within the table.

As can be seen in Figure 28 below, we find a total of 254 terms, among which the largest percentage falls on the adjective *nuclear*, with a total of 66 concordance hits. The second place is occupied by all the terms related to the communist regime of the former USSR, with a total of 45 concordance hits. The next set of terms (*weapon, weapons; threats, threat, threaten, threatens, threatened, and threatening*) shows an equal number of 25 concordance hits in each case. The terms that follow (*authoritarianism, authoritarian, occupiers, occupation, occupy, occupied, and occupying*) appear with 24 and 17 concordance hits respectively. The terms such as *dictator, dictators, dictatorship, and dictatorial* appear with 16 concordance hits, whereas the terms *risk, risks, riskiest, risked, risking, and risky* show 15 concordance hits. The terms *domination, dominates, and dominated* appear with 8 concordance hits, while the terms *trappings, rattletrap, trapped, and booby-trapped* show 7 concordance hits. Finally, the terms *trouble, troublesome, troubled* and *tyranny* appear less frequently in the articles and show 3 concordance hits each.

Figure 28

The overall number of concordance hits to the threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents in the articles from *The Guardian*²²

THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS	THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS
NUCLEAR	66	DICTATOR, DICTATORS, DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORIAL	16
COMMUNISM, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNIST	45	RISK, RISKS, RISKIEST, RISKED, RISKING, RISKY	15
WEAPON, WEAPONS	25	DOMINATION, DOMINATES, DOMINATED	8
THREATS, THREAT, THREATEN, THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING	25	TRAPPINGS, RATTLETRAP, TRAPPED, BOOBY-TRAPPED	7
AUTHORITARIANISM, AUTHORITARIAN	24	TROUBLE, TROUBLESOME, TROUBLED	3
OCCUPIERS, OCCUPATION, OCCUPY, OCCUPIED, OCCUPYING	17	TYRANNY	3

²² Appendix 1.

TOTAL NUMBER OF TERMS: 254

Following the results to the threat-related terms in the articles from *The New York Times* in Figure 29 below, we can see that the total number of 303 of these terms. This number is significantly higher with respect to that of the terms from *The Guardian*, due to the bigger amount of articles in the text corpus. Additionally, this result is also explained by the fact that the US has repeatedly and openly manifested its concerns regarding everything related to Russia, with a marked emphasis on Russia's communist past, lack of democracy, its nuclear potential, and its authoritarian character in the figure of the president Putin. In terms of frequency, however, the situation is quite similar to the one shown in Figure 28, with some quantitative variations.

The first position is once again occupied by the adjective *nuclear*, with 86 concordance hits. The terms *communism*, *communists*, and *communist* appear with 46 concordance hits. The terms *weapon*, and *weapons* appear with 40 concordance hits, and the terms *threats*, *threat*, *threaten*, *threatens*, *threatened*, and *threatening* show 39 concordance hits. The terms *authoritarianism*, and *authoritarian* appear with 28 concordance hits, and the terms *occupiers*, *occupation*, *occupy*, *occupied*, and *occupying* show 20 concordance hits. The threat-related terms such as *dictator*, *dictators*, *dictatorship*, and *dictatorial* appear with 11 concordance hits. The terms *risk*, *risks*, *riskiest*, *risked*, *risking*, and *risky*, as well as *domination*, *dominates*, and *dominated*, appear with 10 concordance hits in each case. The terms *trappings*, *rattletrap*, *trapped*, and *booby-trapped* show 5 concordance hits. Finally, similarly to the results offered in Figure 28, the least frequent terms are *trouble*, *troublesome*, *troubled*, and *tyranny*, with a shared number of 4 concordance hits.

Figure 29

The overall number of concordance hits to the threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents in the articles from *The New York Times*²³

THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS	THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS
NUCLEAR	86	DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORSHIPS, DICTATOR	10
COMMUNISM, COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS	46	RISKY, RISKIER, RISK, RISKS, RISKED	20
WEAPON, WEAPONS, WEAPONRY, WEAPONIZE	40	DOMINATION, DOMINANCE, DOMINANT, DOMINION, DOMINATE, DOMINATED	11
THREAT, THREATS, THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING	39	TRAP, TRAPPING, TRAPPED	4
AUTHORITARIAN, AUTHORITARIANISM	10	TROUBLED, TROUBLING, TROUBLES	4
OCCUPATION, OCCUPIED, OCCUPANTS, OCCUPYING, OCCUPIES, OCCUPY	28	TYRANNY, TYRANT	5

TOTAL NUMBER OF TERMS: 303

The table in Figure 30 below shows compared results to the threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents depicting Russia as a menacing country. This data comparison emphasises the prevalence of Russia's image as a nuclear and ideological threat, which is reflected in the leading positioning of the terms belonging to the military-nuclear and ideological spheres. This is not only explained by the bigger number of articles in the American press, but also by a more stressed criticism towards Russia's image as a nuclear threat, and towards its communist past.

As for the terms related to Putin's authoritarianism and the historical occupation of the Baltic states, there is barely any substantial difference in the results between the British and the American press. The frequency with which these terms appear in the texts implies a strong criticism towards Putin's government by Great Britain and the United States.

²³ Appendix 2.

Figure 30

**Data comparison of the overall results to the threat-related terms from
The Guardian and *The New York Times***

<i>The Guardian</i>		<i>The New York Times</i>	
THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS	THREAT-RELATED TERMS	CONCORDANCE HITS
NUCLEAR	66	NUCLEAR	86
COMMUNISM, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNIST	45	COMMUNISM, COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS	46
WEAPON, WEAPONS	25	WEAPON, WEAPONS, WEAPONRY, WEAPONIZE	40
THREATS, THREAT, THREATEN, THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING	25	THREAT, THREATS, THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING	39
AUTHORITARIANISM, AUTHORITARIAN	24	AUTHORITARIAN, AUTHORITARIANISM	10
OCCUPIERS, OCCUPATION, OCCUPY, OCCUPIED, OCCUPYING	17	OCCUPATION, OCCUPIED, OCCUPANTS, OCCUPYING, OCCUPIES, OCCUPY	28
DICTATOR, DICTATORS, DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORIAL	16	DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORSHIPS, DICTATOR	10
RISK, RISKS, RISKIEST, RISKED, RISKING, RISKY	15	RISKY, RISKIER, RISK, RISKS, RISKED	20
DOMINATION, DOMINATES, DOMINATED	8	DOMINATION, DOMINANCE, DOMINANT, DOMINION, DOMINATE, DOMINATED	11
TRAPPINGS, RATTLETRAP, TRAPPED, BOOBY-TRAPPED	7	TRAP, TRAPPING, TRAPPED	4
TROUBLE, TROUBLESOME, TROUBLED	3	TROUBLED, TROUBLING, TROUBLES	4
TYRANNY	3	TYRANNY, TYRANT	5

The information shown in Figure 31 below indicates the overall number of concordance hits to the threat-related terms according to their classification into word categories, mainly nouns, adjectives, and verbs.

Figure 31

**Total results to the word category classification
of threat-related terms from *The Guardian***

WORD CATEGORY: NOUNS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: VERBS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: ADJECTIVES	CONCORDANCE HITS
COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNISM	18	TROUBLED	11	COMMUNIST	8
DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORS, DICTATOR		DOMINATES, DOMINATED		DICTATORIAL	
WEAPONS, WEAPON		TRAPPED, BOOBY- TRAPPED		NUCLEAR	
AUTHORITARIANISM		OCCUPY, OCCUPIED		AUTHORITARIAN	
OCCUPATION, OCCUPIERS		RISK,RISKS, RISKED, RISKING		OCCUPYING	
TROUBLE				TROUBLESOME	
RISK, RISKS				RISKY, RISKIEST	
TRAPPINGS, RATTLETRAP					
TYRANNY					
DOMINATION					

As can be seen, there is a prevalence of the nouns with 18 concordance hits. The second position is occupied by the verbs appearing with 11 concordance hits. The number of concordance hits to the threat-related verbs in the texts from *The Guardian* (11) is the same as the number of concordance hits to the threat-related adjectives in the texts from *The New York Times* shown in Figure 32 below (11). Following these results, we can see that these terms stress Russia's authoritarian character, its communist past, and also its image of a nuclear threat.

The third and final position goes to the adjectives with 8 concordance hits. All these terms project the image of Russia as a threat from a general point of view (a country with a lack of democracy and innumerable problems within its domestic sphere), and also more specifically as an authoritarian, nuclear, communist, economic, and imperialist threat.

The presence of the nouns and verbs clearly indicate a very direct way of identifying Russia as a powerful and at the same time dangerous country, with a historical past marked by a strong influence upon its neighbouring territories and also by a regime which has been strongly feared by the West. On the other hand, the adjectives appear as descriptive elements adding or emphasizing the attributions of threat present in the nouns and verbs. These attributions can be clearly seen in the examples described and illustrated in detail in the analysis section 1.4.

As for the results to the threat-related terms from *The New York Times* shown in Figure 32 below, they are quite similar to those illustrated in Figure 31 above, with a quantitative difference due to a bigger number of articles in the corpus of the American press. Once again, there is a prevalence of the threat-related nouns with 24 concordance hits over the rest of the grammatical categories such as verbs and adjectives. The verbs occupy the second position with 15 concordance hits, and the adjectives appear in the third position with 11 concordance hits.

As commented earlier, the number of concordance hits to the adjectives corresponds to the number of concordance hits found in the verbs from Figure 31 above. This emphasises Russia's authoritarian character, its communist past, and its image of a military-nuclear threat. The table in Figure 32 below shows a greater number of terms and a greater presence of semantic equivalences reflected especially in the nouns and adjectives. This is due to the growing criticism by the US towards Russia's threatening character. It is important to insist upon the fact that the American press puts a stronger emphasis on Russia as a nuclear threat accompanied by a great ability to exert influence over its neighbouring territories (especially the Baltic states) due to its communist past. This fact has been present in the US mentality for decades and is still in force today.

Figure 32

Total results to the word category classification
of threat-related terms from *The New York Times*

WORD CATEGORY: NOUNS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: VERBS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: ADJECTIVES	CONCORDANCE HITS
COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNISM	24	DOMINATES, DOMINATED	15	COMMUNIST	11
DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORSHIPS, DICTATOR		TRAPPED, TRAPPING		DOMINANT	
THREATS, THREAT		OCCUPYING, OCCUPIES, OCCUPIED, OCCUPY		NUCLEAR	
WEAPONRY, WEAPONS, WEAPON		RISKS, RISK, RISKED		AUTHORITARIAN	
AUTHORITARIANISM		WEAPONIZE		OCCUPIED	
OCCUPANTS, OCCUPATION		THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING		TROUBLING, TROUBLED	
TROUBLE, TROUBLES				RISKY, RISKIER	
RISK, RISKS				THREATENED, THREATENING	
TRAP					
TYRANNY, TYRANT					
DOMINATION, DOMINANCE, DOMINION					

All the above explained is reflected in the table shown in Figure 33 below. It is a systematised data comparison of the threat-related terms classified into nouns, verbs and adjectives. Once again, the importance of Russia's image as a nuclear and ideological threat is clearly reflected in the prevalence of the threat-related nouns, especially in the case of the American press, as already discussed above.

Figure 33

Data comparison of the threat-related terms from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* following the word category classification

The Guardian					
WORD CATEGORY: NOUNS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: VERBS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: ADJECTIVES	CONCORDANCE HITS
COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNISM	18	TROUBLED	11	COMMUNIST	8
DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORS, DICTATOR		DOMINATES, DOMINATED		DICTATORIAL	
WEAPONS, WEAPON		TRAPPED, BOOBY- TRAPPED		NUCLEAR	
AUTHORITARIANISM		OCCUPY, OCCUPIED		AUTHORITARIAN	
OCCUPATION, OCCUPIERS		RISK, RISKS, RISKED, RISKING		OCCUPYING	
TROUBLE				TROUBLESOME	
RISK, RISKS				RISKY, RISKIEST	
TRAPPINGS, RATTLETRAP					
TYRANNY					
DOMINATION					

The New York Times					
WORD CATEGORY: NOUNS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: VERBS	CONCORDANCE HITS	WORD CATEGORY: ADJECTIVES	CONCORDANCE HITS
COMMUNIST, COMMUNISTS, COMMUNISM	24	DOMINATES, DOMINATED	15	COMMUNIST	11
DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORSHIPS, DICTATOR		TRAPPED, TRAPPING		DOMINANT	
THREATS, THREAT		OCCUPYING, OCCUPIES, OCCUPIED, OCCUPY		NUCLEAR	
WEAPONRY, WEAPONS, WEAPON		RISKS, RISK, RISKED		AUTHORITARIAN	
AUTHORITARIANISM		WEAPONIZE		OCCUPIED	
OCCUPANTS, OCCUPATION		THREATENS, THREATENED, THREATENING		TROUBLING, TROUBLED	
TROUBLE, TROUBLES				RISKY, RISKIER	
RISK, RISKS				THREATENED, THREATENING	
TRAP					
TYRANNY, TYRANT					
DOMINATION, DOMINANCE, DOMINION					

IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

1. The concept of *threat*

1.1. Definition

A threat can be defined as “something that may cause injury or harm”²⁴.

1.2. Denotation and connotation

Before proceeding to the actual description of the lexical study, it is important to recall the basic concepts of denotation and connotation.

The denotation of a word or phrase is its explicit or direct meaning, i.e. the associations that a word usually elicits for most speakers of a language, as distinguished from those elicited for any individual speaker because of personal experience.

The connotation of a word or phrase is the associated or secondary meaning; it can be something suggested or implied by a word or thing, rather than being explicitly named or described²⁵.

It can be said that most words “convey more than exact, literal meanings, in which case they “connote” or suggest additional meanings and values not expressed in general dictionary definitions. Words that “denote” a core meaning are those that are generally used and understood by the users and the audience to represent an object or class of objects, an act, a quality, or an idea. **However, because of usage over time, words that denote approximately the same thing may acquire additional meanings, or connotations, that are either positive or negative** (my emphasis)²⁶.

This last sentence is relevant for our purpose and is related to the notion of evaluative language. Significantly,

“many words that are not evaluative in virtue of their meaning can nevertheless be used to convey evaluation, depending on the context. One could even conjecture that any given expression may be used, in a suitable context, as an evaluative device”²⁷.

²⁴ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/threat>

²⁵ <https://www.dictionary.com/e/denotation-vs-connotation/>

²⁶ http://www.csun.edu/~bashforth/098_PDF/06Sep15Connotation_Denotation.pdf

²⁷ <https://philo.univ-rennes1.fr/actualites/evalang-2019-workshop-evaluative-language>

This applies to many of the terms described in the study. For example, the adjectives *nuclear*, *communist* have a denotative, descriptive meaning which is neutral, as can be seen in the definitions of current dictionaries. However, in certain contexts, and more specifically, in their collocation, these terms may acquire a negative or positive connotation, depending on the context (ideological, etc.)

“Collocations are partly or fully fixed expressions that become established through repeated context-dependent use”²⁸.

1.3. The role of headlines in the analysis of Russia’s image as a threat

As mentioned in the analysis process in section 2.1, the first part of the analysis of the British and American press articles focuses on the lexical-semantic and rhetorical analysis of the headlines when stressing Russia’s image of a threatening country. The second part constitutes a thorough analysis of the threat-related terms and their semantic equivalents, including some of the most relevant examples for a better understanding of Russia’s image as a threat.

The headlines and the leads play a very important role both in the British and American press, since they reflect a rather clear intention of anticipating the reader what the information is going to be about. From a formal point of view, headlines are typically placed on top of the lead²⁹. Headlines and leads appear in bold and italics with a smaller printing type before the rest of the news content. They may vary in length: sometimes it is a sentence, a phrase or even a question; others, a simple word. The headlines of the articles analysed here appear mostly as sentences and phrases. Two of the articles from the British press offer headlines appearing as questions to draw the reader’s attention and requiring a reader’s response³⁰.

- *Licensed to kill?*
- *Is Gazprom driven by politics or profit?*

Some of them are presented in single inverted commas as direct quotes taken from the articles. This gives the articles a more objective tone and a sense of content veracity as they provide factual evidence in the form of personal testimonies as well as source credibility³¹.

²⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collocation>

²⁹ The leads to the articles from *The Guardian* can be consulted in Appendix 3, p. 179, 185, 191, 214, 215, 217, 222, 224, 227, 236, 238, 242, 248, 253, 258, 262, 270, 272, 276, 279, 282, 285, 287, and 289. There are no leads to the articles from *The New York Times*.

³⁰ Appendix 3, p. 242 and 285.

³¹ Appendix 3, p. 179, 183, 202, 249, 258, 266, 272, and 274; Appendix 4, p. 401.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

- **'Ten of our journalists have been killed in 15 years. Living with a bodyguard is no fun'**
- Russian reporter **'silenced'** for Chechnya coverage
- **'It was a model of civility'**
- **'It's no way to run a country'**
- Europe's **'last dictator'** defies calls for change
- Bush hails Georgia as **'beacon of liberty'**
- **'It must face up to its history'**
- Russia says **'spies'** work in foreign NGOs

An example from *The New York Times*:

- *Pervasive Corruption in Russia Is* **'Just Called Business'**

Despite the headlines' descriptive nature, they clearly aim at showing factual information, adding a strong component of subjectivity and ideological standpoint. This is clearly seen in the articles headlines from *The Guardian* this anticipation is reflected in some examples carrying metaphors, while in *The New York Times*, such anticipation is carried out in a much more direct way in most of the times, and usually with a very strong criticism towards Russia depending on the degree of subjectivity of the texts.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

'It must face up to its history'³². This headline has a function of drawing the reader's attention by making reference to Russia's need (**must**) to accept and apologise (**face up**) for its historic domination exercised over the Baltic states since the end of World War II (hence WWII) until the early 1990s (**history**). This reference is equally reflected in the word **misdeeds** in the subtitle, which has a clear connection to Russia's historic wrongdoings regarding the mentioned countries. The phrase appears in single commas which indicates it was taken from the following sentence in the text: "[...] Russia **must face up to** and come to honest terms with **its history**, [...]."

³² Appendix 3, p. 272.

History shows this drive to the east could bring disaster³³. This headline anticipates the information concerning the image of Russia personified as **the east** on the one hand, and the devastating consequences (**disaster**) of denying its role in defeating Hitler during WWII on the other hand, as shown in the lead. The term **history** makes reference to Russia's communist past and its negative effects upon the former Soviet republics. This idea connects with the headline **Bush condemns Allies' division of Europe at Yalta**³⁴, in which the verb **condemn** clearly reflects the former US president's feelings concerning the imposition of Communism in Eastern Europe, after the 1945 Yalta agreement, and its still persistent influence these days in countries such as Belarus and Moldova.

We must not forget how war was won *Richard Overy*³⁵. The headline in this article equally makes reference to Russia's role in WWII but in a more subjective tone by the British historian Richard Overy, whose name appears in italics. The author highlights Russia and China in a very positive way as countries with a great ability fighting the enemy (a positive image of both countries). The importance of these countries is clearly emphasised through the use of the modal **must**.

It's time to bin the past³⁶. In this headline, the term **bin** is an abbreviation of the word **Dustbin** related to the Three Dustbins Theory mentioned and described in a rather subjective tone in the article by a leading expert on international affairs, Fred Halliday. The most relevant of them is the one mentioning the Soviet communism legacy with a specific reference to Putin and his neo-authoritarian dictatorship.

Putin's way³⁷. This headline anticipates in a direct way what the reader will be facing when reading the article: the Russian president's own way of leading the country towards democracy. The headline marks Putin's clear authoritarian character.

Russia threatens to cut off Ukraine's gas supply³⁸. **Fear of gas shortage after Ukraine rejects huge price rise**³⁹. These headlines show another example of a direct anticipation of the information related to the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Russia shows its menacing image marked by the terms **threatens**, **fears**, **cut off** and

³³ Appendix 3, p. 256.

³⁴ Appendix 3, p. 264.

³⁵ Appendix 3, p. 262.

³⁶ Appendix 3, p. 185.

³⁷ Appendix 3, p. 248.

³⁸ Appendix 3, p. 281.

³⁹ Appendix 3, p. 289.

shortage with a strong warning of depriving Ukraine from the gas supply if the latter does not abide by the Kremlin's conditions.

Licensed to kill?⁴⁰. This headline is also related to the Chechen conflict and makes a specific reference to Russia's authoritarian permissiveness in its intervention in the Caucasian territory, with accusations of murdering Chechen civilians on the part of Russian soldiers. The headline makes an immediate allusion to a very famous 1989 spy film **License to Kill**.

Some of the headlines carry metaphors or metaphoric expressions. Before mentioning some of these examples, it is important to make a brief definition of this rhetorical figure, as well as its function and its role in the headlines of the articles in both the British and the American press.

A metaphor is defined as "a common figure of speech that makes a comparison by directly relating one thing to another unrelated thing"⁴¹. The writers relate two or more different things with the intention of making the audience understand such relation as a comparison.

One of the most important functions of a metaphor is the emphasis of what the author intends to express to the audience. Examples of headlines with metaphors are shown below.

Baltic states agonise over Putin's invitation⁴². In this headline the verb **agonise** manifests the countries' attitude of strong resentment towards Russia for not accepting its historical past and for not apologising to the Baltic states and Poland. It is an example of a metaphorical extension.

Russian reporter 'silenced' for Chechnya coverage⁴³. When facing this headline for the first time and without any prior knowledge about the Chechen conflict, one can assume that the term '**silenced**' is clearly referring to killing or murdering. In fact, many journalists in Russia had been assassinated under strange circumstances for broadcasting and publishing the news related to Russia's attitude and behaviour towards this and other conflicts, often with a strong criticism. In the case of this headline, the term

⁴⁰ Appendix 3, p. 242.

⁴¹ <https://literaryterms.net/metaphor/> Retrieved in September 2021.

⁴² Appendix 3, p. 210.

⁴³ Appendix 3, p. 183.

comes in single commas and refers to the forbiddance to continue with the coverage of the Chechen conflict and the Beslan school massacre.

The term **silence** can also be seen in the headline **Europe is risking silence to end its longest war**⁴⁴ and makes reference to Jonathan Steele's criticism towards the passiveness the British journalist observes in Western governments concerning the Chechen conflict and Russia's acts. In this sense, the term implies significant consequences, which are the aggravations of the conflict without a Western efficient intervention.

The thorns in Georgia's rose⁴⁵. This headline is an example of a metaphor expressing Russia's strong influence upon Georgia to prevent it from developing into a fully democratic country (another instance of Russia as a dominant country).

Chechnya loses its Yasser Arafat⁴⁶. This headline is another example of a metaphor in which the late Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov is compared to the equally late Palestinian leader due to some common features between both such *the combination of military credibility and diplomatic experience to carry his people to the peace table*, according to the article.

In the examples from *The New York Times*, the headlines are presented in a much more direct way, with a very strong explicit or implicit criticism towards Russia:

60 Years Later, Debating Yalta All Over Again⁴⁷.

Bush Tells Putin Not to Interfere With Democracy in Former Soviet Republics⁴⁸.

Bush, Celebrating Allies' Victory, Chafes Old Wounds⁴⁹.

Russia and Europeans Sign Pact, but Tensions Persist⁵⁰.

After Centuries of Enmity, Relations Between Poland and Russia Are as Bad as Ever⁵¹.

⁴⁴ Appendix 3, p. 236.

⁴⁵ Appendix 3, p. 268.

⁴⁶ Appendix 3, p. 214.

⁴⁷ Appendix 4, p. 378.

⁴⁸ Appendix 4, p. 364.

⁴⁹ Appendix 4, p. 362.

⁵⁰ Appendix 4, p. 373.

⁵¹ Appendix 4, p. 390.

The headlines above make reference to the troublesome relationship between Russia and the Baltic states and anticipate the information regarding the historical 1945 Yalta agreement leading to the Soviet hegemony over its neighbouring territories in Eastern Europe until the fall of Communism in 1991. The descriptive nature of these and other headlines give the readers a chance to guess, in an intuitive way, what the information can be possibly about. The terms such as **interfere, wounds, tensions, enmity** and **bad** clearly depict Russia as a country not willing to come to terms with its historical past with respect to the Baltic states.

The term **Tension** is equally present in the headline ***Bush and Putin Exhibit Tension Over Democracy***⁵², with a specific reference to the US concern about the way Russia is being directed towards democracy. In addition to Russia's historical past, lack of democracy, strong power concentration and a series of domestic issues are constantly made reference to throughout the articles of *The New York Times*.

Russia Will Pursue Democracy, but in Its Own Way, Putin Says⁵³. This headline is an example of a direct anticipation of Putin's strong determination in leading Russia towards the path of democracy in his own terms. The phrase ***in Its Own Way*** clearly marks the president's authoritarian character. Bush's concerns regarding Putin's regime is equally made reference to in the headline ***BUSH IN EUROPE: DIPLOMACY; Bush May Feel Chilly Blast From Russians, Envoy Says***⁵⁴, in which the phrase ***Chilly Blast*** reflects Putin's willingness to contribute to Russia's democratic development, but without receiving any external directions on how to carry this out.

The Man Who Took the Measure of the Communist Threat⁵⁵. This headline refers to the figure of a significant US diplomat during the Cold War era, George F. Kennan, whose criticism towards the former Soviet communist regime is made manifest in the phrase ***Communist Threat***.

Soviet Leftovers, Where Statecraft Is Stagecraft⁵⁶. This headline uses a pun (***statecraft*** vs ***stagecraft***) to refer to the concept of "managed democracy" often cited in the articles from the American press. This concept is used to describe post-Communist influence still present in some of the former Soviet republics such as Belarus and Azerbaijan.

⁵² Appendix 4, p. 292.

⁵³ Appendix 4, p. 327.

⁵⁴ Appendix 4, p. 288.

⁵⁵ Appendix 4, p. 312.

⁵⁶ Appendix 4, p. 401.

Bush Seeks to Begin a Thaw in a Europe Still Cool to Him⁵⁷. In this headline, the term **thaw** makes reference to Bush's intentions to soften the diplomatic relations with Europe, with a very special focus on Russia and the tensions over nuclear security and the implantation of the democratic model in the country.

To Russia, With Tough Love⁵⁸. This phrase **Tough Love** is related to possible expulsion of Russia from the Group of 8 if Putin doesn't reduce his concentration of power and consolidate democracy in the country.

A Modern K.G.B. Colonel⁵⁹. This headline is presented in a metaphorical way making reference to the authoritarian figure of Putin and his former position of a KGB agent in the 1980s.

Russian Exile From Yukos Assails Putin as a Despot⁶⁰. This headline already shows once again Putin's strong authoritarian character in the metaphoric allusion to the president as a **Despot** in connection to the persecution and ultimate incarceration of the Russian oligarch Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, the president of the oil company Yukos.

1945's Legacy: A Terror Defeated, Another Arrives⁶¹. This headline mentions in an implicit way Nazism and Communism made reference to as **terrors**. The reason for such comparison is due to the devastating effects of both regimes worldwide, the latter one showing more lasting effects.

Still the Tyrant, Stalin Refuses to Be Wished Away⁶². This headline is an example of a metaphor made reference to Stalin and the terrible consequences Stalinist Communism had brought to Russia and the neighbouring territories. There is a metaphoric parallelism between both headlines: **Putin** as a **Despot** vs **Stalin** as a **Tyrant**. From a semantic point of view, there is a connection between the phrase **Refuses to Be Wished Away** and the headline **Mourning Mother Russia**⁶³, in which the idea of **Mother Russia** is taken from a phrase which is present in many articles from the American press: *the fall (also collapse) of the Soviet Union* and the communist regime regarded as *"the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century"* with considerable repercussions for the neighbouring territories.

⁵⁷ Appendix 4, p. 283.

⁵⁸ Appendix 4, p. 290.

⁵⁹ Appendix 4, p. 388.

⁶⁰ Appendix 4, p. 315.

⁶¹ Appendix 4, p. 365.

⁶² Appendix 4, p. 340.

⁶³ Appendix 4, p. 332.

Gazprom Becomes the Bear of Russia⁶⁴. This headline is another example of a metaphorical expression typically referred to the largest gas monopoly company. The word **bear** has always been one of the most typical metaphors associated to Russia's might from a geographical and geopolitical points of view.

The illustrated examples of headlines above stress the importance of the news content presentation from a stylistic and rhetorical points of view, as well as for the analysis of ideological manifestations in a text. The writer's main goal is to create a persuasive effect upon the readers by making the story as believable as possible. The first is the level of a straight way of expression (what is actually being said), the direct way of saying something; the second is the rhetoric level (the way something is being said); the third level corresponds to the ideas and representations about what is being said. It is strongly related to the first level, to what is being said (Арнольд, 2010).

Most of the articles include the lead but very few of them contain images supporting the content described in the texts⁶⁵. The texts of the American press include no images to the articles. Images play an important role in framing construction. "Visual framing refers to the process of using images to portray certain parts of reality" (Rodríguez & Dimitrova, 2011: 48:65). Some studies (Powell, Boomgaarden, Swert,& Vreese: 2015) claim that visual framing is highly relevant in news coverage. Images interact with text to create meaning. Typically, images are considered to have a stronger emotional appeal and can play an effective role as tools for foregrounding and giving salience to news items, putting emphasis on a specific aspect, and obscuring issues and facts to frame information. Despite the importance of visuals for framing information, owing to space limitations its aspects will not be studied in this thesis.

1.4. Analysis of the words related to Russia's image as a *threat*

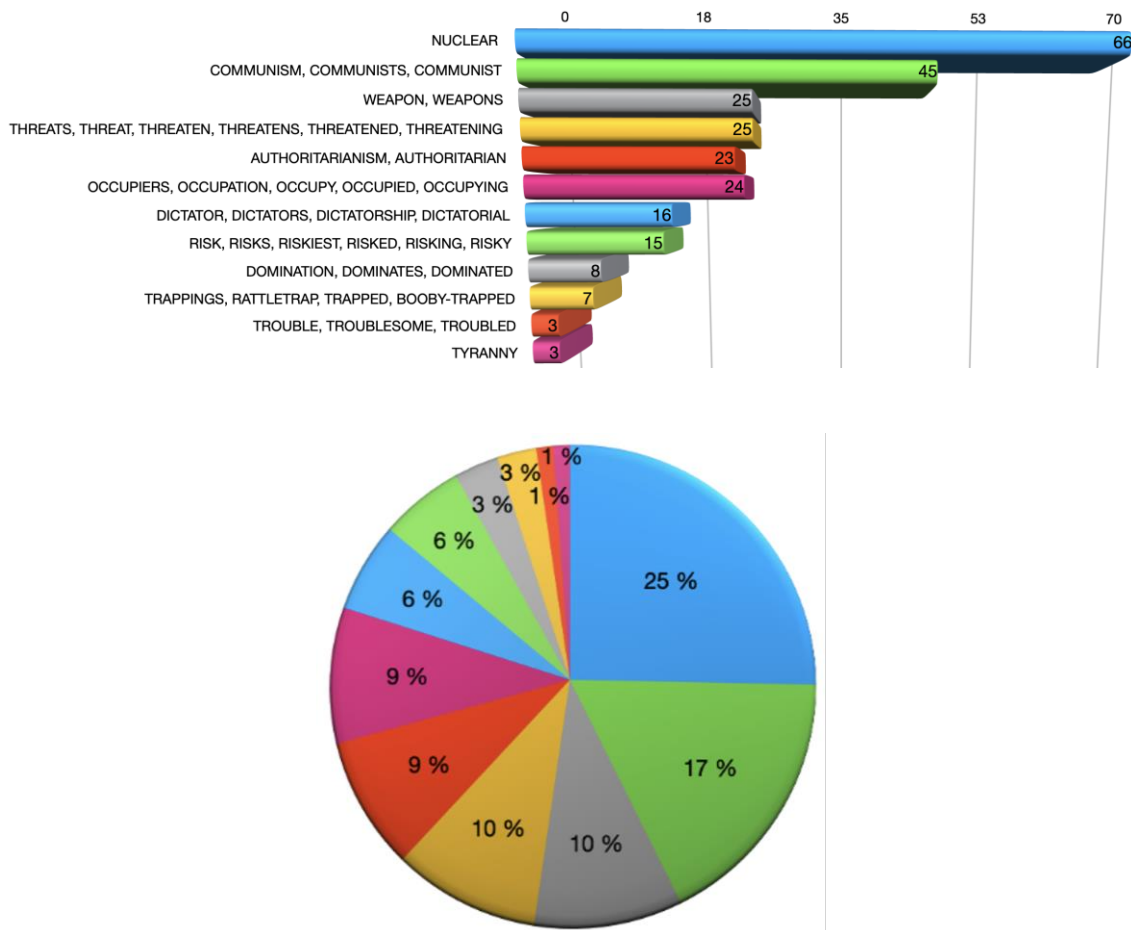
In the methodology section 6, I had presented and commented the results concerning Russia's image as a threat in the military, ideological, economic and domestic spheres, highlighting the prominence of Russia's image as a nuclear and ideological threat. In this section of the analysis, a thorough description will be developed regarding the use frequency of the threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents in the articles from the British and American press.

⁶⁴ Appendix 4, p. 435.

⁶⁵ Appendix 3, p. 212, 214, 224, 229, 236, and 266.

Figure 34

Frequency of the use of threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents in the articles from *The Guardian*⁶⁶



The largest data percentage falls on the adjective *nuclear*, occupying the first position with 25% of the results. This data reflects the importance of Russia as a nuclear threat to the West, an issue which was highly-debated and broadcasted in the Western media in 2005, as will be demonstrated later on in the analysis.

In the course of several decades, after the fall of the communist regime, Russia has been repeatedly criticized for its communist past, which is reflected in the influence it has exerted in some of its neighbouring territories such as Belarus, Azerbaijan or Georgia, among others. This fact is reflected in the 17% of the results attributed to the term *communism* and its semantic equivalents *communists*, and *communist*.

⁶⁶ Appendix 1.

The next set of terms such as *weapon*, *weapons*; *threats*, *threat*, *threaten*, *threatens*, *threatened*, and *threatening* share an equal 10% of the results. These terms refer to Russia as a generalised threat to the Western world on the one hand, and more specifically to Russia's threatening image within the nuclear and military context on the other hand.

The terms that follow show little difference in results with respect to the terms mentioned above: *authoritarianism*, and *authoritarian*, as well as the terms *occupiers*, *occupation*, *occupy*, *occupied*, and *occupying*, appear sharing 9% of the results respectively. These terms refer to Russia's authoritarian character in the figure of the president Vladimir Putin, in relation to the historical occupation of the Baltic states.

The terms *dictator*, *dictators*, *dictatorship*, and *dictatorial* appear with 6% of the results and allude to the image of Russia as a threat emphasising its authoritarian character. The terms *risk*, *risks*, *riskiest*, *risked*, *risking*, and *risky* appear with the same percentage of results (6%). They are more general and make reference to Russia as a dangerous country in the nuclear and domestic spheres.

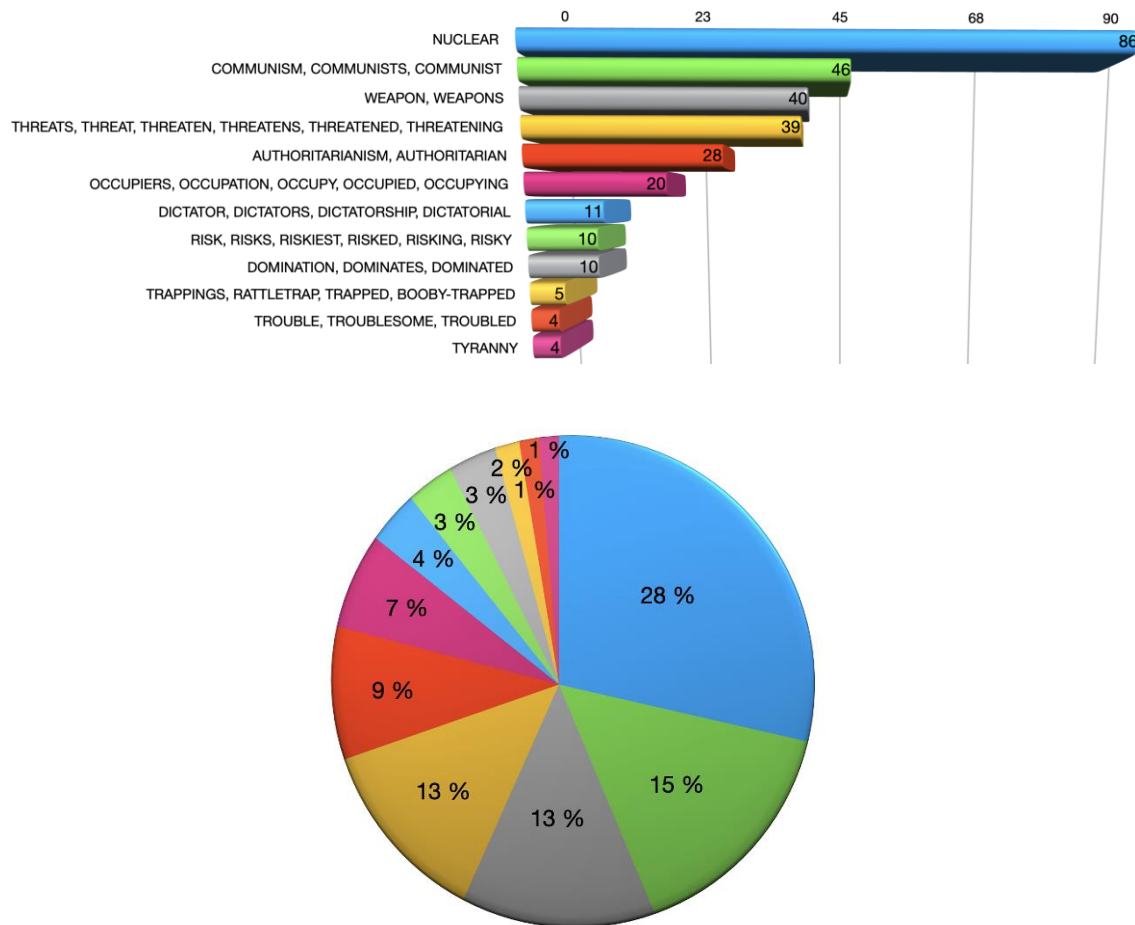
The terms *domination*, *dominates*, and *dominated*, despite having a close relationship with Russia's authoritarian character, appear with just 3% of the results. The same applies to the terms *trappings*, *rattletrap*, *trapped*, and *booby-trapped* (3% of the results), and are specifically related to the articles dealing with the capturing and assassination of the Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov.

Finally, the least frequent terms are *trouble*, *troublesome*, *troubled* and *tyranny*, with 1% of the results in each case. These terms reflect Russia's threatening image in a significantly lower degree with respect to the first half of the terms from the pie chart above.

Similarly to the results described in Figure 34 above, Figure 35 below shows the results applied to the threat-related terms and their semantic equivalents in the articles from *The New York Times*.

Figure 35

Frequency of the use of threat-related terms with their semantic equivalents in the articles from *The New York Times*⁶⁷



Similarly to the results observed in *The Guardian* in Figure 34 above, the first position is once again occupied by the adjective *nuclear* (28%). As commented earlier, these results manifest one of the most debated topics in the Western world, especially in the US: Russia's threatening image as a nuclear power.

The terms *communism*, *communists*, and *communist* appear with 15% of the results, which explains another significant concern on the part of the US: Russia's communist past.

⁶⁷ Appendix 2.

The terms *weapon*, and *weapons*, as well as *threats*, *threat*, *threaten*, *threatens*, *threatened*, and *threatening* share 13% of the results. As can be seen, there is barely any difference in the results among these terms. Nevertheless, the number of concordance hits is much higher compared to those from *The Guardian*, due to the US emphasis on Russia's image as a nuclear threat.

The terms *authoritarianism*, and *authoritarian* appear with 9% of the results, and the terms *occupiers*, *occupation*, *occupy*, *occupied*, and *occupying* with 7% of the results. Similarly to the results in Figure 34 from *The Guardian*, these terms equally make reference to Russia's authoritarian character in the figure of Putin, in relation to Russia's historical occupation of the Baltic states.

The threat-related terms that follow appear less frequently in the articles from *The New York Times* and allude to Russia's threatening image in specific contexts such as the nuclear and domestic spheres, always stressing Russia's authoritarian character. Such is the case of the terms like *dictator*, *dictators*, *dictatorship*, and *dictatorial*, with 4% of the results. The terms *risk*, *risks*, *riskiest*, *risked*, *risking*, and *risky*, as well as *domination*, *dominates*, and *dominated*, appear with 3% of the results in each case.

The terms *trappings*, *rattletrap*, *trapped*, and *booby-trapped* show 2% of the results and, as in the case of the articles from *The Guardian*, are specifically related to the capturing and assassination of the Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov.

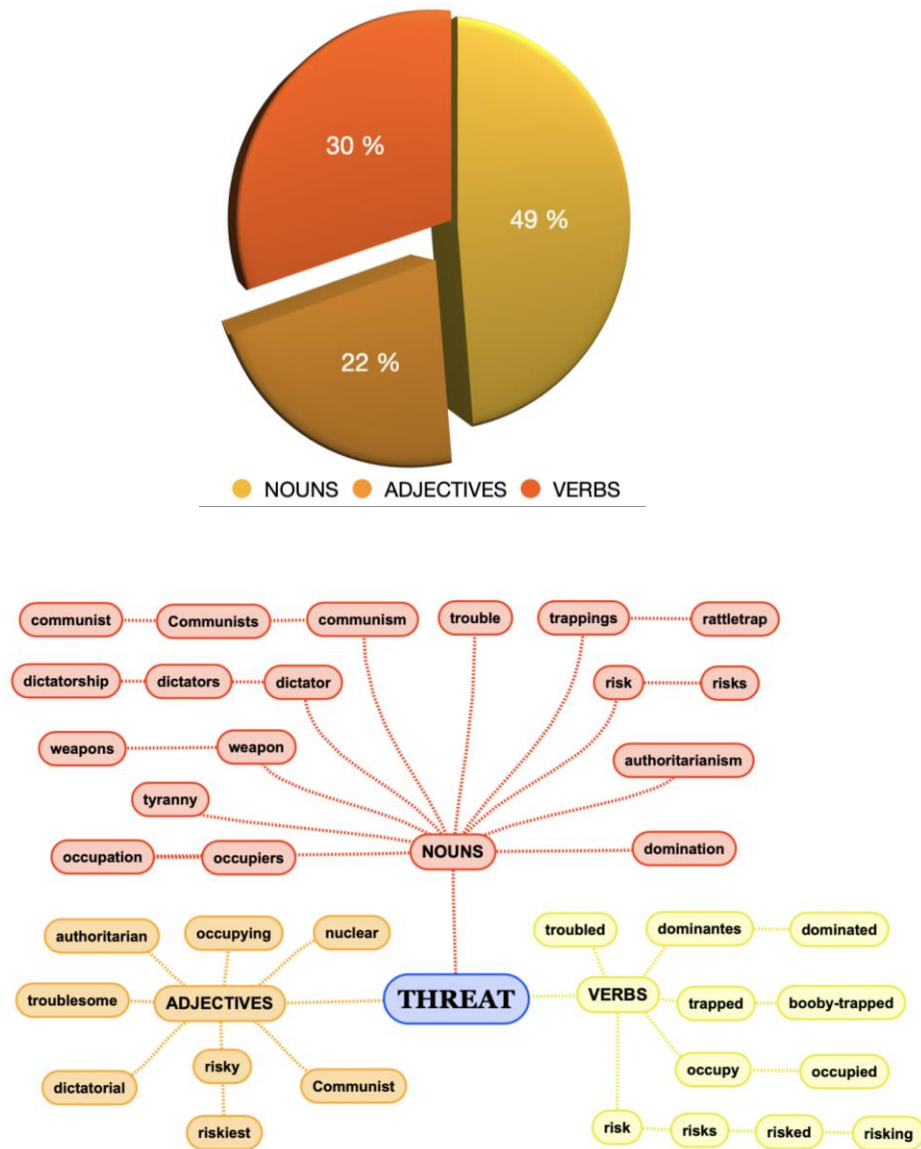
Finally, similarly to the results offered in Figure 34, the least frequent terms are *trouble*, *troublesome*, *troubled*, and *tyranny*, with a shared number of 1% of the results.

The threat-related terms in the articles from *The Guardian* (Figure 36) and *The New York Times* (Figure 37) not only appear as word categories, but are also grouped in semantic networks, equally classified as nouns, adjectives and verbs. When discussing the methodology (section 6), a reference had already been made to the total results to the word category classification of the threat-related terms from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*. In the current section, a more detailed analysis is developed, with the results of use frequency reflected in percentages.

The nouns in the articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* occupy the first position, thus prevailing over the other grammatical categories such as adjectives and verbs. In Figure 36 below, the nouns in the articles from the British press constitute 49%, whereas the adjectives occupy the second position with 30%, and the verbs come in third place with 22%.

Figure 36

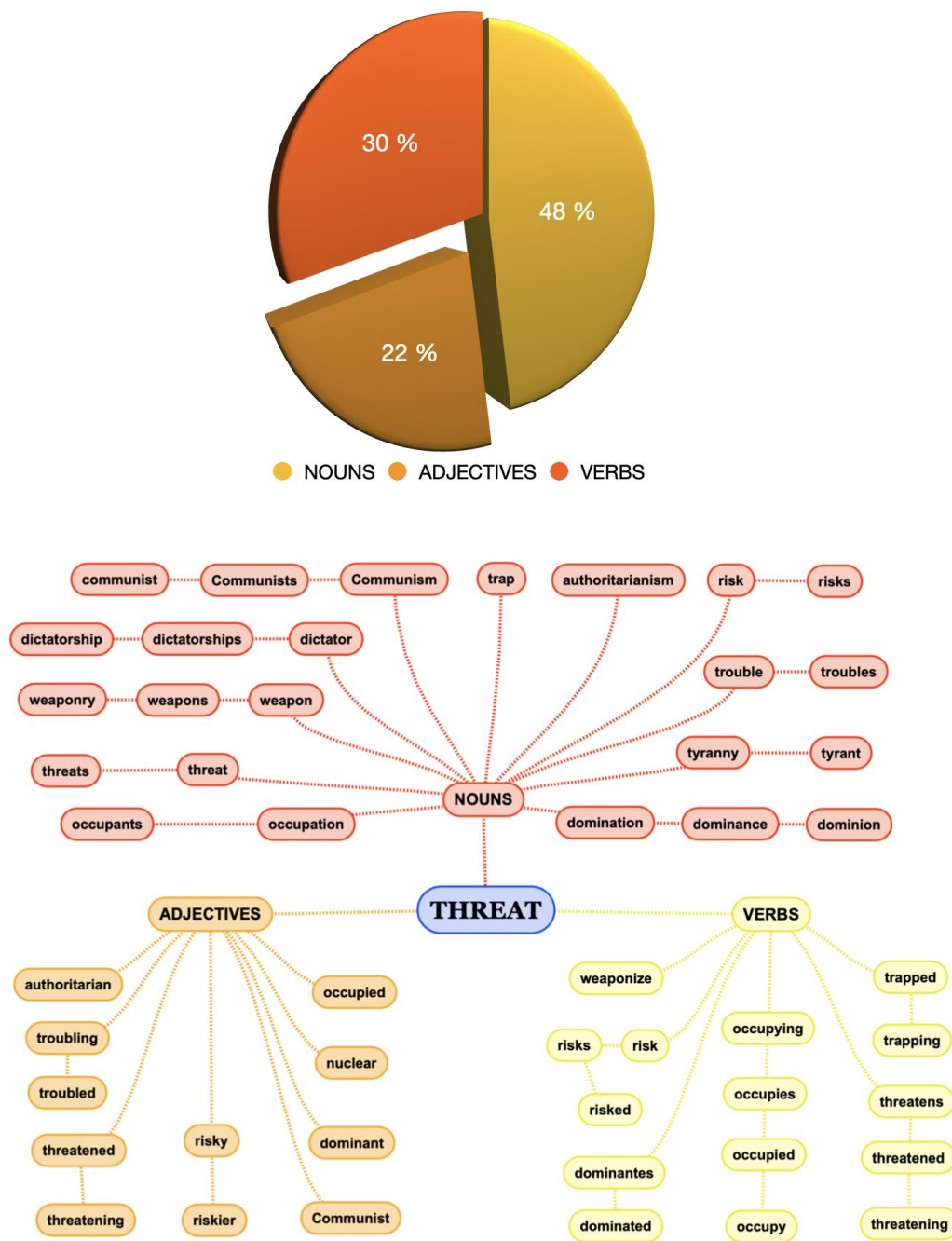
Frequency of appearance of the threat-related terms
classified into word categories in *The Guardian*



In Figure 37 below, the results in the articles from the American press are similar to those in *The Guardian*. The nouns constitute 48%. The second position, however, goes to the verbs (30%), and the third one is occupied by the adjectives (22%).

Figure 37

Frequency of appearance of the threat-related terms
classified into word categories in *The New York Times*



The discussion below provides their data interpretation reflected in the most highlighting examples of Russia as a military, ideological, economic and domestic threat. The most relevant threat-related terms from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* in terms of frequency are reflected in the overall results to the number of grammatical categories illustrated in Figures 35–59. These figures reflect the overall results to each of the threat-related terms separately and in collocation with other words, mostly adjectives.

The quantification results of the threat-related terms are shown in terms of concordance hits organised from the highest to the lowest number⁶⁸. The searched words appear in blue, while the words immediately next to them are marked in red, and the rest of them appear in green and purple.

Most of these terms in the articles from the British and American digital press depict an image of Russia as a fearful and authoritarian country. For the sake of clarity and precision, the current thesis will be focusing exclusively on the contrastive analysis of those threat-related terms portraying Russia as a threatening country to the eyes of Great Britain and the United States. It is important to stress that the differences in numbers are highly conditioned by the overall amount of the articles, which is bigger in the US press (as commented in section 3 of the present thesis⁶⁹). We are going to start by analysing the concordance hits to the threat-related terms focusing on Russia as a military and nuclear threat. Some examples from both presses are included below, underneath the data quantification.

1.4.1. Russia as a military and nuclear threat

Throughout its history and for many decades, Russia has been viewed as a dangerous country in the field of international security concerning terrorism and nuclear issues. The articles from the British press reflect the image of Russia as a nuclear and a military threat to the Western world. The relevance of the terms is shown in the results obtained from the concordance hits. The higher the number of hits, the more relevant the term. As illustrated in the data and in the examples of most frequently used terms, Russia's image as a nuclear and ideological threat is the most relevant one in quantitative terms both in the British and American press.

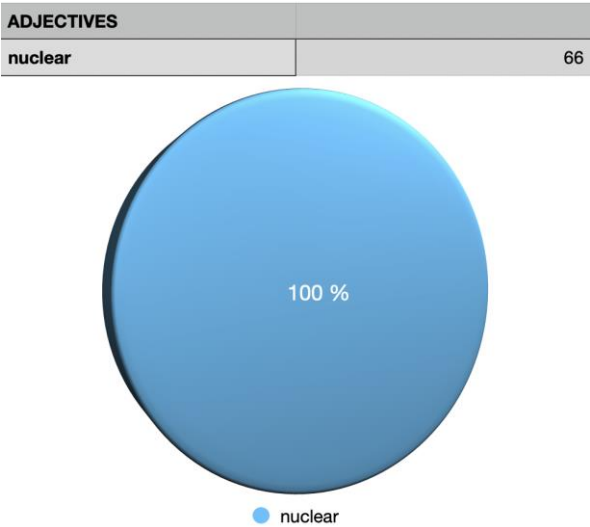
⁶⁸ Appendix 1 (*The Guardian*) and Appendix 2 (*The New York Times*).

⁶⁹ p. 51.

There are 66 concordance hits to the adjective *nuclear* in the articles from *The Guardian*, as shown in Figure 35 below.

Figure 38

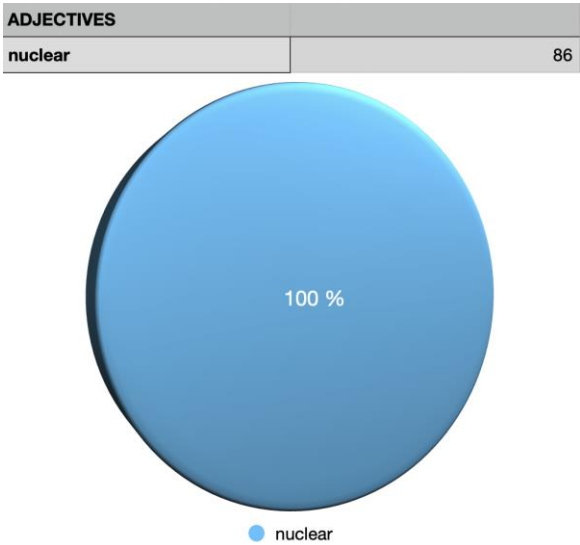
Frequency of appearance of the term *nuclear* in the articles from *The Guardian*



In the articles from *The New York Times*, there are 86 concordance hits to the same adjective (Figure 39).

Figure 39

Frequency of appearance of the term *nuclear* in the articles from *The New York Times*



This is due to the US extreme concern associated with the image of Russia as a potential threat to the worldwide security in terms of its nuclear capacity. As illustrated in section 1.2⁷⁰, *nuclear* is not at first an evaluative adjective, but a descriptive one. In its denotative meaning, it is defined as⁷¹:

- 2 a** : of or relating to the atomic nucleus
// nuclear reaction
// nuclear physics
- b** : used in or produced by a nuclear reaction (such as fission)
// nuclear fuel
// nuclear waste
// nuclear energy
- c (1)** : being a weapon whose destructive power derives from an uncontrolled nuclear reaction
(2) : of, produced by, or involving nuclear weapons
// the nuclear age
// nuclear war
(3) : armed with nuclear weapons
// nuclear powers
- d** : of, relating to, or powered by nuclear energy
// a nuclear submarine
// the nuclear debate
// a nuclear plant

However, in its frequent collocation with certain nouns it has ideological and negative connotations, and as such it can play an evaluative role. The most frequent ones are *weapon* and its plural form *weapons*, *fuel*, and in lesser degree (but not less important): *power*, *programme*, *strikes*, *proliferation*, *plant*, and *bomb*⁷². Russia as a nuclear threat is also reflected in the presence of the most frequently used adjective *Soviet*⁷³.

The total number of concordance hits shows that these nouns appear 25 times in the articles from the British press⁷⁴, with a significant prevalence of the plural form (84%) over the singular form (16%), as shown in Figure 40 below. The most frequent noun appearing next to *weapons* is *programme*. The most frequent adjectives and a noun complement are *nuclear*, *Russia's*, and *Soviet*⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ p. 84.

⁷¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nuclear>

⁷² Appendix 1.

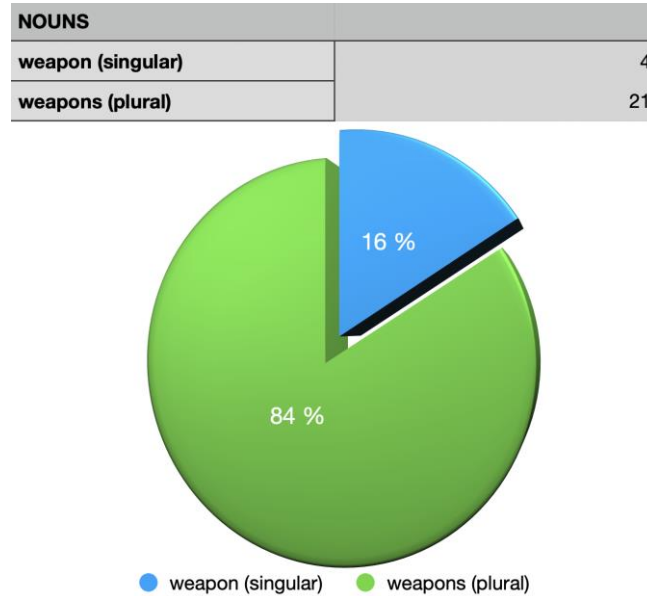
⁷³ Appendix 1.

⁷⁴ Appendix 1.

⁷⁵ Appendix 1.

Figure 40

**Frequency of appearance of the term *weapon* and *weapons*
in the articles from *The Guardian***



In the articles from *The New York Times*, the most frequent nouns next to the adjective *nuclear* are *weapons*, *program*, *material*, and in lesser degree *security*, *power*, *fuel*, *warheads*, *materials*, and *agency*⁷⁶. Russia as a nuclear threat is equally reflected in the most frequent adjectives and a noun complement following *nuclear*, which are *Russia's*, *Russian*, *Soviet*, *Soviet Union's*, and *peaceful*⁷⁷. All of these adjectives make reference to Russia as a nuclear threat in the Cold War era.

As opposed to *The Guardian*, in the American press, in addition to the noun *weapon* and its plural form *weapons*, there are also other related nouns such as *weaponry*, and the verb *weaponize*. The total number of concordance hits to these terms is 40⁷⁸. Following the results in the graphic (Figure 41 below), the prevalence of the plural form (88%) over the singular one (8%) is even higher than the one in *The Guardian* to stress the threatening character. The terms *weaponry* and *weaponize* have an equal percentage (3% each).

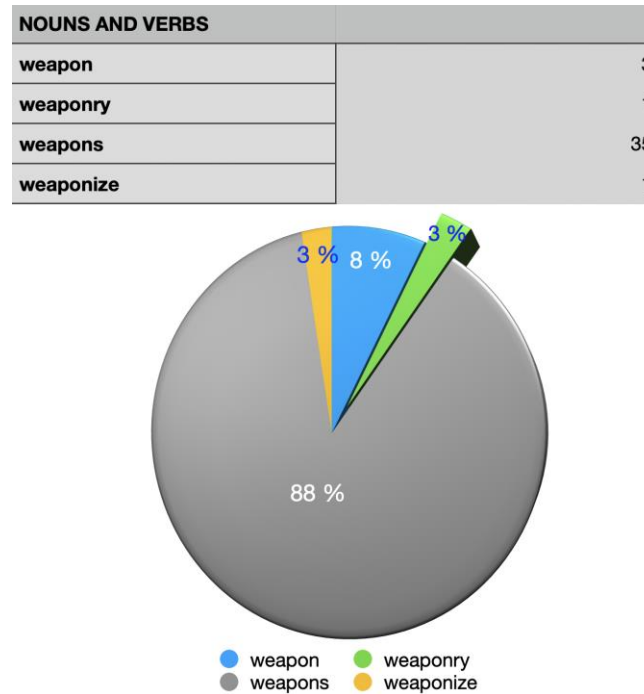
⁷⁶ Appendix 2.

⁷⁷ Appendix 2.

⁷⁸ Appendix 2.

Figure 41

Frequency of appearance of the terms *weapon*, *weaponry*, *weapons* and *weaponize* in the articles from *The New York Times*



The most frequent noun appearing next to *weapons* is the noun *program*. *Weapons* equally appears twice coordinated by the nexus *and* next to the noun *ammunition*⁷⁹.

The examples from both presses are an important part of the analysis. They have been included for a better comprehension and contextualization of the terms described above. They also manifest the number of times the terms are being repeated and their relation with other terms equally making reference to the concept of threat.

The frequent use of the nominal phrase *nuclear weapon/s* is related to Russia's absolute determination to continue negotiating with Iran, regarding the use of the nuclear weapons programme, as can be seen in the examples below. Putin insists that the nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes and rules out any links to terrorism and the sale of nuclear weapons to terrorists.

⁷⁹ Appendix 2.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

*[...] President Putin declared: "The latest steps by Iran convince Russia that Iran indeed does not intend to produce **nuclear weapons** and we will continue to develop relations in all sectors, including peaceful atomic energy."*

*Mr Putin [...] declared that Tehran was not pursuing **nuclear weapons**, flatly contradicting repeated allegations by the US.*

*"**Nuclear weapon** proliferation is dangerous in general [...]. From a military standpoint it is illogical, and from a humanitarian standpoint it is unacceptable," Mr Putin said.*

However, the US and one of its allies, Israel, believe quite the opposite, claiming that Russia's attitude poses a dangerous threat to world peace and security. Russia's threatening character is manifested in the possible fatal consequences of the nuclear fuel deal between both countries for the worldwide security. From the Western perspective, Russia's implication in such a project constitutes a threatening element in itself. In this sense, following the examples above, Putin's position is favourable towards the development of the nuclear programme, which is regarded by the West as a justification to continue with a project seen as a threat to the worldwide security.

*Russia and Iran signed a long-awaited agreement [...] for the delivery [...] of **nuclear fuel** to a regime which Washington claims is **seeking an atomic bomb and sponsors terrorism**.*

*The United States insists that Iran's atomic energy programme is a front **for developing nuclear weapons** and has openly clashed with President Vladimir Putin, who says he is satisfied that the programme is peaceful.*

*[...] Israeli officials have expressed concern to Mr Putin that Tehran would use the technology to further its **nuclear weapons** programme.*

*Mr Putin said the **nuclear components** did not threaten Israel's security.*

The articles from *The New York Times* put a bigger stress on Russia as a nuclear threat. This is one of the main worries for the US government which has led to continuous conflicts with Russia throughout the year 2005 up to the present. The main focus is on the use of different nuclear materials and weapons for terrorist purposes as one of the most concerning aspects related to worldwide security. Russia is on the watch due to its connections with the Middle East, especially the countries such as Iran, Syria and Palestine.

The references made to the Cold War emphasise an era in which both the US and the former USSR outstood for their potential nuclear development. After the fall of the communist regime, there had been a progressive dismantling of the nuclear weapons and radioactive material and, as mentioned previously, it was (and still is) believed in the Western world that the danger lied in their possible use for terrorist and other menacing purposes. Once again, Russia appears firm and secure about its decisions to proceed with the nuclear programme insisting it's completely safe and for civilian aims. All this can be seen in the examples from *The New York Times* below:

*[...] although much of the former **Soviet Union's nuclear and radioactive material** has been consolidated into upgraded storage sites since the union dissolved in 1991, **worrisome security gaps remain**.*

*Since the end of the cold war, the United States Energy Department has worked with Russian officials to recover **nuclear material** from old warheads **and to make Russian reactors safer**.*

*In a new effort to pressure Iran to allow strict controls on its **nuclear program**, Britain and the United States are trying to persuade Russia [...] to endorse their conclusion, derived from [...] new evidence, that Tehran intends to **build nuclear weapons** [...].*

*Russia [...] argued that a confrontational approach will simply drive its government to walk away from international obligations on its **nuclear program** and oust the inspectors who are examining its facilities.*

*[...] Russian help with building a nuclear power plant could help Iran develop **nuclear weapons**. Iran insists that its **nuclear program** is strictly for civilian use.*

*[...] Russian officials said [...] the material could not be used secretly for **nuclear weapons**, because it would be enriched only to "reactor grade."*

*Mr. Putin [...] defended Russia's nuclear cooperation with Iran while saying that Russia opposes an Iranian **nuclear weapon**.*

*[...] the two sides announced an agreement that could reduce **the potential threat of nuclear terrorism** by speeding up the much-delayed securing and dismantling of some of Russia's nuclear materials.*

*What is needed now is final resolution of a dispute over liability that threatens to hold up those vital **nuclear security programs**, along with joint moves to take thousands of **nuclear warheads off hair-trigger alert** [...].*

[...] President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia [...] tried to allay fears that Israel's security was threatened by **Russia's nuclear assistance** to Iran and missile sales to Syria.

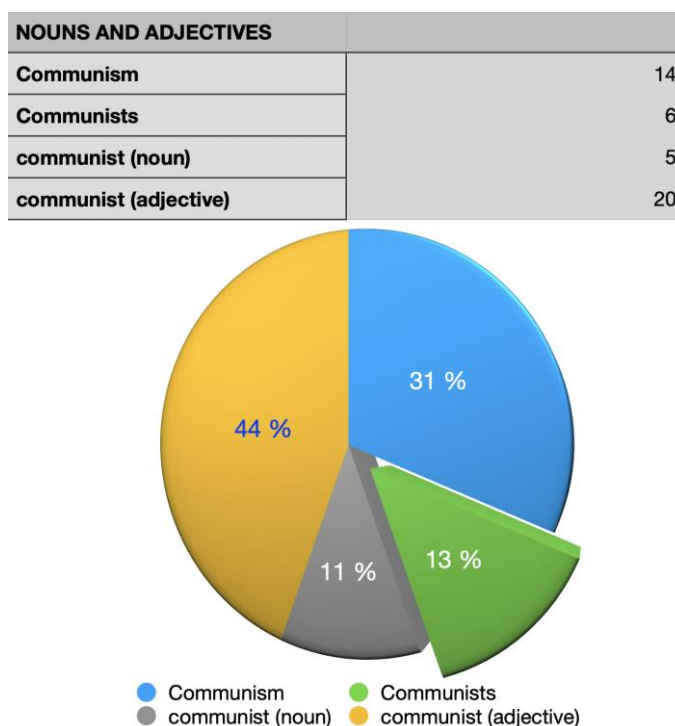
1.4.2. Russia as an ideological threat: the communist past

Russia's communist past has been one of the crucial topics which is still being debated throughout the Western world.

Following the results from *The Guardian* (Figure 42), we find the noun *Communism* (31%), its plural form *Communists* (13%), and the term *Communist* as an adjective (44%) and as a noun (11%).

Figure 42

Frequency of appearance of the terms *Communism*, *Communists*, *communist* (noun) and *communist* (adjective) in the articles from *The Guardian*



The percentages from the graphic show that the adjective *Communist* prevails over the rest of the related terms. This obviously makes a direct reference to Russia and its past regime.

The overall number of concordance hits to all these terms is 45⁸⁰. The most frequent noun that comes next to the adjective *Communist* is *party*. The terms *communism* and *communist* are the most frequently used ones in the texts, in combination with other nouns, adjectives and also in collocations⁸¹.

The terms *communism* / *communist* had, in theory, a denotative meaning (as explained in section 1.2. about connotation and denotation).

Communism is defined as a totalitarian system of government in which a single authoritarian party controls state-owned means of production⁸².

Communist is a term making reference to an adherent or advocate of communism⁸³

The idea of Russia as an ideological communist threat has led to an array of strong criticisms on the part of several historians and experts in International Relations in the Western world, as well as to the creation of a very stereotypical image of Russia as a giant evil (typically and often associated to the evil bear) in need of a constant vigilance and control. This is due to the devastating effects left by the former communist governments reflected mainly in strong repression and poverty. Putin's government, conceived as authoritarian (or neo-authoritarian) reinforces Russia's image as an ideological threat, since such character is reminded and understood in terms of the old regime. The sole idea of a possible going back to communism (with China as an example) is terrifying to the eyes of the West, especially the US.

In addition to the negative resonance of the terms *communism/communist*, the harmful nature of Russia is reinforced by an association with terms heavily loaded with negative connotations and significance (crime, Nazism, dictatorship, etc.) as will be commented below.

⁸⁰ Appendix 1.

⁸¹ Appendix 1.

⁸² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communism>

⁸³ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communist>

Examples from *The Guardian*:

*[...] all democratic nations must urge Russia to condemn **the crimes committed during the Soviet era in the name of communism.***

*Most significant [...] is the political character of the two most important states to have undergone the **communist experiment**: the neo-authoritarian dictatorship of Vladimir Putin in Russia, and **the politically immobile dictatorship of the communist leaders in China.***

When referring to framing, we discussed about the importance of objectivity and transparency (section 2.2.2). The current examples of criticism towards Russia's communist past make it clear that objectivity is a category that is, in theory, non-applicable to political texts. These texts cannot be fully objective, since our world perception and understanding is subjective, as well as the way we perceive a specific situation.

The point of view from which the author of a political text sees and experiences reality is a fact that basically constitutes one of the many aspects regarding his or her ideological approach. In our case, criticism is the predominant aspect. When criticising and setting their point of view about a specific content, the journalists offer the readers an information to be analysed. The content description is based on the selection of words arousing the author's sympathy or antipathy towards the discussed topic. As an illustration, a series of examples is provided below regarding the criticism toward the communist regime manifested in a rather subjective tone.

The first criticism comes from Fred Halliday, the Irish leading expert on international affairs. He mentions the Three Dustbin theories related to the nature of communism and its aftermath in the scene of international affairs. Specifically in the third dustbin theory he alludes in a metaphorical way to the hidden and pervasive aspects of communism preached by politicians and everyone who fervently believed in the former regime.

*The Third Dustbin is that of [...] **a children's crusade of intellectual demagogues [...] with [...] dreamers and political manipulators**, of the old and new lefts, whose claim to moral and analytic superiority too often masks a set of **unexamined [...] platitudes** from the Cold War period and, indeed, from the ideology of the **communist world.***

Another criticism is made by Jonathan Steele, the British journalist and also specialist in international affairs. In the examples below, Steele establishes a comparison between Nazism and Communism, both having more similitudes than it is thought, according to the author. The common denominator lies on the dictatorial the repressive tendencies of the leaders and also on an infinite ambition to expand their powers worldwide (stressing Russia's imperial character).

*[...] **Nazism and communism** were somehow **two sides of the same evil coin**.*

*With the end of the cold war **the equation of Nazism and communism** became more prevalent.*

The lasting influence of the communist regime is equally criticised by the British historian Richard Overy, who not only compares Nazism with Communism, as does Steele, but also stresses the imposition of Stalinist Communism over Nazism as the price for the victory of the former USSR at the end of WWII (a win or a loss?). In this sense, communism is regarded even more evil than Nazism, since it still prevails these days.

*[...] **Soviet victory left a sour taste**. [...] *The sour taste has become more marked with the fall of **communism** [...]. The opening up of Soviet archives has shown a system that for some critics makes it almost **indistinguishable from the totalitarian enemy it was fighting**. This makes it more difficult to embrace the Soviet contribution to victory. And in the end the peoples of eastern Europe were unquestionably better off under the new **communist regimes** than under German imperial domination.**

The relationship between the Cold War and Communism is very important in the texts of the British and American press due to a series of historical events which led to important and lasting consequences in the years to come. To this day, there are still former Soviet republics such as Belarus who have leaders having inherited the communist legacy and applying it to their people, with lamenting social, political and economic consequences. This can be seen in the third criticism by the British historian Eric Hobsbawm, who stresses the social injustice brought to the countries under the communist regime, and which is still in the present century.

*[...] the enormous social injustice which gave **communism** its historic force in the last century is not diminishing in this one.*

Finally, the most metaphorical example of criticism towards communism was made by the late American diplomat during the Cold War era, George F. Kennan, to whom

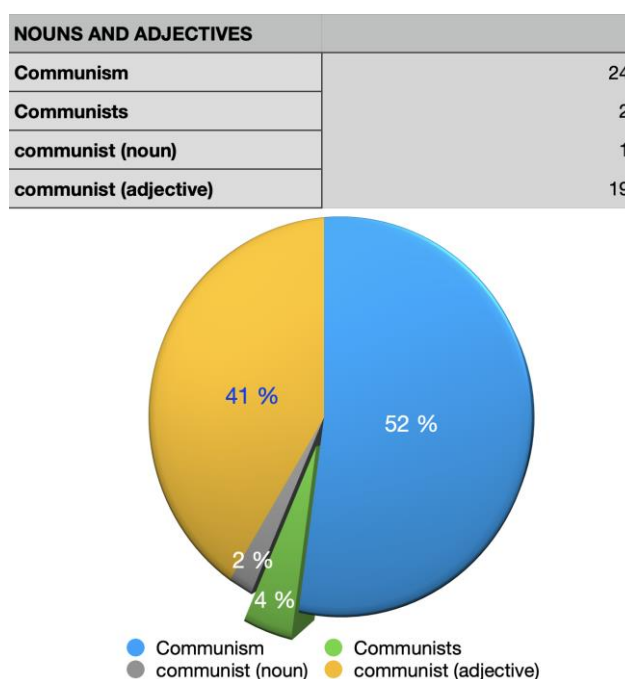
"World communism is like a malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue [...]".

This metaphor clearly emphasises the regime's threatening character and that of the countries professing it.

The articles from *The New York Times*⁸⁴ show 46 concordance hits to the same terms described earlier. There is barely any difference between both results due to the significant relevance the subject of communism has exercised upon the US government since the Cold War times, and also due to a higher amount of articles in *The New York Times* compared to those in *The Guardian*. The distribution of the hits, however, is different. The graphic in Figure 43 below shows the prevalence of the term *Communism* (52%), while the adjective *communist* occupies the second position (41%). The nouns *Communists* and *communist* occupy the last positions, with 4% and 2% respectively.

Figure 43

Frequency of appearance of the terms *Communism*, *Communists*, *communist* (noun) and *communist* (adjective) in the articles from *The New York Times*



⁸⁴ Appendix 2.

As opposed to the examples in *The Guardian*, in *The New York Times*, there are lots of instances of the terms *Communism* and *Communist* appearing next to the adjectives. They are equally part of nominal and prepositional phrases. All of them reflect the US big worry and a strong criticism towards Russia as an ideological threat⁸⁵.

In general terms, we can say that the strong criticism towards this regime not only reflects Russia as an ideological threat in its pretensions to somehow restore the old order, but has equally fed a considerable feeling of Russophobia in the Western world due to this fear of going back to repression and dictatorship. All this leads to an overall stereotypical representation of the country commonly associated with the image of the already mentioned evil bear symbolising expansionist imperialism, strong authoritarian power, corruption, mafia, KGB, among others.

The articles from *The New York Times* offer a lot more examples related to communism and its devastating effects worldwide:

[...] the exercise of Communism [...] killed upward of 80 million people in the Soviet Union, China, Cambodia, Eastern Europe, North Korea and Vietnam.

A 2003 poll commissioned by Putin's government asked Americans to name the top 10 things they associated with Russia. The top ... were **Communism, the KGB, snow and the mafia.**

Today's Kremlin [...] has cast aside the country's **communist experiment as an unworkable utopia** and begun glorifying **Soviet Russia's imperial pretensions.**

Grigory A. Satarov, the president of Indem, said [...] that the new **growth of bribery** fed off **the inefficiencies of Russia's still sclerotic state structures, inherited from the Communist past.**

[...] Peter Schulze, professor of comparative government at Göttingen University [...] said [...] "All the Eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union countries [...] wanted to run away from their former **Communist powers** in the East."

Can a meaningful distinction be made, in moral terms, **between Communist totalitarian terror and Nazism?**

[...] post-Communist governments often **manipulate** electoral outcomes, ostensibly lending a patina of legitimacy **to plainly undemocratic men.**

⁸⁵ Appendix 2.

[...] the diplomatic establishment [...] wrestled with Soviet Communism and a Maoist revolution in China.

[...] the slow rot of Soviet Communism undermined the cold war's architectures.

[T]he greatest danger [...] in coping with [...] Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.

[...] history on the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain [...] was an exercise in glorifying Communism.

The criticism towards Russia's communist past is closely related to its lack of efficiency as a democratic country. This is manifested in the phrase "*managed democracy*":

"Managed democracy" has long been the descriptive pejorative for the autocrats' brand of post-Communist political liberalization.

Such phrase is one of the examples when qualifying the political system under Putin's presidency. Additionally, other phrases such as "controlled pluralism" and 'electoral democracy' are among the most common epithets to describe Putin's new order" (Sakwa, 2008: 135). The examples below make reference to the way in which Communism has been affecting the countries on their path towards the Western model of democracy:

Mr. Bush [...] told Mr. Putin that "the remembrances of the time of Communism are unpleasant remembrances and you need to work with these young democracies." [...].

The end of WWII clearly signalled the victory for Russia but a huge loss for the rest of the world according to the US:

[...] in Central and Eastern Europe, [...] "the war [...] marked [...] the imposition of Communism."

[...] the end of World War II [...] marked [...] the imposition of Communism."

Similarly to *The Guardian*, in the articles from *The New York Times* we find a comparison between Communism and Nazism, with the use of the metaphor *the terrible twins*. The examples illustrate the distinctive features of the former communist regime such as its permanence and secrecy. All these aspects give Russia a rather threatening image:

*[...] years of debate have not resolved how **the terrible twins of the 20th century, Communism and Nazism**, should be viewed on a scale of evil.*

*[...] **Communism's** claim to have been **more murderous than Nazism** is persuasive: it lasted longer and its reach was greater.*

*But **because its crimes** were [...] less visible to the West, [...] **Communism** has always appeared less vivid and less uniform in Paris or London or New York than Hitler's genocide.*

*[...] it remains striking that Nazism was judged at Nuremberg, whereas **the crimes of Communism** have never come before an international tribunal.*

*[...] from the standpoint of the Baltic states or Ukraine, the **scourge of Communism** is much more palpable than it is on the Left Bank of the Seine.*

*[...] the **dirty laundry of Communism** has not yet been hung out in the sun. The search for truth remains a work in progress.*

*Grigory A. Satarov, the president of Indem, said [...] that the **new growth of bribery fed off the inefficiencies of Russia's still sclerotic state structures**, inherited from the **Communist past**.*

As in the case of the articles from *The Guardian*, the articles from the American press equally show examples of strong criticism towards Russia's communist influences. David Brooks, a conservative political and cultural commentator who writes for *The New York Times*, makes reference to the effects communism has left in the country, thus reinforcing the idea of considering the fall of communism as a double-edge sword. The fact that the Western world has no communism doesn't mean it is completely safe according to the author, since Russia is under Putin's neo-authoritarianism suffering an "*epidemic of collapse*", the effects of the old regime:

*Most of us are grateful for the fall of **communism**, but the **phrase "epidemic of collapse" is not a bad description of what Russian society is suffering through right now.***

Another important criticism was made by the before-mentioned US diplomat George F. Kennan, who insisted upon stopping the spreading of communist influences to the point of trying to find ways to fully eradicate it.

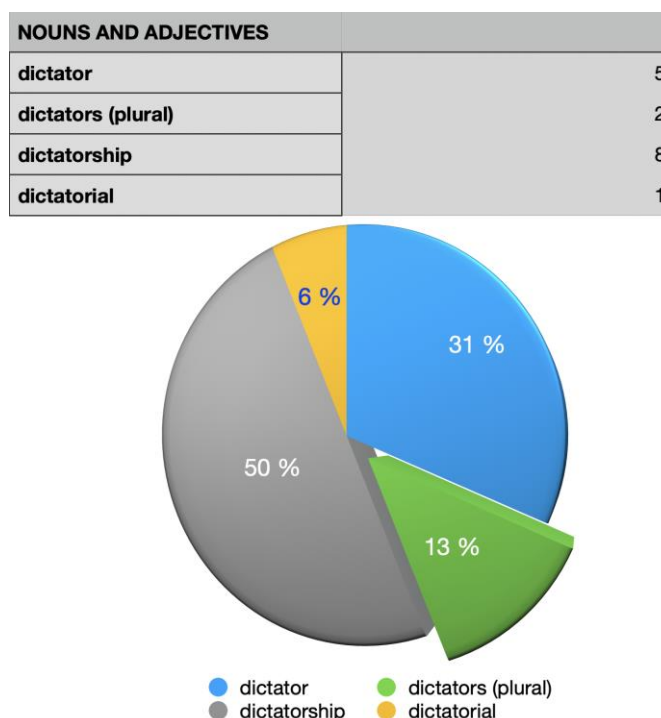
[...] the United States should stop **the global spread of Communism** by diplomacy, politics, and covert action [...].

1.4.3. Russia as a threat to democratic values

Russia's image as a communist threat is often related to a repressive and totalitarian nature of communism, to the point of comparing it to a tyranny or dictatorship. In the articles from the *The Guardian* we find 16 concordance hits to the terms *dictator* and its plural form *dictators*, *dictatorship*, and the adjective *dictatorial*⁸⁶. Following the graphic in Figure 44 below, the highest number of repetitions is attributed to the noun *dictatorship* (50%). The second position goes to the noun *dictator* (31%), the third one goes to the plural form *dictators* (13%), and finally, the adjective *dictatorial* occupies the last position with 6% of the results.

Figure 44

Frequency of appearance of the terms *dictator*, *dictators*, *dictatorship* and *dictatorial* in the articles from *The Guardian*



⁸⁶ Appendix 1.

The communist heritage still exercises a strong influence manifested in a few territories like Belarus, a country often referred to as 'the last European dictatorship'. This is reflected in the list below showing most of the adjectives describing the nature of the past dictators and the regime in general terms:

*[...] How to prevent a return to **dictatorship**?*

***Europe's 'last dictator'** defies calls for change⁸⁷*

*This "**last European dictatorship**" has become the final battleground for Moscow in its attempts to retain what is left of its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union [...]*

*The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice [...] called President Alexander Lukashenko's administration the "**last true dictatorship in Europe**", [...].*

*[...] the US [...] is right too to call for change in Belarus, **the last dictatorship in Europe**, while condemning "authoritarian drift" in the Kremlin.*

*[...] Moshe Lewin and Ian Kershaw argued in their book, *Stalinism and Nazism* [...] "The Nazi regime, unlike Stalin's, cannot be regarded as **a modernising dictatorship**.*

*Fred Halliday, a leading expert on international affairs, says we are still infected by Cold War ills: an arrogant West, **shabby** dictators, naive protests.*

*[...] most western discourse on Russia has focused on the alleged **revival of dictatorial tendencies** at the top.*

*Most significant of all of these is the political character of the two most important states to have undergone the communist experiment: **the neo-authoritarian dictatorship of Vladimir Putin** in Russia, and the politically **immobile dictatorship of the communist leaders in China**.*

*Aslan Maskhadov [...] was born [...] before the death of Joseph Stalin [...]. The entire Chechen people had been dumped there by **the Soviet dictator** [...].*

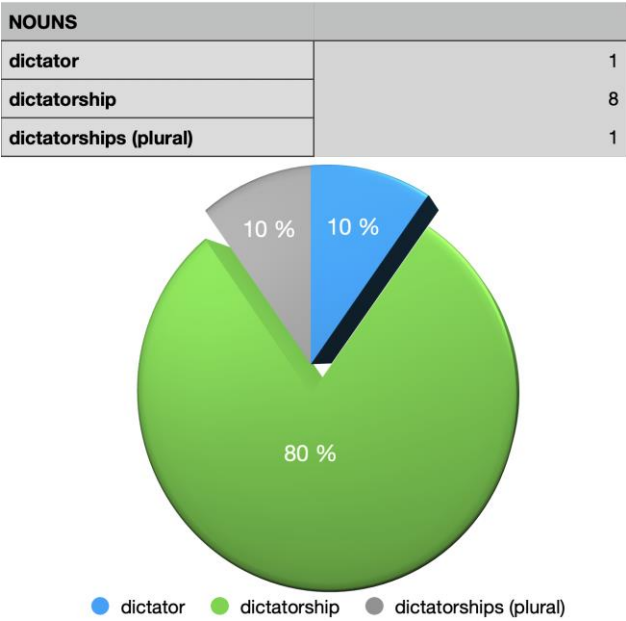
*A senior western diplomat in Minsk said: [...] "Some think Putin is trying things out here to see what **level of dictatorship** would be acceptable for former Soviet citizens."*

⁸⁷ Headline (Appendix 3, p. 258).

In the articles from the *The New York Times* (Figure 45), the noun *dictatorship* occupies the leading position (80%) with respect to the nouns *dictator* and the plural form *dictatorships* (10% each).

Figure 45

Frequency of appearance of the terms *dictator*, *dictatorship* and *dictatorships* in the articles from *The New York Times*



The texts make a more specific reference towards Russia’s dictatorial past. In both presses we find references to Belarus as ‘the last European dictatorship’:

*[...] Belarus and Turkmenistan have become **dictatorships** to different degrees [...].*

*Ms. Rice [...] had previously declared that Belarus was **the last dictatorship in Europe** [...]*

*Nikolai Cherginets, who heads the Commission on International Affairs and National Security in the upper house of the Belarussian Parliament, had a particularly sharp and personal reaction to Ms. Rice's remarks [...]. He called her description of Belarus as **Europe's last dictatorship** " [...].*

[...] Mr. Bush put more pressure on Mr. Putin by calling for "free and open and fair" elections in Belarus, **the last dictatorship in Europe** [...].

Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, a husband-and-wife team who [...] served as Moscow bureau chiefs for *The Washington Post*, [...] give us a restoration drama in primary colors, a battle between "Western-style liberal democracy" and "**a budding dictator**," between democrats and "Soviet leftovers."

[...] Ms. Rice [...] said: [...] "Belarus is really **the last true dictatorship in central Europe** [...]"

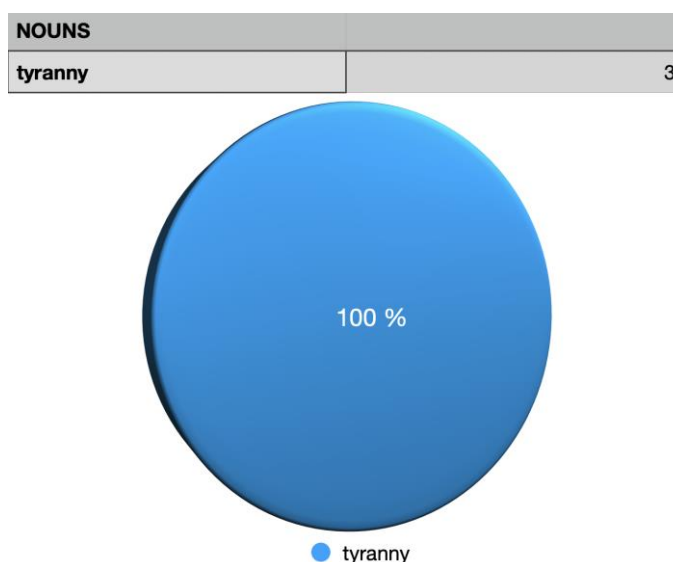
[...] Khrushchev [...] sacrificed **Stalin's dictatorship** in the name of Lenin.

Peter Baker and Susan Glasser [...] have written [...] a former lieutenant colonel in the K.G.B. [...] presided over "a newly assertive Russia, [...] glorifying its lost empire rather than exulting in **the downfall of dictatorship**."

In connection to this dictatorial image of Russia, the graphic from *The Guardian* shows 3 concordance hits to the term *tyranny* (Figure 46 below).

Figure 46

**Frequency of appearance of the term *tyranny*
in the articles from *The Guardian***



This noun is followed by the gerunds *appeasing* or *excusing*, the adjective *Nazi*, and in a phrase *a new and longer-lasting tyranny*⁸⁸. Bush's strong criticism towards Russia's past communist regime is manifest in the examples below, in which he stresses the need to do whatever possible to stop it from spreading throughout the world. This is a similar idea to the already mentioned metaphor by Kennan making reference to communism as *a malignant parasite* feeding on diseased tissue.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

[...] Bush said: '[...] We will not repeat the mistakes of other generations - **appeasing or excusing tyranny**, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of stability.'

[...] the Russian soldiers [...] though they saved Europe from Nazism, they did not liberate it. **With official Soviet permission ... they looted and raped** their way across the continent and established **a new and longer-lasting tyranny ...**

In the articles from the *The New York Times*⁸⁹ we find 10 concordance hits to the terms *dictatorship*, and its plural form *dictatorships*, and *dictator*. Following the graphic (Figure 47), similarly to the results from *The Guardian*, the highest number of repetitions is attributed to the noun *dictatorship* (80%), only the percentage is much higher due to a stronger emphasis on the US criticism towards Russia's former communist regime. The terms *dictator* and the plural form *dictatorships* have an equal percentage of results (10% each).

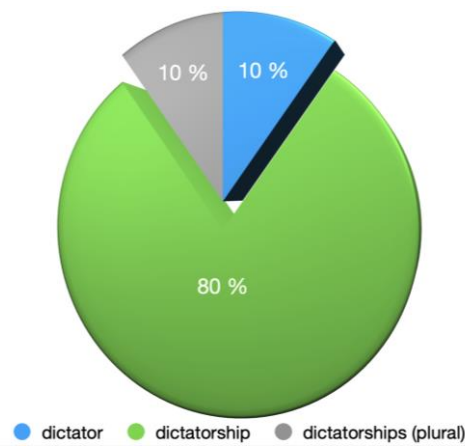
Figure 47

**Frequency of appearance of the term *tyranny*
in the articles from *The New York Times***

NOUNS	
dictator	1
dictatorship	8
dictatorships (plural)	1

⁸⁸ Appendix 1.

⁸⁹ Appendix 2.

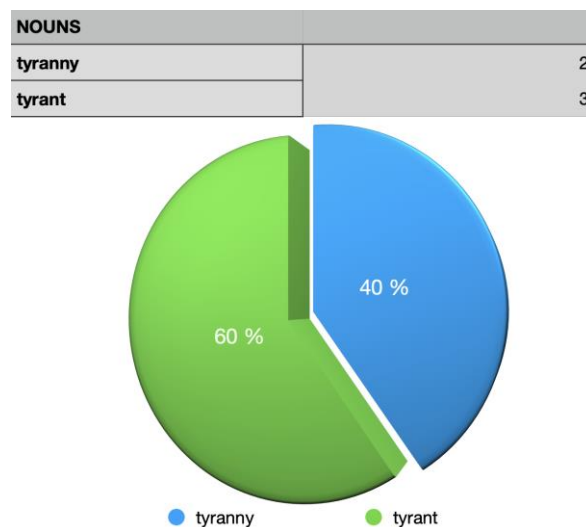


As opposed to the examples offered in *The Guardian*, the articles in *The New York Times* make a more specific reference towards Russia's dictatorial past. However, in both cases we find references to Belarus as 'the last European dictatorship'.

The graphic from *The New York Times* (Figure 48) shows the frequency use of the terms *tyranny* (40%) and *tyrant* (60%).

Figure 48

Frequency of appearance of the terms *tyranny* and *tyrant* in the articles from *The New York Times*



There 5 concordance hits to these terms⁹⁰. Once more, a lot more emphasis is made on the tyrannical nature of the communist regime in the former USSR, with a specific association of communism with Stalinism. The phrase *the most odious tyrant* makes a direct reference to the figure of Stalin:

*Still **the Tyrant, Stalin** Refuses to Be Wished Away*⁹¹

*Conservatives are equally adamant. In his syndicated column last Wednesday, Patrick J. Buchanan said that Mr. Bush told "the awful truth" about who really triumphed in World War II [...] "it was Stalin, **the most odious tyrant of the century**" [...].*

As in the articles from *The Guardian*, Bush appears strongly criticising Russia's past communist regime stressing the need to find the way to stop it from spreading throughout the world.

Examples from *The New York Times*:

*Mr. Bush [...] said: "[...] we will not repeat the mistakes of other generations - **appeasing or excusing tyranny**, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of stability."*
*[...] Ms. Rice [...] said [...] **one country in the old Soviet Union [...] remained authoritarian: "Belarus is really the last true dictatorship in central Europe, and it is time for change to come," [...].***

So far, we have seen Russia's manifestation as a military and ideological threat in the Western world. Now we will be focusing on the image of Russia connected to its imperialist and expansionist historical past. The following discussion with illustrative examples is very much related to Russia's communist past and makes a specific reference to its exercise upon the former Soviet republics.

⁹⁰ Appendix 2.

⁹¹ Headline (Appendix 4, p. 351).

1.4.4. Russia as an imperialist threat

When analysing Russia's identity and image in terms of power (section 1.2), a reference was made to the term *derzhava* meaning "power, might, or dominion" (Taras, 2013: 1). This historical term reflects Russia's image as a magnifying empire, a great power. We have equally mentioned that, to the eyes of the West, such greatness was understood in terms of imperialism and expansionism. It was precisely that perception of Russia as a security menace that evolved into the Western ultimate viewing of Russia as a serious and feared expansionist threat.

This is closely related to Russia's historical past marked by the occupation and domination over the former Soviet republics, with a clear intention of extending its sphere of influence throughout the world. Such manifestation makes a general reference to the context of WWII, and more specifically, to the non-aggression pact by which the Baltic states and the former Soviet republics in Eastern Europe were officially under the former Soviet Union's sphere of influence and control.

Therefore, the mentioning of WWII is significant to understand Russia's conflictive relationships with the Baltic states, since it is related to its victory over the Nazis, particularly to the pact between the former USSR and Germany before the war. This had a direct implication of subjugating the surrounding territories such as the Baltic states, Georgia and Poland⁹², to the power of the former Soviet Union. The results below indicate once again the bigger volume of articles from the American press due to the greater relevance the US government has paid to Russia's historical past in relation to the establishment of their democratic model to the former Soviet territories.

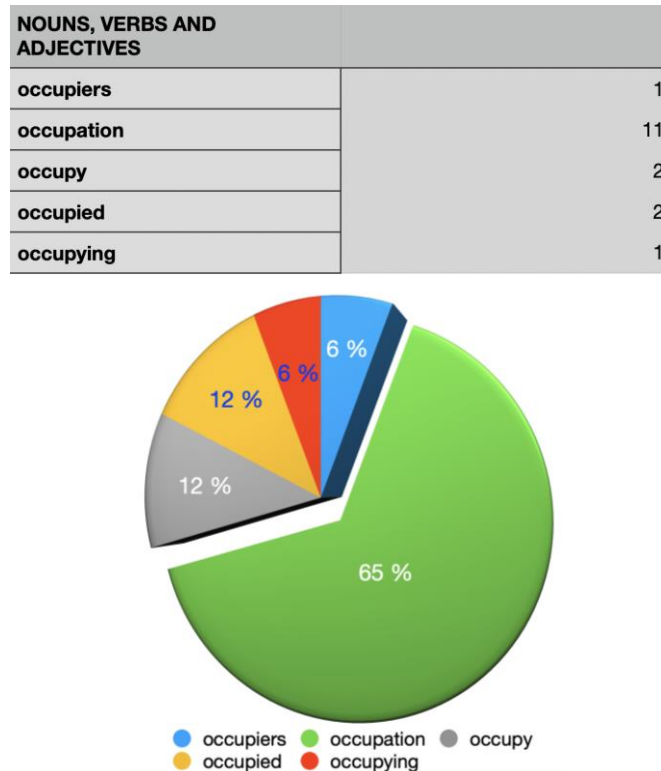
The semantically-related terms from the articles in *The Guardian*, are the nouns *occupiers* and *occupation*, and the verbal forms *occupy*, *occupying* and *occupied*. There are 17 concordance hits to these terms⁹³, with the prevalence of *occupation* (65%) over the rest of the words, according to the graphic (Figure 49 below). Each of the verbs *occupy* and *occupied* constitute 12% of the overall results, whereas *occupiers* and *occupying* constitute 6% of the results each.

⁹² Poland had never been a Soviet republic, but it had a territorial attachment to Russia.

⁹³ Appendix 1.

Figure 49

Frequency of appearance of the terms *occupiers*, *occupation*, *occupy*, *occupied* and *occupying* in the articles from *The Guardian*



This reflects Russia's power exercise over its neighbouring territories:

*Maskhadov continued his ambidextrous stance of being open to a negotiated settlement while continuing military action against "**Russian occupiers**".*

***The Red Army occupied the three countries** during the second world war [...].*

*Tatyana Zhdanok, an MEP from Latvia's Russian-speaking community, said "[...] **the Red Army occupied Latvia** rather than liberating it."*

*[...] **Soviet occupation** was as bad as that of the Nazis or worse.*

*[...] Mr Bush's [...] first stop [...] in the Latvian capital Riga, is intended to symbolise US support for the liberation of the Baltic countries from **a Soviet occupation** [...]. He acknowledged that [...] Josef Stalin, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt laid the way for **the Soviet occupation of Europe** [...].*

*[...] Bush seemed determined to [...] demand that Moscow should apologise for its **occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania**.*

[...] Bush chose largely to ignore the defeat of Nazism [...] choosing instead to focus [...] on **the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe** [...].

[...] Poland and the Baltic three have demanded that Russia apologise for **the Soviet occupation**.

[...] George Bush has underlined [...] "Vladimir Putin regards the westwards extension of Russian dominance after 1945 as a liberation rather than an **occupation** [...].

Moscow argues that its **occupation** liberated the Baltics from Nazi tyranny.

[...] Mr Bush [...] described **the Soviet occupation of Europe** as one of the great wrongs of the 20th century [...].

[...] Maskhadov was the Yasser Arafat of the Chechen conflict - beyond the pale for negotiations as far as **the occupying power** was concerned [...].

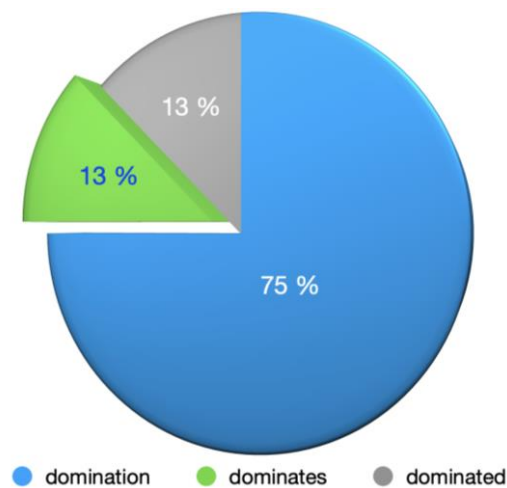
There is another set of terms related to Russia's historic occupation of the Baltic states. These terms are: *domination*, and the verbal forms *dominates* and *dominated*. They appear with 8 concordance hits⁹⁴. Following the results from the graphic (Figure 50), the prevalence goes to the noun *domination* (75%) over the verbal forms (13% each).

Figure 50

Frequency of appearance of the terms *domination*, *dominates*, and *dominated* in the articles from *The New York Times*

NOUNS AND VERBS	
domination	6
dominates	1
dominated	1

⁹⁴ Appendix 1.



The most frequent words appearing next to the nouns are mostly adjectives, as seen below:

*[...] conspiracy theorists might even now see something sinister in [...] **growing domination of the Russian information business.***

*Perestroika plunged Russia into social ruin - and the world into an unprecedented superpower bid for **global domination.***

*[...] the peoples of eastern Europe were unquestionably better off under the new communist regimes than under German **imperial domination.***

*President George Bush yesterday said the **Soviet domination of Eastern Europe** was 'one of the greatest wrongs of history' [...].*

*[...] post-1945 **Soviet domination in eastern Europe and central Asia** was "one of the greatest wrongs of history"*

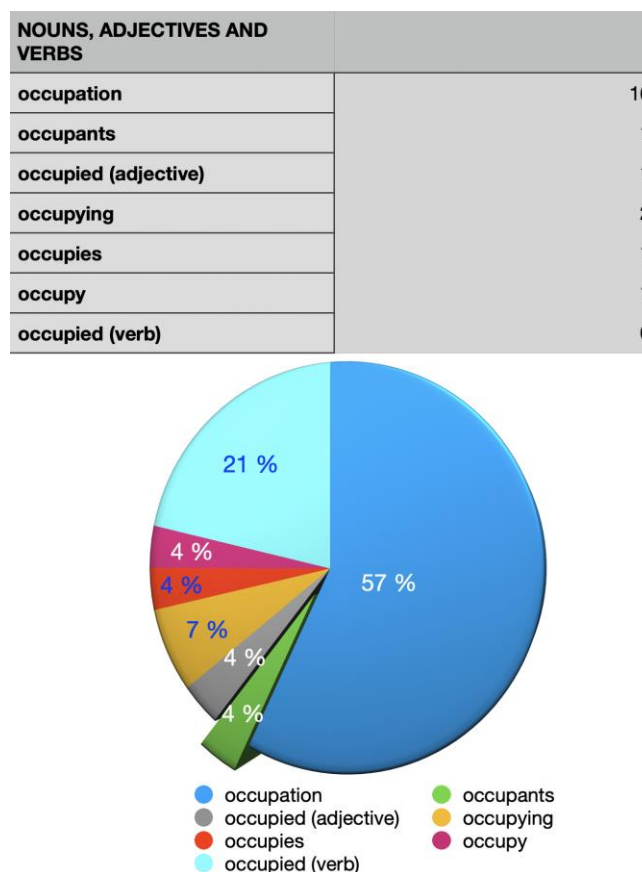
*[...] Russia will not answer the demands of Baltic states to apologise for years of **Soviet domination.***

In *The New York Times*, we find the nouns *occupation*, *occupants*, and the verbal forms *occupying*, *occupies*, *occupy* and *occupied* (the last term also appears as an adjective), with the total result of 28 concordance hits⁹⁵. The graphic in Figure 51 below shows that the prevalent term is the noun *occupation* (57%), followed by the verb *occupied* (21%), and *occupying* (7%). The remaining terms (*occupants*, the adjective *occupied* and the verbs *occupies* and *occupy*) constitute 4% each.

⁹⁵ Appendix 2.

Figure 51

Frequency of appearance of the terms *occupation*, *occupants*, *occupied* (adjective), *occupying*, *occupies*, *occupy* and *occupied* (verb) in the articles from *The New York Times*



These terms are higher in number and more abundant in the articles from *The New York Times*:

[...] *Lithuania and Estonia – nations **occupied by Soviet troops** in 1940 and **reoccupied** after the Soviets ousted the Nazis in 1944 – [...] cited Victory Day as a day that honored resumption of what would turn into **46 years of occupation** [...].*

*The Baltic leaders [...] have used the 60th anniversary [...] to account for [...] the nonaggression treaty that the Soviet Union signed [...] leading to **the Soviet occupation of part of Poland** that year **and the Baltic states** a year later.*

*Mr. Bush's letter [...] said [...] in Central and Eastern Europe, [...] "the war also marked **the Soviet occupation** and annexation **of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania** and the imposition of Communism."*

[...] the letter sets the tone for [...] the subsequent **Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe**.

[...] Latvia stepped up demands that Russia apologize for **decades of occupation**.

“One cannot use the term ‘**occupation**’ to describe those historical events,” Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the Russian envoy to the European Union, said [...].

[...] Mr. Bush has spoken repeatedly of the pain that Baltic nations like Latvia endured under **the Soviet occupation** after World War II.

Mr. Bush [...] repeatedly used the word “**occupation**” to describe the Russian acts in the Baltics [...].

[...] an Estonian television journalist [...] had asked [...] why Russia refused to renounce [...] the nonaggression treaty signed by the Soviet Union [...] leading to **the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania** [...]. Mr. Putin [...] dismissed historical claims that Soviet forces **reoccupied the Baltic nations** after the war, since by then they were already part of the Soviet Union.

Vaira Vike-Freiberga, the president of Latvia, gave her own answer [...]. The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 was no liberation for the Baltic states [...], because “it meant [...] **occupation**, [...] and [...] Stalinist terror.”

[...] Anne Applebaum, a columnist for The Washington Post, wrote [...] Yalta and other wartime deals “went beyond mere recognition of **Soviet occupation** [...].

[...] Estonia’s railway system [...] is still not fully integrated with Western Europe’s – **a legacy of Russian occupation** [...].

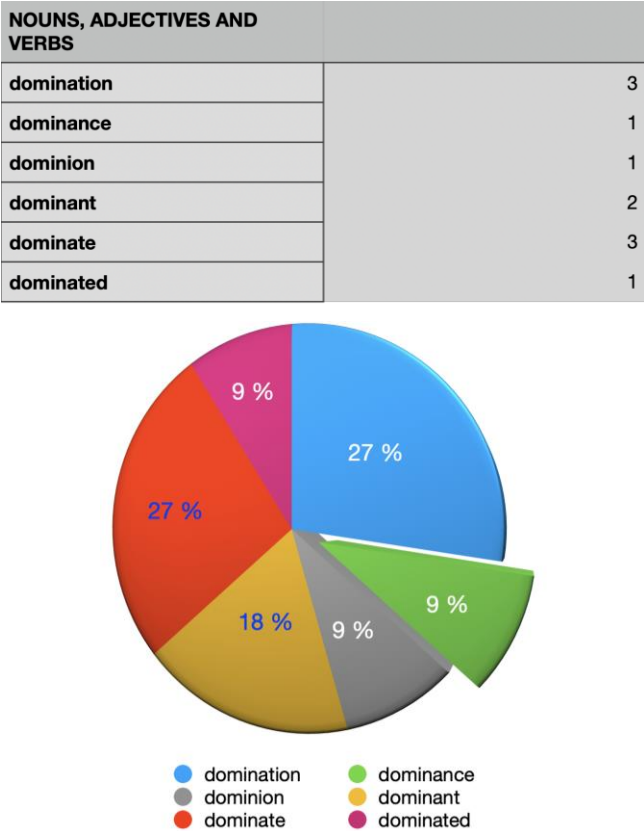
The presidents of Lithuania and Estonia – nations **occupied by Soviet troops** in 1940 and **reoccupied** after the Soviets ousted the Nazis in 1944 – pointedly refused Mr. Putin’s invitation.

After the Soviet Union joined the war on the side of the Allies in 1941, German forces overran the three Baltic countries and **occupied them**, with local support, until Soviet troops recaptured them toward the end of the war.

Additionally, in *The New York Times*, the set of terms related to Russia’s historic occupation of the Baltic states is formed by the nouns *domination*, *dominance*, *dominion*, the verb forms *dominate* and *dominated*, and the adjective *dominant*. There are 11 concordance hits to these terms⁹⁶. According to the graphic (Figure 52), the terms *domination* and *dominate* constitute each of them 27% of the overall results. The term *dominant* occupies the second position (18%), and the terms *dominance*, *dominion* and *dominated* appear with 9% each.

Figure 52

Frequency of appearance of the terms *domination*, *dominance*, *dominion*, *dominant*, *dominate* and *dominated* in the articles from *The New York Times*



⁹⁶ Appendix 2.

The most frequent words appearing next to these terms are adjectives, as seen below:

*Where individual governments stand in path of Soviet purposes pressure will be brought for their removal from office. This can happen where governments directly oppose Soviet foreign policy aims [...], or where they compete too strongly, [...], for **moral domination** among elements which it is important for Communists to **dominate**.*

*A renunciation [...] the **Soviet Union's domination of Eastern Europe** after the war -- appears to be highly unlikely.*

*Mr. Putin [...] angrily criticized the Baltic nations [...] for clinging to historic grievances over **Soviet domination**.*

*[...] Russia's bad behavior [...] retains many aspects of Russian imperialism, the wish to **dominate its neighbors** [...].*

*[...] Georgia collapsed [...] against the autocratic rulers who **dominate the former Soviet Union**.*

*[...] Russia [...] is locked in conflict with Washington for **dominance in the region's former Soviet republics**.*

*[...] the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact [...] gave Germany permission to invade Poland in exchange for **Soviet dominion over Finland and much of the Baltics** [...].*

In the articles from *The Guardian*, the basis for the Western criticism towards Russia and its historical conflict with the Baltic states and Poland lies on Putin's denial to accept and offer a public apology for the past communist domination over those territories.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

*[...] **The Red Army occupied the three countries** during the second world war after fierce fighting with nationalists.*

*Tatyana Zhdanok, an MEP from Latvia's Russian-speaking community, said [...] "[...] **the Red Army occupied Latvia** rather than liberating it."*

*[...] Bush seemed determined to [...] demand that Moscow should apologise for its **occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania**.*

*[...] Poland and the Baltic three have demanded that Russia apologise for the **Soviet occupation**.*

From the historical point of view, there can be two different interpretations regarding the role the pacts or agreements played in the occupation and domination of the Baltic states. Putin clearly states that the occupation was necessary to free these countries from the Nazis, which implies that, thanks to the agreement between Stalin and Hitler in 1940 (made reference to as *the devil's pact*), these territories could later recover their independence in the early 1990s. This interpretation is what makes the Russian government deny the existence of such occupation over the mentioned countries, and thus the need to bring any apologies.

*[...] the liberation of the Baltic countries from a **Soviet occupation** [...] began - thanks to the devil's pact between Stalin and Hitler - in 1940, and ended only in 1991 when Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania regained their independence.*

*[...] "Vladimir Putin regards the westwards extension of **Russian dominance** after 1945 as a liberation rather than an **occupation** [...]"*

*Moscow argues that its **occupation** liberated the Baltics from Nazi tyranny.*

Nevertheless, the Western interpretation seems to be quite different. On the one hand, the British journalist Jonathan Steele argues that the agreement between Stalin and Hitler was a perfect pretext for the Russian troops to occupy the Baltic states via the annexation of Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. According to Steele, this was a way to secure Russia's extension of power fed by its pretensions for a global domination. However, in no way does he regard Soviet occupation worse than the Stalin-Hitler pact:

*The Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact which gave Stalin the chance to build better defences is well-known, but Russians still underplay the secret annexes that allowed him to send troops into eastern Poland, adding its lands to Soviet Ukraine and Belarus, and to **occupy the Baltic states** a year later.*

*[...] it is [...] wrong of today's Baltic leaders [...] to claim **Soviet occupation** was as bad as that of the Nazis or worse. [...]*

On the other hand, the US position is completely different. Bush not only compares both pacts by attributing them the same evil quality, but specifically regards the occupation as *one of the greatest wrongs of history / of the 20th century*. Russia's territorial proportions, potential and a strong sense of independence in acting and decision-making have always been conceived as threatening to the West, a fact justifying statements as those reflected in the examples below:

*President George Bush [...] said the **Soviet domination of Eastern Europe** was 'one of the greatest wrongs of history' [...]*

*[...] **post-1945 Soviet domination in eastern Europe and central Asia** was "one of the greatest wrongs of history".*

*The presidents of **Lithuania and Estonia -- nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940** and reoccupied after the Soviets ousted the Nazis in 1944 -- pointedly refused Mr. Putin's invitation.*

*The presidents of **Lithuania and Estonia, nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940** and reoccupied after the Soviets defeated the Nazis in 1944, refused the invitation of President Vladimir V. Putin to attend the May 9 commemoration.*

*President George Bush [...] acknowledged that the 1945 Yalta agreement [...] laid the way for the **Soviet occupation of Europe**, and compared it to the appeasement of Hitler and the 1939 Soviet-Nazi pact.*

*[...] Mr Bush [...] described the **Soviet occupation of Europe** as one of the great wrongs of the 20th century [...]*

The examples from articles in *The New York Times* show similar critical attitudes towards Russia's historical past related to the occupation of the Baltic states. Its image is regarded in terms of an arrogant country with an insatiable desire to impose power and control over the surrounding territories:

Examples from *The New York Times*:

*Polish analysts attribute [...] Russia's bad behavior, [...] to its failure to carve out a post-cold-war identity for itself. [...] it retains many aspects of Russian imperialism, the wish to **dominate** its neighbors, [...] and [...] never to tarnish its image by admitting past crimes.*

*Latvia stepped up demands that Russia apologize for decades of **occupation**.*

In the articles from *The New York Times*, the US openly states the occupation of the Baltic states as one of the most devastating consequences of Russia's victory in WWII, together with the imposition of the communist regime.

*The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 "[...] meant slavery, [...] **occupation**, [...] subjugation and [...] Stalinist terror."*

*[...] the end of World War II "[...] marked the **Soviet occupation** and annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the imposition of Communism."*

It is important to stress that the US criticism towards the former Soviet communist regime shows traces of aggressiveness due to the fear of a possible restoration of the old regime. Such attitude is reflected in the following example below, in phrases such as *awful truth* when making reference to Russia's victory in WWII, and in the metaphorical expression to the figure of Stalin as *the most odious tyrant of the century*, as well as in another metaphorical phrase, *monstrous lie*, alluding to the Yalta agreement.

*[...] Mr. Bush told "**the awful truth**" about who really triumphed in World War II east of the Elbe -- "it was **Stalin, the most odious tyrant of the century**" -- and that the pact that Roosevelt and Churchill co-signed at Yalta was a "**monstrous lie**."*

From the historical point of view, the example below presents a parallelism in describing the way the occupation took place following the Western interpretation. It is rather similar with that offered by Jonathan Steele. The Stalin-Hitler agreement (made reference to as *the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact*⁹⁷) had marked the beginning of the occupation.

*Soviet troops joined German forces in **occupying** Poland, and the next year the Soviet Union also entered Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and incorporated them into the Soviet Union as republics. [...] in 1941, German forces overran the three Baltic countries and **occupied** them, with local support, until Soviet troops retook them near the end of the war.*

Russia's attitude is the same as that observed in the texts from *The Guardian*, with a significant difference shown in the last example below: Russia's demand to have its victory in WWII recognised and given respect to as it deserves.

⁹⁷ The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact was a non-aggression pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union that enabled those two powers to partition Poland between them. The pact was signed in Moscow on 23 August 1939 by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov and was officially known as the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Unofficially it has also been referred to as the Hitler–Stalin Pact, Nazi–Soviet Pact or Nazi–Soviet Alliance.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molotov%E2%80%93Ribbentrop_Pact

*[...] Russia refused to renounce the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the nonaggression treaty signed by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany in 1939, leading to the **Soviet occupation** of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania [...]*

*A renunciation of Molotov-Ribbentrop -- or of the **Soviet Union's domination of Eastern Europe** after the war -- appears to be highly unlikely.*

*Mr. Putin [...] dismissed historical claims that Soviet forces **reoccupied** the Baltic nations after the war, since by then they were already part of the Soviet Union.*

*The Kremlin is once again emphasizing its historical justification for the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact -- which gave Germany permission to invade Poland in exchange for **Soviet dominion** over Finland and much of the Baltics -- and denying that Baltic states were **occupied**;*

*"When people today discuss whether we **occupied** anybody's country or not, I want to ask them: what would have happened to you had we not broken the back of fascism?" the Russian defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, declared. "Would your people be among the living now?"*

1.4.5. Russia as a personalized threat: Putin's authoritarianism

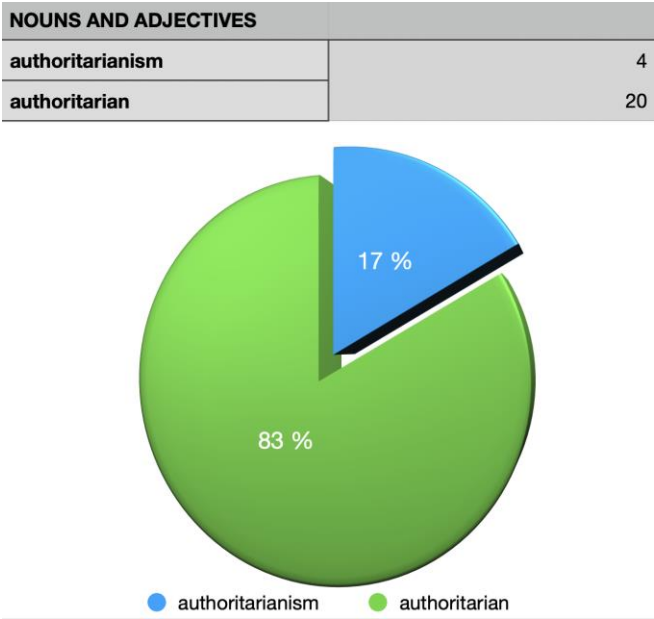
With no doubt, Russia's strong authoritarian character in the figure of Putin has been one of the aspects Russia has been most criticised for, especially by the US. Russia's image as an authoritarian threat has a close connection with Russia's communist and imperialist past, and has been regarded by the West as one of the country's biggest drawbacks for its full development in terms of democratic values.

Nevertheless, it is important to add that, regardless of the criticism towards Russia's model of government, and despite the ongoing domestic issues still to be solved, Putin's popularity has not faded (Sakwa, 2008). Just as the West regards him as a despot, he is also thanked for having taken Russia from the abyss of the 90s, and for continuing his hard work to restore Russia's image of a great and democratic country. Additionally, in line with his relationships with the Middle East, he is also known for having helped the Palestinians to reconstruct and reinforce the country's infrastructure after its damage due to endless war conflicts with the Israelis (a more detailed description is found in the article from *The Guardian* **Putin offers to help Palestinians**. Appendix 4, p. 254). This is just one of the many examples of Russia's more positive image.

In the articles from *The Guardian*⁹⁸, we find 24 concordance hits to the noun *authoritarianism* and the adjective *authoritarian*. The graphic (Figure 53) reflects that the highest percentage of frequency use applies to the adjective *authoritarian* (83%), while the noun *authoritarianism* occupies the second position (17%).

Figure 53

Frequency of appearance of the terms *authoritarianism*, and *authoritarian* in the articles from *The Guardian*



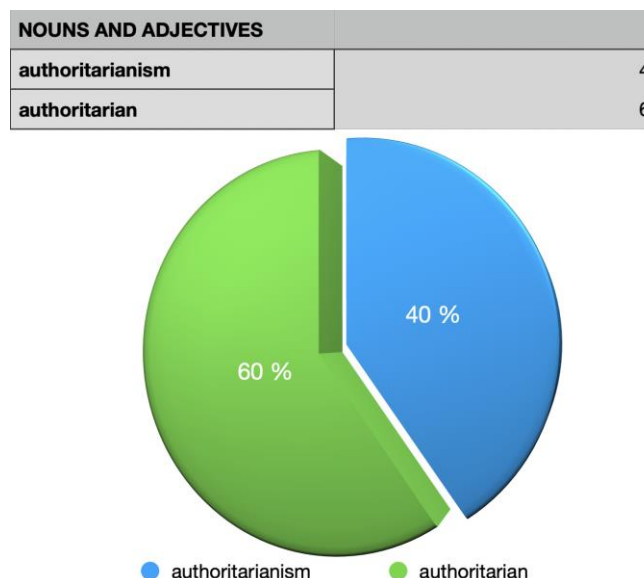
In the articles from *The New York Times*, we find 24 concordance hits to the noun *authoritarianism* and the adjective *authoritarian*⁹⁹. The graphic (Figure 54 below) reflects that, similarly to the results from *The Guardian*, the highest percentage of frequency use applies to the adjective *authoritarian* (60%), while the noun *authoritarianism* occupies the second position (40%).

⁹⁸ Appendix 1.

⁹⁹ Appendix 2.

Figure 54

Frequency of appearance of the terms *authoritarianism*, and *authoritarian* in the articles from *The New York Times*



The articles from the British and the American press show a rather similar criticism towards Putin's authoritarianism. It is important to stress that Russia's authoritarian character is connected to its communist past. Putin is regarded as a political figure using his power trying to restore the previous order, a fact that makes Russia a potential threat due to its clear intentions of returning to a dictatorship, according to the West. The most relevant examples reflecting Putin's authoritarianism appear below:

Examples from *The Guardian*:

*"Vladimir Putin [...] goes hand in hand with an **authoritarian tendency** at home, whether towards parliament, the media or the oligarchs [...]"*

*Mr Putin insisted there would be no return to "**authoritarianism**," but warned that democracy was not "anarchy".*

*Most significant [...] is the political character of the two most important states to have undergone the communist experiment: **the neo-authoritarian dictatorship of Vladimir Putin in Russia**, and the politically immobile dictatorship of the communist leaders in China.*

Berezovsky [...] says [...] “Putin is clearly building [...] a return to **authoritarianism**. [...] Russia could again become its military opponent – because that's the logic of an **authoritarian system**.”

[...] Russia's few remaining liberals are so scared about [...] Russia's slide back towards a more centralised, **authoritarian form of government**.

Despite a good personal relationship with Mr Bush, **Mr Putin's authoritarian domestic policies** and frequently oppositional international stance have caused increasing alarm in Washington.

Civil liberties groups have urged [...] Mr Bush [...] to “publicly challenge President Putin's **authoritarian course**”.

Under the general heading of “**authoritarian drift**”, critics of Russia point to [...] greater interest in reasserting state control over the economy than pursuing liberalisation.

Mr Putin's moves raise the spectre of a return to **Russia's authoritarian past** ...

Western critics see the issue as **democracy versus authoritarianism**.

[...] critics, at home and abroad, [...] see, in the concentration of power in the presidency, [...] **an alarming “authoritarian drift”** [...]

[...] Mr Putin has no intention of rolling back his recent **authoritarian reforms**.

[...] the US [...] is right too to call for change in Belarus, the last dictatorship in Europe, while condemning “**authoritarian drift**” in the Kremlin.

Examples from The New York Times:

[...] Roman A. Dobrokhoto, 21, a political science student [...] said [...] “Nowadays, people understand that under **authoritarian rule**, development is impossible.

[...] nationalist forces in Russia [...] believe in their country's uniquely “Eurasian” destiny, which implies an **authoritarian domestic order** and a foreign policy that combines intimidation of other former Soviet republics and xenophobia toward the world at large.

President Putin, [...] has cultivated ties with the autocratic leaders of the Central Asian states, seemingly indifferent to accusations that their rule amounts to **authoritarianism**.

*[...] Mr. Khodorkovsky has played the role of a classic victim of **Russian authoritarianism** [...].*

*One reporter, a longtime Moscow resident with a European passport, shot back a blunt reply: "[...] Putin is intent on building a **semi-authoritarian regime** that's prepared to kill its own citizens to stay in power."*

*Putin's rule, [...] has [...] given political scientists cause to devise a new classification: **authoritarianism** without authority.*

*In much of the former Soviet Union, a patchwork of corrupt and semifunctional states where **authoritarianism** has proven durable and political liberalization has been uneven or thwarted, elections are routinely flawed or stolen.*

1.4.6. Russia as a domestic threat

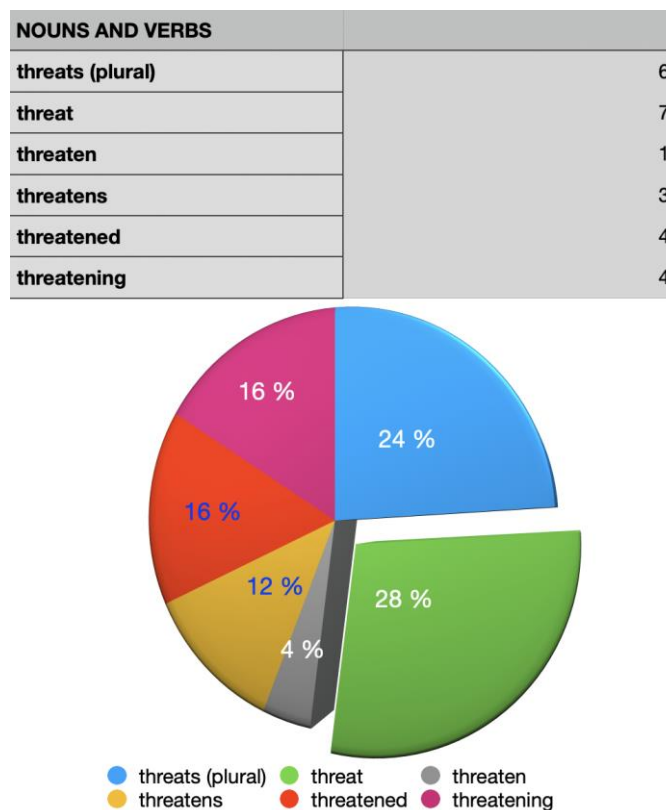
The final part of this analysis focuses on Russia's image as a threat inside its borders in relation to the domestic issues such as the lack of democracy and freedom in the media, the Chechen conflict, the gas conflict with Ukraine, and the prosecution of the oligarchs. Since all these issues were taking place mainly inside Russia, they did not have the same mediatic repercussions as the previously described ones.

The semantically related terms in the articles from *The Guardian* are the noun *threat*, its plural form *threats* and the verbal forms *threaten*, *threatens*, *threatened* and *threatening* (the latter ones are also adjectives). The total number of concordance hits to all of them is 25¹⁰⁰. Following the graphic (Figure 55 below), we can see that the noun *threat* appears with 28% of the results. The second position is occupied by the plural form *threats* (24%). In the third place we find the verbal forms *threatened* and *threatening*, each of them with 16% of the results. *Threatens* shows 12% of the results, and the infinitive *threaten* carries 4% of the total results.

¹⁰⁰ Appendix 1.

Figure 55

Frequency of appearance of the terms *threats* (plural noun), *threat*, *threaten*, *threatens*, *threatened*, and *threatening* in the articles from *The Guardian*



It follows that the major emphasis lies on the noun *threat* emphasising Russia's image of a feared country. These terms appear followed by nouns, adjectives and in different phrases illustrated in several examples below, in which the image of Russia as a threat manifests itself in different domestic spheres. This is directly related to the widespread lack of democratic sense which Putin's government had been strongly criticized for in the West, especially by the US. This lack is evident in the direct threat and, in some cases, in the murder of some of the Russian journalists who, as stated by them, tried to openly show the reality of the Kremlin and its peculiar procedures of facing and solving Russia's problems.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

*[...] The price of success in the Russian media industry is **death threats** [...].*

*"Yuri Bagrov, deprived of his passport and of his nationality, [...] was **threatened with expulsion** [...]", the spokesman added.*

*On March 31, *Russki Kurier*, a young and vibrant paper [...] known for its vociferous and colourful attacks on the Putin administration, published its last issue and then ceased to exist, leaving many observers perplexed. [...] *Kurier's* disappearance began a series of minor crises in Moscow's liberal print media which **threatens** to extinguish the last remaining voice criticising the government within Russia's political nerve-centre.*

The examples above reflect the use of the previously described threat-related terms and how these threats end up being materialised in types of measure such as expulsion, disappearance or "silencing"¹⁰¹, and sometimes in death as in the example below:

*Critics of the Kremlin, like former kingmaker turned billionaire in exile, Boris Berezovsky, regard the crisis as [...] a direct result of the Putin administration's strangulation of the media. "[...] journalists [...] are **threatened**, killed.*

The example below highlights the already mentioned strong influence of communism on some of the former ex-Soviet republics. The concept of threat is manifested as a possible response to any attempt to criticize or modify the order established by the Kremlin. This is the case in countries such as Belarus and Moldova, where a threat can turn into severe reprisals, or even death.

*[...] Alexander Radchenko [...], a stocky former political commissar in the Red Army, [...] says [...] that Smirnov¹⁰² "has the powers that Stalin had, or Saddam Hussein". He and other parliamentarians want to change the constitution to allow them to impeach the president, strengthen the constitutional court, and so on. He has received **threatening phone calls** [...]*

As in the case of the nuclear issue and the historical conflict with the Baltic states, Putin's justifications are viewed as an excuse to proceed with his actions. Such justifications are based on a deep distrust towards the Other, and a fear of something catastrophic if measures are not taken to prevent a particular conflict. This is reflected mainly in the already discussed examples about the nuclear issue and in the examples below related to the Chechnya conflict:

¹⁰¹ As manifested in the headline from Appendix 3, p. 183.

¹⁰² The president of Moldova.

*President Putin claimed to see in Chechnya's autonomous mayhem a **spreading threat** to Russia's integrity and cohesiveness.*

*The Russians were more concerned about the **threat** implicit in such talk than they were in his¹⁰³ peace talks offer.*

*[...] the Russian president - who has equated his fight against Chechen rebels with Israel's fight against Palestinian militants - said he wanted to cooperate more closely with Israel in fighting terror. [...] the Israeli president, Moshe Katsav, [...] said Russia needed to address **the growing threat** of anti-semitism.*

Putin's responses to a particular problem or conflict often lie in his choice between the security of his country to fight nuclear terrorism, and Russia's sovereignty for the preservation of its national integrity (Sakwa, 2008). Both of them are important but territorial unity has always been evident in Putin's mind. That is why the war conflicts such as that in Chechnya were seen by the Kremlin as a desire for independence of this region of the Caucasus, something that goes against a territorial unity. Putin's attempt to prevent the territorial fragmentation similar to that of the former Yugoslavia means that, if necessary, he has to resort to threats and tough measures to avoid more tragedies and conflicts in the future.

The much-talked-about gas conflict with Ukraine is reflected in the examples below. Russia has mainly been seen as a huge monopoly of the Russian gas and oil companies with the main natural resources under its direct control. This fact is clearly reflected in the economic confrontation with Ukraine over the gas prices, as well as in the prosecution of some of the oligarchs due to economical and political conflicts.

The conflict took place as a result of a lack of agreement on the prices of gas supplies. Gazprom is the monopolistic company with the greatest power to control oil and gas resources. The threat lies in the gas supply cut in case of non-compliance with the prices set by Gazprom.

*Russia drastically raised the price for vital winter fuel supplies to neighbouring Ukraine [...] **after threatening to cut off** the country's gas if a deal was not reached by January 1.*

¹⁰³ Aslan Maskhadov.

*The state-controlled Russian gas monopoly, Gazprom, is **threatening to cut off** flows on January 1 if Ukraine does not agree to pay quadrupled prices for the energy that comprises a third of its needs.*

*[...] according to Hilary McCutcheon, analyst at Wood MacKenzie: '[...] Ukrainian industry is very reliant on Russian gas.' In addition, there are **threats** that other interests can make [...].*

*Alexander Lebedev, a Russian MP critical of the Kremlin's hardline stance, said [...] "Russia's stance is irrational," [...] "We are not reprimanding the orange leaders - we are only helping them consolidate their support by providing **a foreign threat** with a gas weapon."*

*If Russia makes good its **threat to cut off** Ukraine's supply, it will reduce the amount of gas sent through the pipeline - which also carries Europe's share.*

Unfortunately, the gas supply cut was carried out at the beginning of 2006.

The following examples make reference to the different manifestations of the term *threat* and its related words applied to the already discussed aspects concerning Russia's image as a military, nuclear and ideological threat with its communist and imperial past:

*[...] the Soviet Union [...] policies that were as wrong then as they are now: the **fabrication of threats**, accompanied by **dire warnings** about how time 'is running out', about hostile states; [...].*

*President Truman had proclaimed America's defence [...] against communist insurgents and promised help for any other **threatened nations**. Finally, Stalin's brusque rejection of Marshall aid for Russia and its satellites had set the seal on the Cold War division of Europe.*

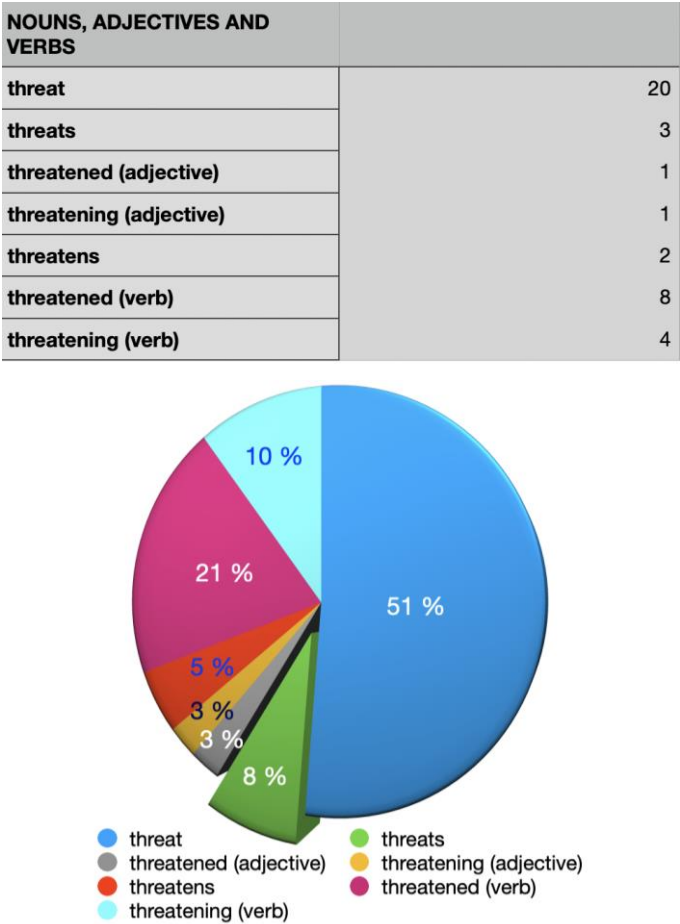
As in the case of *The Guardian*, the terms referring to the threat in the articles from *The New York Times* are also evident in examples including the gas conflict and, to a lesser extent, the Chechnya conflict. The number of concordance hits to these same terms in *The New York Times* is 39¹⁰⁴. This number is significantly higher with respect to the results offered by the texts from the British press due to a bigger concern towards Russia and its issues on the part of the US. The graphics in Figure 56 below show the overall results reflected in the frequency of appearance of these terms. As in the articles

¹⁰⁴ Appendix 2.

from the British press, the noun *threat* appears to prevail hugely over the rest of the terms (51%). The verb *threatened* has 21% of the results, the gerund *threatening* appears with 10%, the plural form *threats* with 8%, *threatens* with 5%, and the adjectives *threatened* and *threatening* with 3% each.

Figure 56

Frequency of appearance of the terms *threat*, *threats*, *threatened* (adjective), *threatening* (adjective), *threatens*, *threatened* (verb), and *threatening* (verb) in the articles from *The New York Times*



These terms appear with nouns, adjectives and in different phrases as can be seen in the examples from *The New York Times* below:

*Yukos, once Russia's largest private oil company, [...] has repeatedly **threatened** that it will file for bankruptcy protection.*

*Gazprom is **threatening to cut** supplies if talks break down, [...].*

*Gazprom **threatened to sue** if Ukraine siphons gas from export pipelines [...].*

Ukraine **threatened to take a portion of the gas exports** that Russia sends to Europe. Gazprom called such a move theft.

This raised the possibility that without a settlement, Ukraine might divert transiting gas for its own use, which earlier in the week Prime Minister Yury I. Yekhanurov **threatened to do**. Gazprom said that would be theft. **Ukraine's threat**, if acted upon, could create shortages in Europe.

Russia's energy giant, Gazprom, renewed its **threat to cut supply lines to Ukraine [...]** if the country did not accept a nearly fourfold increase in price.

Gazprom has been unflinching. Aleksei Miller, its chief executive, reiterated **the threat [...]**.

The Kremlin has been slow to grant foreign companies access to its commercial railways and is sometimes seen as **a threat** to interfere with their plans.

Russia has long been wary of organizations that highlight the kidnappings and killings that blight Chechnya, but the fate of the society has repercussions that reach far beyond this city on the Volga River, where it has offices, **threatening foreign support** for groups like it and confronting the United States with a diplomatic quandary.

It should be noted that the examples related to the gas conflict reflect a greater emphasis on the economic aspect on the part of the US. Additionally, there are a few more examples below illustrating the use of the threat terms alluded to Russia's lack of democracy connected to the absence of freedom in the media.

[...] some influential Democrats and Republicans in Congress [...]. Alarmed by Mr. Putin's tendencies, [...] have **threatened Russia with suspension** or outright expulsion from [...] the Group of 8 major industrialized countries [...].

"All the nations that border Russia will benefit from the spread of democratic values, and so will Russia itself," Mr. Bush said [...] "Stable, prosperous democracies are good neighbors, trading in freedom and posing no **threat** to anyone."

Mr. Kasparov, who retired from professional chess this year to devote himself to opposing Mr. Putin, appears as fearless as he was as a player. [...] he has relentlessly attacked Mr. Putin as an autocrat and denounced his policies as **a threat** not only to democratic values, but also to the economic and social well-being of the country.

The real threat to Russia's future could lie in the economy. [...] a model of corrupt, state-managed capitalism, economists and political analysts say, [...] is inimical to democracy and could condemn its economy to perpetual third world status.

The following examples make reference to the different manifestations of the term *threat* and its related words applied to the already discussed aspects concerning Russia's image as a military, nuclear and ideological threat:

*Volodymyr Tereschenko, a deputy minister of defense charged with munitions disposal, [...] said [...] "There is a whole complex of problems, many of which cause a **great threat and danger**," [...] "The tragedy of Ukraine is not our own only. This is a tragedy for Europe."*

*With greater urgency than ever, anticorruption campaigners and even some government officials warn that the government has become so ensnared by corruption that it **threatens to undo Russia's progress** since the dismantling of the Soviet Union 14 years ago.*

*[...] Mr. Kennan said that [...] what he was talking about was not the containment by military means or **military threat**, but the political containment of a **political threat**.*

In all these examples, the criticism of Russia is reflected as a country that continues to be seen as a threat to the Western world due to its lack of socio-economic modernization and its political model still based on corruption and a strong authoritarian statism. This leads us to the final part of this thesis in which we will talk about the results of everything analyzed so far.

1.4.7. Synonyms and other related terms

The following are the synonyms of the term *threat*, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary¹⁰⁵: *hazard*, *imminence*, *menace*, *peril*, *pitfall*, *risk*, and *trouble*, and related words like *snare*, *trap*, and *booby trap*¹⁰⁶. The terms *imminence*, *menace*, *peril*, and *snare* are not found in the articles.

The first of these terms is *risk*. There are 15 concordance hits to this term and the semantically-related words in the articles from *The Guardian*¹⁰⁷. Following the graphic in Figure 57 below, the verbal form *risked* is the most frequent term used (33%), and is followed by another verbal form *risks* (20%), and the plural noun *risks* (13%). *Risk* as a noun and verb, the adjective *risky*, its superlative form *riskiest*, and the verb *risking*, all of them share the same results (7% each) and are the least used in the articles.

Figure 57

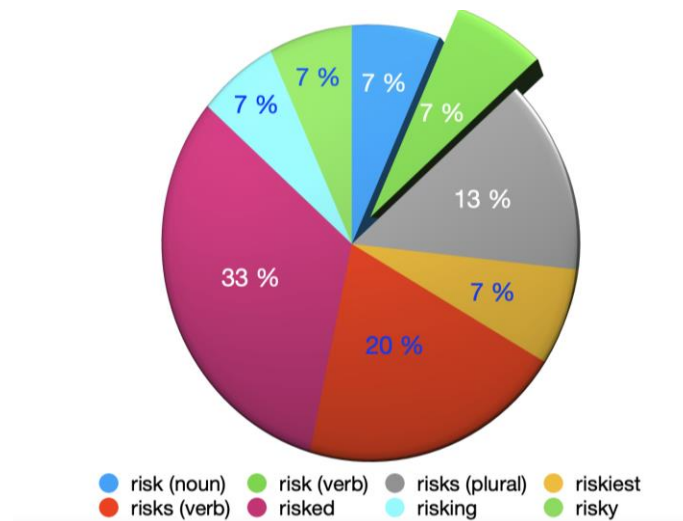
Frequency of appearance of the terms *risk* (noun), *risk* (verb), *risks* (plural noun), *riskiest*, *risks* (verb), *risking*, and *risky* in the articles from *The Guardian*

NOUNS, ADJECTIVES AND VERBS	
risk (noun)	1
risk (verb)	1
risks (plural)	2
riskiest	1
risks (verb)	3
risked	5
risking	1
risky	1

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/threat#synonyms>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/threat>

¹⁰⁷ Appendix 1.



The examples below from *The Guardian* reflect one of the clear manifestations of a threat, which are the possible consequences or repercussions if something is or is not done in a specific way. It is a rather subjective interpretation or opinion based on the analysis about what may or may not happen if certain actions take place in one way or another.

Examples from *The Guardian*:

George Bush **risked a further deterioration in relations with the Russian president, Vladimir Putin**, yesterday when he met critics of the Kremlin's human rights record and told them he supported their work to build a "civil society" and democracy.

[...] Mr Bush [...] must find effective ways of drawing Mr Putin into the Euro-Atlantic community; or **risk "losing Russia"**, with all the damaging strategic consequences that might entail.

Mr Bush flew to Georgia after attending yesterday's VE day commemoration in Moscow, where he **risked further deterioration in the relationship between the US and Russia** by meeting vocal critics of the Russian president, Vladimir Putin.

[...] the necessary restoration of state power in Russia in recent years has been at **heavy risk** to the political and juridical liberalisation which was the major [...] achievement of perestroika.

Alexander Lebedev, a Russian MP critical of the Kremlin's hardline stance, said brinkmanship over prices **risked angering Russia's western European partners** [...].

If the EU does not expand to take in more parts of the former Soviet Union, places like Transnistria will remain black holes. If it does, the European Union **risks itself going the way of the former Soviet Union**.

Europe is **risking silence** to end its longest war¹⁰⁸

[...] low-key offers of help by European governments, and support at the Council of Europe for Chechnya's political forces to start a dialogue, could have a better chance of success. [...] but **the risks are enormous**.

With Maskhadov gone, the **risks of polarisation and new bloodshed** have grown.

Poland **risks Russia's wrath with Soviet nuclear attack map**¹⁰⁹

Poland's new rightwing government [...] **risked a damaging confrontation with Russia** when it published a Warsaw Pact map showing detailed plans for Soviet nuclear strikes against western Europe.

Fatih Birol, chief economist at the International Energy Agency (IEA) says: 'There could be serious implications for western Europe if the problem is not resolved. [...] relying on one supplier for a major part of a supply is very **very risky**.'

One Russian MP said that **Moscow's refusal to back down risked making it look like an "energy bully"**. Relations between the two former Soviet countries deteriorated after Ukraine's orange revolution [...].

The next term related to *threat* is the noun *trouble*, the adjective *troublesome*, and the past form *troubled*. There are 3 concordance hits to these terms¹¹⁰. Each of these terms shows an equal percentage of use (33%), according to the graphic in Figure 58 below:

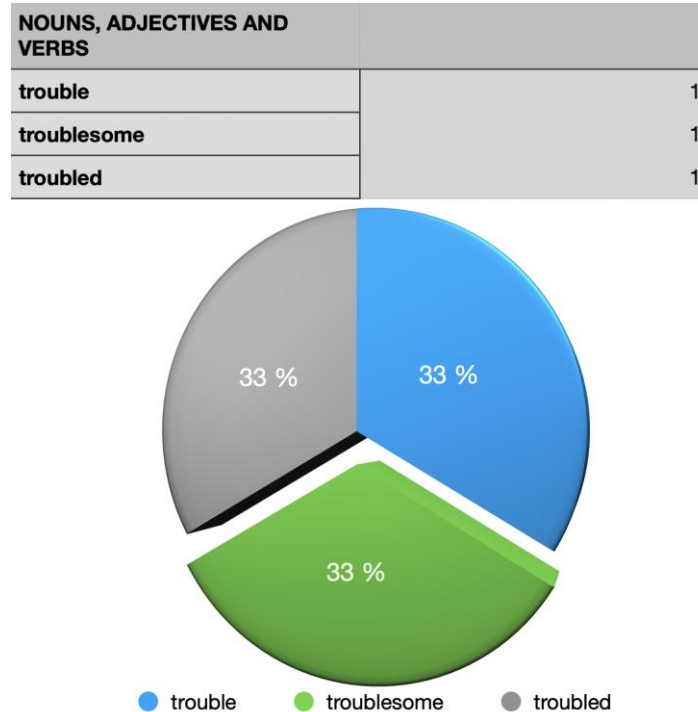
¹⁰⁸ Headline (Appendix 3, p. 236).

¹⁰⁹ Headline (Appendix 4, p. 279).

¹¹⁰ Appendix 1.

Figure 58

Frequency of appearance of the terms *trouble*, *troublesome*, and *troubled* in the articles from *The Guardian*



As opposed to the term *risk* and its semantically-related forms, the word *trouble* does reflect a direct consequence of a precedent action, as shown below:

*Mr Putin, who is also **troubled** domestically **by unpopular benefit reform and increasing discontent from the business elite**, used the speech to offer concessions across the political spectrum.*

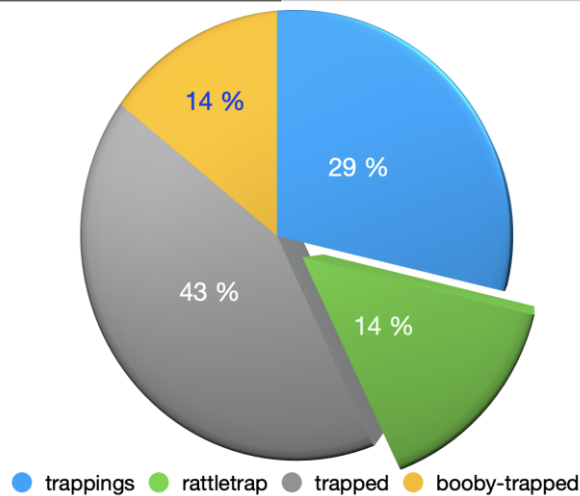
The next threat-related terms are the nouns *trap*, *trappings*, and *rattletrap*, and the verbal forms *trapped* and *booby-trapped*. The articles from *The Guardian* show 7 concordance hits to these terms¹¹¹. According to the graphic in Figure 59 below, the most frequently used term is *trapped* (43%). The second position goes for the plural noun *trappings* (29%), and the terms *rattletrap* and *booby-trapped* occupy the third position (14% each).

¹¹¹ Appendix 1.

Figure 59

Frequency of appearance of the terms *trappings*, *rattletrap*, *trapped* and *booby-trapped* in the articles from *The Guardian*

NOUNS, ADJECTIVES AND VERBS	
trappings	2
rattletrap	1
trapped	3
booby-trapped	1



The noun *trappings* appears following the noun compliments of *its Soviet past* and of *the Stalinist state*:

*Minsk retains all **the trappings of its Soviet past**.*

*[...] Soviet liberation ushered in **the trappings of the Stalinist state**.*

Similarly to the term *trouble*, the term *trap* and its related terms also make a clear manifestation of the direct consequences from a specific action:

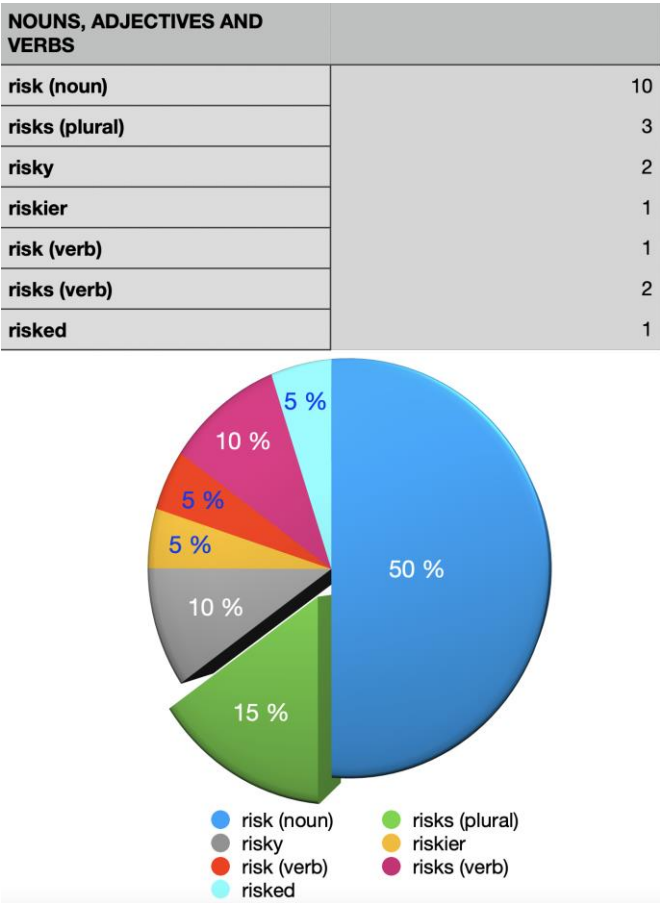
*The FSB says Maskhadov was killed by grenades thrown into the basement where he **was trapped**.*

*[...] the building was destroyed because of fears it **had been booby-trapped** [...].*

All these terms equally appear in the articles from *The New York Times* and have the same escalating effect as that observed in *The Guardian*. According to the results, we find 20 concordance hits to the noun *risk* and its semantically-related terms¹¹². The graphic in Figure 60 below shows the noun and the verb *risk* appearing with 50% of the results, which means they are the most frequently used terms in the articles from the US press. The second position is occupied by the plural form *risks* (15%). The third position goes to the verbal form in third person singular, *risks* (10%). The final positions are occupied by the adjective *risky*, the comparative form *riskier*, and the *ED*-form *risked* (5% each).

Figure 60

Frequency of appearance of the terms *risk* (noun), *risks* (plural noun), *risky*, *riskier*, *risk* (verb), *risks* (verb), and *risked* in the articles from *The New York Times*



¹¹² Appendix 2.

The words accompanying the term *risk* give an intensifying character to Russia's image as a threat. This is especially evident in the gas conflict with Ukraine, the Chechen conflict, the nuclear issue, and the economic deficiencies due to Russia's communist past.

*[...] Senator John Kerry, the Democratic nominee, accused Mr. Bush of moving far too slowly in addressing [...] the biggest single **proliferation risk** in the world.*

*[...] the militarized Soviet state, [...] has emerged as a **risk to post-Soviet states and to nations far away**, endangering local environments and communities and providing a reservoir of lethal materials for terrorists and armed groups.*

*Such stockpiles endanger global security [...] because military munitions can readily be disassembled and their explosives used to make powerful bombs. **This risk** is among the prospective worries in Ukraine.*

*The health care system is in shambles. **The risk of suffering a violent death** is nine times as high for Russian men, compared with men in Israel.*

*[...] Russia is becoming steadily less democratic. [...] even public health [...] is now **at risk**.*

*[...] Gazprom is **at risk** of appearing as a tool of the Kremlin [...].*

*Christopher Weafer, chief strategist at Alfa Bank, concurred with that view, saying: "[...] the reason Russia is cheap is **risk**. Shifting politics can easily change economic dynamics."*

*Ukrainian officials and industry analysts played down any **immediate risk**, saying gas reserves in Ukraine would ensure that its supply was maintained for at least two days and perhaps longer than two weeks.*

*[...] as Soviet-era munitions have aged, environmental and **safety risks** have mounted.*

*A gas shortage during heating season could discredit the president and weaken his party [...]. Ukrainian officials have acknowledged **the risks**.*

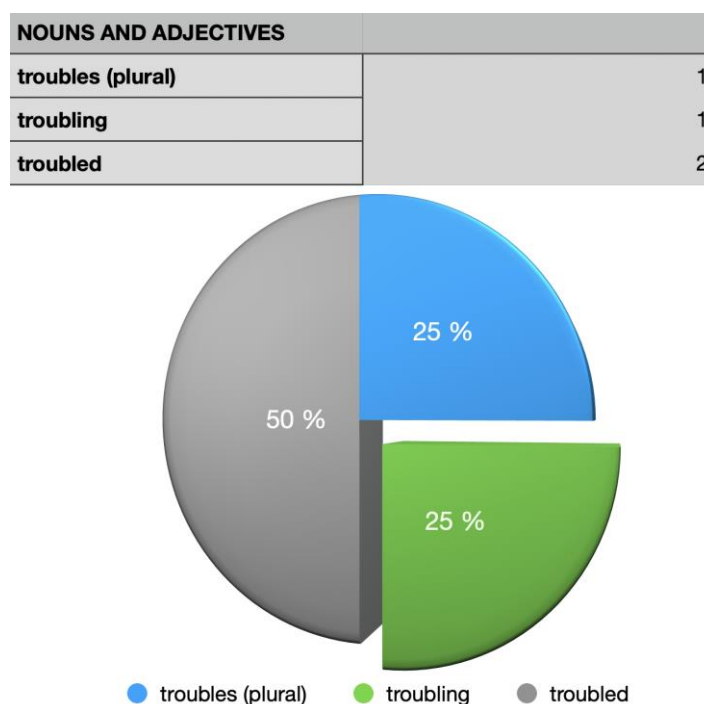
*[...] too much of Georgia's political power is concentrated in its president and that the nation **risks drifting to one-party rule**.*

*The leaders of [...] Abkhazia and South Ossetia -- have treated Mr. Saakashvili as an impulsive neophyte and say his drive for national reunification **has risked rekindling latent civil wars**.*

The next term is the plural noun *troubles* and the semantically related adjectives *troubled* and *troubling*. There are 4 concordance hits to these terms¹¹³. According to the graphic in Figure 61 below, *troubled* is the most frequently used term (50%), whereas *troubles* and *troubling* occupy the second position (25% each).

Figure 61

Frequency of appearance of the terms *troubles* (plural noun), *troubling*, and *troubled* in the articles from *The New York Times*



The adjective *troubled* is placed next to the adverb *deeply* and coordinated with another adjective, *chaotic*. It also appears coordinated with another adjective, *complicated* next to the noun *relationship*.

*It is a measure of how **deeply troubled and chaotic** the **region** is [...] despite the presence of tens of thousands of Russian and pro-Moscow Chechen forces [...].*

*Mr. Putin's trip is a concrete sign of improved ties between Russia and Israel as they work to overcome a **complicated and troubled relationship** dating back decades.*

***The society's troubles**, [...] could force the United States and other countries to [...] face a confrontation with Mr. Putin's government.*

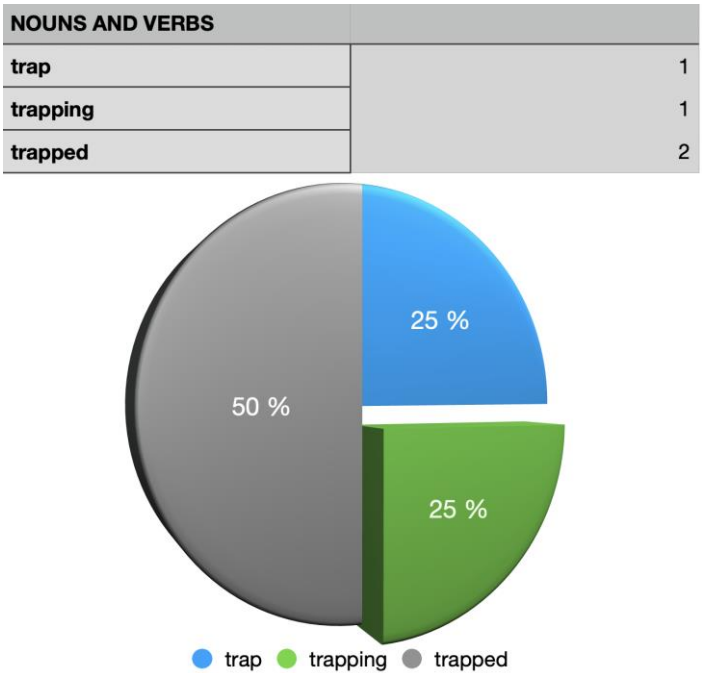
¹¹³ Appendix 2.

The examples above highlight not only the turbulent relations between Russia and the United States, but also the lack of efficiency on the part of the Russian government in managing conflicts such as that in Chechnya. All this makes the US government concerned about the uncertainty with regards to Russia's actions. In this sense, the threat is reflected in the uncertainty about how to continue further relations with Russia.

The final set of threat-related terms is formed by the noun *trap* and the verbal forms *trapping* and *trapped*. The results are exactly the same as those reflected in the terms *troubles*, *troubling* and *troubled*. There are 4 concordance hits to these terms¹¹⁴ and the results from the graphic in Figure 62 below also coincide with those applied to the terms *troubles*, *troubling* and *troubled*: the most frequently used term is the verb *trapped* (50%), whereas the noun *trap* and the verb *trapping* occupy the second position (25% each).

Figure 62

Frequency of appearance of the terms *trap*, *trapping*, and *trapped* in the articles from *The New York Times*



¹¹⁴ Appendix 2.

[...] Mr. Basayev said he had deceived Russian intelligence services, which believed that his accomplices [...] cleared a route at the border as **part of a trap**, which the terrorists sidestepped.

The gerund *trapping* appears next to the pronoun *itself* making reference to Russia. The example below clearly reflects the possible consequences for Russia being constantly tangled in its past if it does not embrace to Western model of democratisation. The metaphorical reference *an eddy of reaction and isolation* reinforces the idea of trapping:

*Russia faces a choice between entering the mainstream of the modern world, or **trapping itself in an eddy of reaction and isolation**.*

The verb *trapped* appears in passive and is followed by the agents *by Russian commandos* and *by the Nazi's Final Gamble*:

*Mr. Maskhadov was **trapped by Russian commandos** on Tuesday in a bunker beneath a house in a Chechen village.*

V. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of my thesis was to present and develop the subject of Russia's image construction as a threat to the West reflected in the newspapers from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* in the year 2005. For such purpose, I carried out a contrastive study of the articles, with examples to corroborate the hypothesis that in the year 2005, Russia's image worldwide was that of a fearful country, representing a potential threat in the nuclear, ideological, economic and domestic spheres. The fact is, there is a big uncertainty about Russia's possibilities of becoming a recognised democratic nation by the countries like Great Britain and the United States. As discussed in the theoretical framework, this is so due to Russia's complex history, which has made manifest Russia's strong tendency to keep on being regarded as a stranger to the Western world. Besides, the creation of a series of stereotypes associated to Russia's image as a barbaric, alien and feared country, is significantly reducing the chances for Russia to be fully recognized and accepted as a country with a clear Western democratic model.

A clear justification for the hypothesis developed was based on the theoretical-practical nature of my thesis. The theoretical approach had a focus on a broad description of the key ideas of the historical evolution of Russia for a better understanding of its otherness and its evolution over the centuries to the present day. We saw how this otherness has made Russia a rather peculiar country from the political and socio-economic points of view, creating a bigger distance with respect to Great Britain and the United States. In this sense, the general ideas of the historical development of Russia in parallel with the development of Great Britain and the United States as nations of their own have also been included within the theoretical framework, in order to facilitate the understanding of why these two countries have continued to see Russia as a threat. On the other hand, the importance of the commented stereotypes was key to reinforce Russia's otherness, and constituted a clear example of the different commented representations about Russia and its image in the world (the evil bear, the Asian barbarian, etc.).

As explained in section 2.2.4, the inclusion of framing has been very important to emphasise Russia's otherness and its image as an ideological threat through the dichotomy of *Us* vs *Them*. From a discourse perspective, this dichotomy is reflected in the role played by the lexical-semantic, stylistic and rhetorical features when it comes to influencing a reader of a news story (section 2.2.7). This explains the close relationship between the concept of framing and the lexical and discursive elaboration of the press articles, since this relationship reflects a whole series of linguistic strategies that implicitly

carry persuasion as the key factor of influence exerted on the news reader and their cognitive schemata when it comes to interpreting the news content. In section 2.2.8, I described the different linguistic and rhetoric strategies based on the desired emphasis upon a particular aspect of the content presented to the reader. The concept of framing is fundamental and serves as a practical application for the analysis of the lexical-semantic and rhetorical-stylistic aspects of the newspaper articles from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*.

Within the methodology section, the first of the three stages of CDA based on Fairclough's model (the lexical-semantic one) has been described in detail for the analysis of the British and American press texts, as well as the lexical-semantic and stylistic-rhetorical analysing criteria based on van Dijk's model, with a special emphasis on the dichotomy *Us vs Them*. It is important to re-emphasise that I have focused mainly on the first of the three stages of Fairclough's model for a better illustration of the lexical and stylistic features for the analysis of Russia's image as a threat in the newspaper articles. I have also developed a detailed description concerning the corpus and its structuring, with a special emphasis on the thematic relevance linked to Russia's image as a threat. A thorough description of the structure of the press articles and their formal presentation have equally been paid attention to in this section.

The final part of the methodology section included the overall number of concordance hits to the threat-related terms and their semantic equivalents, and also the total results to these terms following the word category classification, mainly into nouns, adjectives and verbs. The results served as a quantitative illustration to show a specific sphere of prevalence of some threat-related terms over the others. According to the data reflected in the tables, the conclusion was that, both, in the British and American press articles, the threat-related terms with a higher frequency of appearance corresponded to those from the military-nuclear sphere, with their respective semantic equivalents, and also to the terms from the ideological sphere alluding to Russia's communist past.

In the practical approach of my thesis, we could see how various theoretical aspects of Russia's image as a threat could be brought into the field of analysis of the British and American press texts. The first step was to define the concept of threat, in relation to the basic concepts of denotation and connotation. As we have seen in the examples of the terms *nuclear* and *communist* (section 1.2. in the analysis section), these concepts are very important for the lexical-semantic analysis of the threat-related terms, since they significantly influence the meaning of these terms and their use according to the context.

The second step was based upon the analysis of the headlines to stress the lexical-semantic importance of the threat-related terms. Some of the headlines were included from the articles of *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* as illustrative examples.

The third and final step consisted of a detailed analysis of all the threat-related terms and their semantic equivalents appearing in the texts from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*. The terms of threat were represented in semantic networks and the quantification was carried out according to their frequency of appearance in the British and American press articles. Once again, I made reference to the classification of these terms into word categories such as nouns, adjectives and verbs within the final part of the methodology section. The results, however, were analysed and discussed in more detail within the analysis section, whereas the methodology section served to introduce them in a more general way. Additionally, the analysis included examples from the articles, as well as the data quantification reflected in the pie charts. In each of the analysed set of threat-related terms, the results showed the frequency of use of these terms and the implications thereof.

I will conclude my exposition by pointing out the recurring idea present in today's Western discourse, which is Russia's need to change as a country. In the eyes of Great Britain and the United States, Russia's transformations and a very complicated transition towards democracy since the fall of communism have not been enough to end with innumerable domestic problems and a general instability as a political actor. Putin's image as an authoritarian (or neo-authoritarian) figure is regarded by the West as an attempt to recover the Communist past, which would destroy all Russia's effort to continue on its path towards the Western democratic model.

As described in the contrastive analysis of the articles, the image of Russia as a nuclear and ideological threat has been emphasising the lack of democracy and freedom. This implies that Russia's otherness and the dichotomy of *Us* versus *Them* have prevailed up to the present. In the eyes of the Great Britain and the United States, the image of Russia and the knowledge about it have been integrated in a wider socio-political discourse. Many journalists, publicists, religious, social and political figures, diplomats and businessmen have nowadays included themselves in the discussions and debates concerning Russia, its problems and its future (Журавлева, 2012). If, at the end of the 19th century, the perception of Russia on the other side of the Atlantic was inscribed in a very complex set of love-hate emotions, nowadays we see the sense of superiority and the right to some sort of tutorship behind the thoughts about the nature of Russian civilisation.

At present, Russia is still in a mixed position of accepting the influences of the Western values, and, at the same time, trying to preserve its deeply-rooted traditions (Alapuro, et al., 2012). Moreover, what is clearly disputed in the current Western discourse is whether Russia as “a learner will remain a dominant identity in Russian political discourse itself”, due to the continuous tensions for the Russians “between accepting the role as ‘learner’ from Europe and maintaining the notion that Russia is a European great power, a notion which presupposes some kind of equilibrium with (other) European great powers” (Neumann, 1998: 4). Such contradictory tendencies lead us to question whether Russia can really be part of Western Europe, how much of Europe, in the sense of European values, is in Russia (Вульф, 2003), and the degree of acceptance of Russia as part of the Western world.

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APPENDIX 1

Quantification of the threat-related terms from *The Guardian*

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERM

NUCLEAR

Concordance Hits 66	
Hit	KWIC
1	hs of more than 600,000 civilians and opening the
2	would irritate Tehran. But evidence of Iran's
3	analysts as a warning to Iran about its
4	an operation that would have resulted in the
5	, not least in the grotesque continuation of a
6	2005 14. Poland risks Russia's wrath with Soviet
7	was offered the knowledge needed to make a
8	away from having the knowledge to make a
9	its nuclear weapons programme. Mr Putin said the
10	would have been laid to waste in a
11	-aircraft missiles to Damascus. Under the Iranian
12	last month's 19th anniversary of the Chernobyl
13	shington. The US has long maintained that Iranian
14	not have a nuclear weapon." David Albright, a
15	an improvement of our access to [Russia's
16	for a visit to Iran". If signed, the
17	at 19 Feb 2005 3. Putin defends Iran and eyes up
18	repatriation deal would also open the way for
19	clear fuel." Russian officials have said that the
20	said: "This storage house is ready to receive
21	that would open the way for delivery of
22	the way for the delivery within weeks of
23	Moscow Mon 28 Feb 2005 7. Russian deal will send
24	Apr 2005 9. Kremlin disputes Rice's claim on US
25	ax news agency: "Visits by American inspectors to
26	says that looking at other fuel renewables and
27	nts are: an array of uncontrolled and unmonitored
28	and reported on detailed military plans to ship
29	ails. 2 On Friday Hassan Rowhani, Iran's chief
30	however, he said his country remained committed to
31	. Russia is not only building Iran an \$800m
32	. It was signed at the Russian-built Bushehr
33	this is clarified, but people [in the Russian
34	nacceptable," Mr Putin said. Russia is building a
35	down to asking whether we should build new 2
36	Iran. Russia has provided assistance for Iran's
37	put off publishing a report on the Iranian
38	in Washington. His weekend championing of Iran's
39	an even more critical front: global terrorism and
40	be returned to Russia, but only after 10 years.
41	amental and politically expensive as building new
42	that Russia had no intention of halting its
43	at nations" (Bush) are equal: their agreements on
44	considering letting American inspectors check its

45	agreement on new measures to safeguard its ageing	nuclear stockpile ... [This] underscored the growing alli
46	Mr Putin. Washington fears that Russia's ageing	nuclear stockpiles may fall into terrorists' hands, and w
47	policy of retaining the right to a first	nuclear strike - because the Soviet Union had far superio
48	Warsaw Pact map showing detailed plans for Soviet	nuclear strikes against western Europe. Poland threw open
49	e mushroom clouds, representing the expected Nato	nuclear strikes, are drawn over cities in the eastern
50	, they may want to look at renewables and	nuclear.' This all sounds familiar to UK ears. Indeed,
51	under the shadow of the catastrophe of a	nuclear war - and that the transition from the communist
52	uranium enrichment - another possible route to a	nuclear warhead. Tehran has agreed only to suspend enrich
53	that is that Iran should not have a	nuclear weapon." David Albright, a nuclear expert and dir
54	rica, meanwhile, the detonation of Russia's first	nuclear weapon in September 1949, and the outbreak of the
55	remained committed to nuclear non-proliferation. "	Nuclear weapon proliferation is dangerous in general, and
56	cause of concern. Israel accuses Iran of pursuing	nuclear weapons, although Tehran insists its programme is
57	atomic energy programme is a front for developing	nuclear weapons and has openly clashed with President Vla
58	by post-Soviet problems of control over ageing	nuclear weapons and materials and the fear that they
59	that Iran indeed does not intend to produce	nuclear weapons and we will continue to develop relations
60	Kremlin and declared that Tehran was not pursuing	nuclear weapons, flatly contradicting repeated allegation
61	nor North Korea should be allowed to acquire	nuclear weapons may have decreased the pressure. Mr Bush'
62	strongest indication to date that Iran had a	nuclear weapons programme, but it doesn't prove it
63	Tehran would use the technology to further its	nuclear weapons programme. Mr Putin said the nuclear comp
64	hroom clouds over western Europe show that Soviet	nuclear weapons strikes would have been launched at Germa
65	of keeping North Korea and Iran from obtaining	nuclear weapons. They also announced Russia's agreement o
66	largely demobilised, the Russians (still without	nuclear weapons) were maintaining a vast standing army in

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *COMMUNISM, COMMUNISTS, AND COMMUNIST*

Concordance Hits 45	
Hit	KWIC
1	to discover he was also giving money to
2	the cold war the equation of Nazism and
3	7 lei (about £18), told Reuters: "I voted for the
4	Russia in the 80s, before the collapse of
5	out immediately over the question of recognising
6	The liberals, some former political prisoners in
7	his infamous list of "a great many known
8	iterated". Yelena Bonner, widow of the celebrated
9	two most important states to have undergone the
10	s though a disappointed electorate might choose a
11	new capitalist system than they were under Soviet
12	time soon. The left is still pilloried as
13	at first seemed a doomed campaign, with the
14	. In their eagerness to prevent a return to
15	merica's 3 defence of Greece and Turkey against
16	health and vigour of its own society. "World
17	nally recognised Moldovan state, though himself a
18	ons. And the enormous social injustice which gave
19	and the politically immobile dictatorship of the
20	asylum. Left, right, it doesn't matter: greens,
21	threshold for smaller parties. Although the anti-
22	had realised that their project of a reformed
23	29%. Moldovan MPs appoint the president, and the
24	new. When Gorbachev took the helm of the
25	ntirety from programme speeches of leaders of the

communists. And they've had other problems. Two of
communism became more prevalent. It was given a superficial
Communists because they look after the old people and
communism. But he does not expect history to repeat
Communist China. Dulles leaked to a reporter the substance
communist days, were nettled to discover he was also
communists" employed by the state department. Kennan returne
communist-era dissident Andrei Sakharov, has spoken up for
communist experiment: the neo-authoritarian dictatorship of
Communist for president in 1996, albeit one who accepted mu
communism? In recent months, most western discourse on Russ
communism in softer guise. Unlike in central Europe or
communists in the ascendant. His eventual success, he believ
communism in the mid-1990s, western leaders and the
communist insurgents and promised help for any other threat
communism is like a malignant parasite which feeds only
communist, is trying to get closer to the European
communism its historic force in the last century is
communist leaders in China. No transition to democracy here
communists, liberals and Chechens with an animus against Put
communism of the 1990s has slackened slightly, as polls
communism, or even a social-democratised USSR, was unrealis
Communist party, headed by incumbent President Vladimir Vor
Communist party in March 1985, the paper belonged to the
Communist party, Motherland (Rodina), and other leftist opp

26	Georgia and other post-Soviet states. 2 But his	Communist party - projected to win 60% of the vote - contin
27	ted a parliament, abolished censorship, ended the	Communist party's "leading role" and gave Russians the
28	of Moscow through the ballot box. The ruling	Communist party, the last in Europe, won 40% of the
29	after pledging to cleanse the country of its	communist past, believes the map shows how Moscow was
30	One contains the legacies of the Soviet and	communist periods. Among its contents are: an array of
31	Ish Nick Paton Walsh in Moscow Mon 7 Mar 2005 2.	Communists poised to win Moldovan poll - and reject Russia
32	rope were unquestionably better off under the new	communist regimes than under German imperial domination. Ge
33	The episode touched the central questions of post-	communist Russia. Have the shifts in property ownership rea
34	during the Soviet era in the name of	communism. Russia must face up to and come to
35	to develop in a mature way in post-	communist Russia, or indeed in Georgia, Ukraine, and the
36	just on Lenin Street but on Soviet Street,	Communist Street and Peace Street every third person seems
37	of a man who had progressed from pragmatic	communist to soft-spoken democrat, Rybkin had been speaker
38	nuclear war - and that the transition from the	communist to the postcommunist era in eastern Europe, and
39	its head to remind you that 70 years of	communism was a difficult legacy to shake off. Political
40	often masked an inner view that Nazism and	communism were somehow two sides of the same evil
41	pro-western Mr Voronin is an old-school	communist who sheltered under Moscow's wing until Russia'
42	der Yakovlev, the now fierce antiMarxist and anti-	communist who used to be Gorbachev's ideology chief,
43	as a return to the 'show trials' of	communism, with the defendant as the scapegoat for the
44	period and, indeed, from the ideology of the	communist world. It is as if, having appeared to
45	has become more marked with the fall of	communism 15 years ago. The opening up of Soviet archives

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS WEAPON, AND WEAPONS

Concordance Hits 25	
HIT	KWIC
1	concern. Israel accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, although Tehran insists its programme is peacefu
2	nergy programme is a front for developing nuclear weapons and has openly clashed with President Vladimir Pu
3	st-Soviet problems of control over ageing nuclear weapons and materials and the fear that they might
4	Iran components that could be used to make weapons, and that its assistance was a cause of
5	Iran indeed does not intend to produce nuclear weapons and we will continue to develop relations in
6	, and to those who are killed by the weapons coming out of there. Yet it also highlights
7	is that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon." David Albright, a nuclear expert and director o
8	and declared that Tehran was not pursuing nuclear weapons, flatly contradicting repeated allegations by the
9	by providing a foreign threat with a gas weapon." However, most analysts agree Ukraine's Soviet-s
10	anwhile, the detonation of Russia's first nuclear weapon in September 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean
11	North Korea should be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons may have decreased the pressure. Mr Bush's
12	indication to date that Iran had a nuclear weapons programme, but it doesn't prove it completely,"
13	would use the technology to further its nuclear weapons programme. Mr Putin said the nuclear components d
14	Iran to extract plutonium for use in a weapons programme. Mr Rumyantsev told AP: "In the next
15	nuclear energy development is a front for a weapons programme, while Israel has said Iran is six
16	committed to nuclear non-proliferation. "Nuclear weapon proliferation is dangerous in general, and in suc
17	slip into town with a huge quantity of weapons so easily. Five local police officers have been
18	ecially concerning Russia's vulnerable Soviet-era weapons stockpile. Russia's role as a major energy
19	ouds over western Europe show that Soviet nuclear weapons strikes would have been launched at Germany, the
20	job, western experts in the area believe that weapons supplies to rogue regimes and potential terrorist
21	in the crossfire of tracer rounds from automatic weapons. The guerrilla underground is spreading more and
22	eping North Korea and Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. They also announced Russia's agreement on new
23	ial. It allowed Soviet industry to concentrate on weapons to fight back with. Without Lend Lease the
24	ow of resources under the "Lend Lease" programme. Weapons were few, and the Soviets regarded them as
25	demobilised, the Russians (still without nuclear weapons) were maintaining a vast standing army in the

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS

THREATS, THREAT, THREATEN, THREATENS, THREATENED, AND THREATENING

Concordance Hits 25	
Hit	KWIC
1	then as they are now: the fabrication of
2	it by Berezovsky. He saw off one political
3	five places where she could be attacked." Such
4	success in the Russian media industry is death
5	faces quadrupling of cost as subsidy withdrawn
6	lity." The Russians were more concerned about the
7	. Mr Putin said the nuclear components did not
8	such legacy concerns the origins of the terrorist
9	thout expecting consequences", he said. "They are
10	munist insurgents and promised help for any other
11	turn, said Russia needed to address the growing
12	constitutional court, and so on. He has received
13	words and rules, rather than the bullets and
14	he opposition Moldovan Democratic Bloc, which has
15	reliant on Russian gas.' In addition, there are
16	transported via Ukraine. If Russia makes good its
17	Paton Walsh in Moscow Thu 15 Dec 2005 15. Russia
18	es to neighbouring Ukraine yesterday, hours after
19	tate-controlled Russian gas monopoly, Gazprom, is
20	ge after Ukraine rejects huge price rise · Russia
21	crises in Moscow's liberal print media which
22	line with world prices. Kiev has retaliated by
23	see in Chechnya's autonomous mayhem a spreading
24	consolidate their support by providing a foreign
25	finds himself in legal limbo. If he was

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS

AUTHORITARIANISM AND AUTHORITARIAN

Concordance Hits 24	
Hit	KWIC
1	prewar Baltic regimes of the 1930s were not
2	union of all the different forces opposing the
3	is also high for Russia - a return to
4	Western critics see the issue as democracy versus
5	Putin insisted there would be no return to "
6	rged him to "publicly challenge President Putin's
7	have undergone the communist experiment: the neo-
8	personal relationship with Mr Bush, Mr Putin's
9	and curbs on the independent media an alarming "
10	etter than nothing. Under the general heading of "
11	he last dictatorship in Europe, while condemning "
12	Russia's slide back towards a more centralised,
13	to the electoral defeat of neighbouring Ukraine's
14	6m to finance opposition groups in Belarus, whose
15	the spectre of a return to Russia's
16	has no intention of rolling back his recent
17	this year saw a popular uprising against an
18	is changing. Alarmed by Mr Putin's increasingly
19	have undergone protest-led regime change against
20	allow me to become a dictator ... but an
21	about the flaky Rybkin bid. He blames the
22	opponent - because that's the logic of an
23	... Such obtuseness ... goes hand in hand with an
24	ine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan have turned away from

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *OCCUPIERS, OCCUPATION, OCCUPY, OCCUPIED, AND OCCUPYING*

Concordance Hits 17	
Hit	KWIC
1	while continuing military action against "Russian
2	s" have until recently carried on unimpeded. They
3	as a platform to claim the Red Army
4	Nazi massacres of Jews. Moscow argues that its
5	f deadly operations in Russia. These included the
6	instead to focus his comments on the Soviet
7	Franklin Roosevelt laid the way for the Soviet
8	visit of Mr Bush, who described the Soviet
9	the demand that Moscow should apologise for its
10	the pale for negotiations as far as the
11	minance after 1945 as a liberation rather than an
12	lands to Soviet Ukraine and Belarus, and to
13	's forced subjugation to Moscow. The Red Army
14	ave demanded that Russia apologise for the Soviet
15	authoritarian and chauvinist, or to claim Soviet
16	liberation of the Baltic countries from a Soviet
17	nilaterally decided to combine the Anglo-American

occupiers". A group of Russian MPs tried to engineer
 occupy a peculiar niche: their circulation is too small
 occupied Latvia rather than liberating it." In an attempt
 occupation liberated the Baltics from Nazi tyranny. The Balt
 occupation of a Moscow theatre, a bombing near the
 occupation of Eastern Europe that followed, and the Yalta
 occupation of Europe, and compared it to the appeasement
 occupation of Europe as one of the great wrongs
 occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Bush's comments
 occupying power was concerned, but the only person with
 occupation ... Such obtuseness ... goes hand in hand with an
 occupy the Baltic states a year later. Or it
 occupied the three countries during the second world war
 occupation. "Vladimir Putin regards the westwards extension
 occupation was as bad as that of the Nazis
 occupation which began thanks to the devil's pact
 occupation zones in Germany, the west had unsurprisingly fai

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *DICTATOR, DICTATORS, DICTATORSHIP, AND DICTATORIAL*

Concordance Hits 16	
Hit	KWIC
1	last year · They tell me: you are a
2	state will never allow me to become a
3	Walsh in Minsk Fri 6 May 2005 14. Europe's 'last
4	here are no terrorists here." This "last European
5	alone to bear. · Richard Overy's book The
6	xander Lukashenko's administration the "last true
7	to call for change in Belarus, the last
8	Stalin's, cannot be regarded as a modernising
9	me: you are a dictator. Am I a
10	by Cold War ills: an arrogant West, shabby
11	mir Putin in Russia, and the politically immobile
12	e the communist experiment: the neo-authoritarian
13	Russia has focused on the alleged revival of
14	] the question: How to prevent a return to
15	people had been dumped there by the Soviet
16	things out here to see what level of

dictator. Am I a dictator? My position and the
 dictator ... but an authoritarian ruling style is characte
 dictator' defies calls for change Opponents of the Belarus
 dictatorship" has become the final battleground for Moscow in
 Dictators: Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia appeared
 dictatorship in Europe", and said it was "time for
 dictatorship in Europe, while condemning "authoritarian drift"
 dictatorship. Its concern was with national rebirth and suprem
 dictator? My position and the state will never allow
 dictators, naive protests The thinkers and managers of worl
 dictatorship of the communist leaders in China. No transition
 dictatorship of Vladimir Putin in Russia, and the politically
 dictatorial tendencies at the top. Two versions clash. Vladim
 dictatorship? ... The best, if less-than-satisfactory approach
 dictator, who, in 1944, had feared their rebellious temper
 dictatorship would be acceptable for former Soviet citizens."

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS **RISK, RISKS, RISKIEST, RISKED, RISKING AND RISKY**

Concordance Hits 15	
Hit	KWIC
1	ction Poland's new rightwing government yesterday
2	ates of 'civil society' and democracy George Bush
3	's hardline stance, said brinkmanship over prices
4	success. The policy is worth trying, but the
5	, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. If he does nothing, he
6	major part of a supply is very very
7	's VE day commemoration in Moscow, where he
8	black holes. If it does, the European Union
9	Mr Putin into the Euro-Atlantic community; or
10	said that Moscow's refusal to back down
11	Moscow theatre seizure. With Maskhadov gone, the
12	dden prisons. Berezovsky's fourth strategy is his
13	cholas Watt in Warsaw Sat 26 Nov 2005 14. Poland
14	25/russia.chechnya Fri 25 Mar 2005 17. Europe is
15	Russia in recent years has been at heavy

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS **DOMINATION, DOMINATES AND DOMINATED**

Concordance Hits 8	
Hit	KWIC
1	have gone on winning, and a huge German-
2	new communist regimes than under German imperial
3	d into an unprecedented superpower bid for global
4	Baltic states to apologise for years of Soviet
5	". He said at the weekend that post-1945 Soviet
6	a President George Bush yesterday said the Soviet
7	even now see something sinister in his growing
8	ado, an electronics and white goods retailer that

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS **TRAPPINGS, RATTLETRAP, TRAPPED AND BOOBY-TRAPPED**

Concordance Hits 5	
Hit	KWIC
1	destroyed because of fears it had been booby-
2	Azerbaijan. If he does nothing, he risks being
3	or former Soviet citizens." Minsk retains all the
4	western powers, Soviet liberation ushered in the
5	grenades thrown into the basement where he was

Concordance Hits 1	
Hit	KWIC
1	was destroyed because of fears it had been booby-trapped, but some human rights activists and critics

Concordance Hits 1	
Hit	KWIC
1	with Logovaz, the firm that made the little rattletrap Zhigulis of Soviet days. As hyperinflation hit po

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS
TROUBLE, TROUBLESOME AND TROUBLED

Concordance Hits 3	
Hit	KWIC
1	Georgia next month. Mr Putin, who is also troubled domestically by unpopular benefit reform and incr
2	was also Ms Morozov's attorney, ran into trouble in October 2003. A week before he was to
3	stations bend to his will, especially since two troublesome press barons have taken fright and fled Russia.

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERM
TYRANNY

Concordance Hits 3	
Hit	KWIC
1	akes of other generations - appeasing or excusing tyranny, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of
2	ontinent and established a new and longer-lasting tyranny ... "No word of the Soviet role in starting
3	at its occupation liberated the Baltics from Nazi tyranny. The Baltic countries did not break free from

APPENDIX 2

Quantification of the threat-related terms from *The New York Times*

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERM

NUCLEAR

Concordance Hits 86	
Hit	KWIC
1	to make Russian reactors safer. The worst
2	, are citing documents turned over to the
3	have resisted American efforts to get the
4	considers its sphere of influence. Beyond the
5	majority for programs to destroy or secure
6	much of the former Soviet Union's
7	of efforts to safeguard the public from
8	agreements on sharp cuts in long-range
9	suspected to be a program to develop
10	's security was threatened by Russia's
11	nuclear warheads and vast insecure stockpiles of
12	of 18,500, where uranium was enriched to build
13	have worked to secure and dispose of
14	offer, which came from the former Pakistani
15	tered infrastructure, and again defended Russia's
16	rought no significant new announcements on either
17	ambitious effort to persuade Iran to abandon
18	, Mr. Kravchenko said. He said, however, that
19	had reiterated his pledge not to sell
20	weapons." Iran is required to return spent
21	have to get Iran to agree to
22	remains about the historical accuracy of Soviet
23	ncy focuses on identifying possible diversions of
24	has worked with Russian officials to recover
25	, busy border crossings, or those near stored
26	trying to create layers of security between
27	flew on a passenger jet with the
28	to form new emergency-response procedures if
29	Russia's Service for Customs Control of
30	and dismantling of some of Russia's
31	U.S. is more important than protecting
32	would have been helpful to the struggling
33	of the reactor model used there and
34	contends that Russian help with building a
35	States or Israel on Iran's Bushehr
36	, reprocesses it and sells it to American
37	reasingly challenging the reluctance of the major
38	walk away from international obligations on its
39	differences on Iran, in particular over its
40	Iran to allow strict controls on its
41	, the effort to rein in Iran's
42	threat it faces. Iran insists that its
43	for what it says is a peaceful
	nuclear accident in history occurred on April 26, 1986, w
	nuclear agency by Iran apparently showing that it
	nuclear agency to refer Iran to the Security
	nuclear agreement, the day produced no breakthroughs. Mr.
	nuclear and other weapons. But \$45 million went to
	nuclear and radioactive material has been consolidated in
	nuclear and radioactive stockpiles left from the cold
	nuclear-armed missiles and bombers. The last time
	nuclear arms. The Europeans counter that the talks
	nuclear assistance to Iran and missile sales to
	nuclear bomb fuel. And it is also Russia
	nuclear bombs during the Cold War. Now, Tiit
	nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the conventiona
	nuclear chief, Abdul Qadeer Khan. British and American
	nuclear cooperation with Iran while saying that Russia
	nuclear front, just elaborately orchestrated theatrics th
	nuclear fuel activities that could lead to the
	nuclear fuel pellets and raw uranium had been
	nuclear fuel to Iran without an agreement that
	nuclear fuel to Russia so it cannot be
	nuclear inspections," he added. Later Mr. Sharon, whose
	nuclear inventories. That means that how much material
	nuclear material and has little weapons expertise. The
	nuclear material from old warheads and to make
	nuclear material, have received the sensors rather than
	nuclear material on foreign soil and the United
	nuclear material to Munich, where he was arrested.
	nuclear material was missing or a "dirty bomb"
	Nuclear Materials and Radioactive Sources, said the senso
	nuclear materials. But it also offered unusual moments
	nuclear materials from falling into the hands of
	Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference now und
	nuclear power in general, and he became atomic
	nuclear power plant could help Iran develop nuclear
	nuclear power plant, which Russia is helping to
	nuclear power plants.
	nuclear powers to reduce their weapons inventories. Any
	nuclear program and oust the inspectors who are
	nuclear program, and that the United States would
	nuclear program, Britain and the United States are
	nuclear program has occurred largely in the International
	nuclear program is strictly for civilian use. 2 "We
	nuclear program. The British, as part of the

44 sale of equipment to Iran for its nuclear program, there also appeared to be little
45 negotiations on an eventual abandonment of its nuclear programs. On top of these problems, European
46 . 2 "We are working with Iran for peaceful nuclear purposes," Mr. Putin said. "We certainly object
47 be allowed 2 to enrich uranium for its nuclear reactors -- but only on Russian soil. Russian
48 . Putin talked with Iran about expanding their nuclear relationship, a subject the official said did
49 M. Longworth, deputy director of the National Nuclear Safety Administration, a semiautonomous agency in
50 be used to help Russians improve their nuclear safety, his lawyers said Tuesday. The atomic
51 because of the Kremlin's fears that nuclear secrets would leak out. Locals say that
52 , a spokesman for the agency. The National Nuclear Security Administration said it would continue to
53 concern when it comes to Russia is nuclear security and nonproliferation, and on that front,
54 passed a drill of a quietly expanding nuclear security initiative in the former Soviet Union.
55 that threatens to hold up those vital nuclear security programs, along with joint moves to
56 mportant statement," said Matthew Bunn, a Harvard nuclear specialist who worked with Mr. Kerry's
57 Russia's mediating role in Iran's nuclear standoff with the United States and Europe,
58 ill complement security measures at former Soviet nuclear storage sites by providing a means to
59 administration official who took part in the nuclear talks said that the goal of the
60 ton otherwise supported Russian efforts to reopen nuclear talks with Iran. "We believe Russia is
61 ficials complained that his institute was selling nuclear technology to Iran. Despite the Chernobyl accident
62 February, they announced an agreement to combat nuclear terrorism by accelerating joint programs meant to
63 that could reduce the potential threat of nuclear terrorism by speeding up the much-delayed
64 Holgate, a regional vice president of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a Washington-based nongovernmental
65 Georgia, that still has more than 10,000 armed nuclear warheads and vast insecure stockpiles of nuclear
66 with joint moves to take thousands of nuclear warheads off hair-trigger alert (Russia's
67 also proceed to overdue reductions in tactical nuclear warheads, which are more easily stolen or
68 national Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations nuclear watchdog, which has described a pattern of
69 missing or a "dirty bomb" or a nuclear weapon fell into the wrong hands. But
70 while saying that Russia opposes an Iranian nuclear weapon. "We intend to continue in all
71 new evidence, that Tehran intends to build nuclear weapons, American and European diplomats said. Un
72 cooperation in combating terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons and narcotics trafficking, gently chided
73 material could not be used secretly for nuclear weapons, because it would be enriched only
74 Iran and North Korea should not have nuclear weapons. But the two sides remained divided
75 object to any Iranian plans for acquiring nuclear weapons." Iran is required to return spent
76 nuclear power plant could help Iran develop nuclear weapons. Israel regards that prospect as the
77 declaration on Iran from the five major nuclear weapons powers that are the permanent members
78 abandon what is thought to be a nuclear weapons program, and American opposition to Europ
79 to persuade Iran to dismantle its any nuclear weapons program it has, as well as
80 Iran to get it to dismantle any nuclear weapons projects, Russia's efforts to open
81 peaceful ends," Mr. Putin said. He added: "Nuclear weapons proliferation is dangerous in general, an
82 on a joint effort to dismantle Russian nuclear weapons so they do not fall into
83 steps needed for it to become a nuclear weapons state. The Moscow stop brought no
84 immense build-up in conventional arms and nuclear weapons that characterized the cold war from
85 seeing, in short, is a country with nuclear weapons that is enduring a slowmotion version
86 Iran should not be allowed to have nuclear weapons, they have resisted American efforts to

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS COMMUNISM, COMMUNIST, AND COMMUNISTS

Concordance Hits 46	
Hit	KWIC
1	back on as they wrestled with Soviet
2	holiday break, but soon leaders of the
3	the terrible twins of the 20th century,
4	that "the remembrances of the time of
5	us are grateful for the fall of
6	States should stop the global spread of
7	on Persian Gulf. Should Spain fall under
8	United States group that has supported former
9	were economic and political reasons the former
10	. Bush's European trips in the former
11	hold one tribunal that would address a
12	and less visible to the West, because
13	. It has cast aside the country's
14	President Islam A. Karimov of Uzbekistan, post-
15	past week shows, the dirty laundry of
16	judged at Nuremberg, whereas the crimes of
17	the rank of colonel and serving in
18	will decide fate of capitalism and of
19	events in Iraq to the overthrow of
20	"truth"; it was an exercise in glorifying
21	its ability to counter the challenge of
22	Baltic states or Ukraine, the scourge of
23	in coping with this problem of Soviet
24	, Latvia and Lithuania and the imposition of
25	into an armed camp. He felt that
26	warfare" unit that aimed to roll back
27	, which had virtually no AIDS problem under
28	Kremlin pique, a postSoviet update of the
29	ll sclerotic state structures, inherited from the
30	), where they seal their territories off against
31	pejorative for the autocrats' brand of post-
32	wanted to run away from their former
33	Stalin. Indeed, in terms of sheer numbers,
34	in Baku. The Azeri government emerged from
35	they associated with Russia. The top ... were
36	, Latvia and Lithuania and the imposition of
37	Man Who Took the Measure of the
38	/the-man-who-took-the-measureof-the-
39	among elements which it is important for
40	boldened and united his political opponents, from
41	distinction be made, in moral terms, between
42	said, as the slow rot of Soviet
43	be little debate that the exercise of
44	early 1950's, setting the stage for anti-
45	concluded that the growing diversity in the
46	for the breed. A member of the
	Communism and a Maoist revolution in China. Though
	Communist and Motherland parties helped organize more. They
	Communism and Nazism, should be viewed on a
	Communism are unpleasant remembrances and you need to
	communism, but the phrase "epidemic of collapse" is
	Communism by diplomacy, politics, and covert action -- by
	Communist control, question of Soviet base at Gibraltar
	Communist countries joining NATO. "This is Russia's
	Communist countries turned their backs on Russia. "It
	Communist countries where the president remains highly popu
	Communist crime: the 1.5 million Cambodians sacrificed to t
	Communism exercised such an enduring fascination on intelle
	communist experiment as an unworkable utopia and begun
	Communist governments often manipulate electoral outcomes,
	Communism has not yet been hung out in
	Communism have never come before an international tribunal.
	Communist Hungary, and later in Lithuania as the
	communism in entire world." Why, the Soviet leadership
	Communism in the Velvet Revolution in 1989 in Czechoslovaki
	Communism. In the West, truth could also be
	Communism. In 1946, when most of the world was
	Communism is much more palpable than it is
	communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to
	Communism." Mr. Bush told the Latvian leader that
	Communism needed to be confronted politically when it
	Communism, not merely contain it. His brainchild became
	Communism, now faces the possibility that by 2010, 250,000
	Communist Party's infamous show trials. A battle
	Communist past. But he also blamed Putin policies
	Communist penetration (Switzerland, Portugal), or where the
	Communist political liberalization. And when managed democr
	Communist powers in the East." Indeed, when the
	Communism's claim to have been more murderous
	Communism seeking closer relations with the West. But
	Communism, the KGB, snow and the mafia. The
	Communism." The letter provoked the angry response from
	Communist Threat GEORGE F. KENNAN, who died Thursday
	communist-threat.html By PETER EDIDIN MARCH 20, 2005 8. Th
	Communists to dominate. What is to be done?
	Communists to liberals who only a few months
	Communist totalitarian terror and Nazism? Vaira Vike-Freibe
	Communism undermined the cold war's architectures. The '
	Communism, whatever the idealism of its origins, killed
	Communist witch hunts that severely dented the American
	Communist world was one of the most significant
	Communist Youth League when the Soviet Union began

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS WEAPON, WEAPONS, WEAPONRY AND WEAPONIZE

Concordance Hits 40	
Hit	KWIC
1	services. Israel also put severe restrictions on weapons allowed to the Palestinian police. Mr. Putin
2	evidence, that Tehran intends to build nuclear weapons, American and European diplomats said. Until now,
3	week in London.] Huge depots of conventional weapons and ammunition remain in much of the
4	military now numbers roughly 300,000. The surplus weapons and ammunition, some dating to World War
5	in combating terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons and narcotics trafficking, gently chided Mr. Puti
6	ade, jointly fighting terrorism, proliferation of weapons and organized crime, and adopting uniform educati
7	could not be used secretly for nuclear weapons, because it would be enriched only to "
8	to destroy or secure nuclear and other weapons. But \$45 million went to groups that promote
9	and North Korea should not have nuclear weapons. But the two sides remained divided over
10	diversions of nuclear material and has little weapons expertise. The diplomats, who asked not to
11	tists Web site. Vedomosti, citing an unidentified weapons factory manager and a source said to
12	or a "dirty bomb" or a nuclear weapon fell into the wrong hands. But they
13	process of removing, converting and transporting weapons fuel and might not agree on that
14	, the official said, most of the excess weapons fuel in Russia would be secured or
15	material is in their loads. Since 1995, no weapons-grade material has been discovered, Mr. Kravchenk
16	because spent fuel can be converted to weapons-grade plutonium. This month, Mr. Putin talked
17	least to an intent to build a weapon. "If we could get China and Russia
18	the major nuclear powers to reduce their weapons inventories. Any presidential trip that 2 skirt
19	to any Iranian plans for acquiring nuclear weapons." Iran is required to return spent nuclear
20	power plant could help Iran develop nuclear weapons. Israel regards that prospect as the most
21	to declare that Iran is trying to "weaponize" its program, despite its denials, is a
22	on Iran from the five major nuclear weapons powers that are the permanent members of
23	what is thought to be a nuclear weapons program, and American opposition to Europe's
24	this bears all the hallmarks of a weapons program, it could have an enormous impact
25	persuade Iran to dismantle its any nuclear weapons program it has, as well as Mr.
26	to get it to dismantle any nuclear weapons projects, Russia's efforts to open its
27	ends," Mr. Putin said. He added: "Nuclear weapons proliferation is dangerous in general, and in
28	Israel to Let Palestinian Security Forces Use Weapons RAMALLAH, West Bank, April 29 - President Vladimi
29	Friday to allow Palestinian security forces the weaponry required to fight terrorism as he completed
30	a joint effort to dismantle Russian nuclear weapons so they do not fall into the
31	needed for it to become a nuclear weapons state. The Moscow stop brought no significant
32	build-up in conventional arms and nuclear weapons that characterized the cold war from the 1950'
33	, in short, is a country with nuclear weapons that is enduring a slowmotion version of
34	and dispose of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the conventional stockpiles pose problems as yet
35	we do not support the sales of weapons." The sale could complicate Russia's mediating
36	should not be allowed to have nuclear weapons, they have resisted American efforts to get
37	from democracy and its plan to sell weapons to Syria. European and American officials say
38	saying that Russia opposes an Iranian nuclear weapon. "We intend to continue in all our
39	large quantities of post-Soviet equipment. The weapons were promptly shuttled to Liberia on a
40	29 missile systems to Iran, and that the weapons would complicate a potential airstrike by the

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS **THREAT, THREATS, THREATENS, THREATENED, AND THREATENING**

Concordance Hits 39	
Hit	KWIC
1	a vibrant and democratic Poland as a threat.
2	position in the short term. But their threats against Ukraine, their mocking of Ukrainian propo
3	problems, many of which cause a great threat and danger," Mr. Tereschenko said. "The tragedy
4	, but the political containment of a political threat. As chairman of the planning staff at
5	the containment by military means or military threat, but the political containment of a political
6	allay fears that Israel's security was threatened by Russia's nuclear assistance to Iran
7	members have been questioned and, they say, threatened -- by security officers and by unknown people. [
8	the Volga River, where it has offices, threatening foreign support for groups like it and
9	Who Took the Measure of the Communist Threat GEORGE F. KENNAN, who died Thursday at 101,
10	apartment building where Mr. Dmitriyevsky lives, threatening him and Ms. Chelysheva by name. "Death
11	-man-who-took-the-measureof-the-communist-threat.html By PETER EDIDIN MARCH 20, 2005 8. The Man
12	said that would be theft. Ukraine's threat, if acted upon, could create shortages in
13	Union, which might feel its eastern flank threatened. In 1950, having left the planning staff to
14	21, 2005 12. Rice Tells Putin U.S. Is No Threat in Region VILNIUS, Lithuania, April 20 - Secretar
15	, a regional vice president of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a Washington-based nongovernmental or
16	regards that prospect as the most serious threat it faces. Iran insists that its nuclear
17	Gas-Price Rise, Russian Company Renews Cutoff Threat MOSCOW, Dec. 30 - Worries of a winter gas
18	autocrat and denounced his policies as a threat not only to democratic values, but also
19	an agreement that could reduce the potential threat of nuclear terrorism by speeding up the
20	eksei Miller, its chief executive, reiterated the threat on Friday. "If Ukraine does not sign
21	. That, many commentators have said, would have threatened Polish national security. And then, last year,
22	by Mr. Putin's tendencies, they have threatened Russia with suspension or outright expulsion from
23	now roughly \$2 billion and it has repeatedly threatened that it will file for bankruptcy protection.
24	good news is that neither side is threatening the other with invasion or occupation, so
25	neighbors, trading in freedom and posing no threat to anyone." The president pointedly said, "The
26	by Russia, Germany and Ukraine. Gazprom is threatening to cut supplies if talks break down,
27	Russia's energy giant, Gazprom, renewed its threat to cut supply lines to Ukraine on
28	the week Prime Minister Yury I. Yekhanurov threatened to do. Gazprom said that would be
29	resolution of a dispute over liability that threatens to hold up those vital nuclear security
30	railways and is sometimes seen as a threat to interfere with their plans. Meanwhile, Moscow
31	, are favored by terrorists and pose a threat to military and commercial aircraft. The State
32	may miss the larger point. The real threat to Russia's future could lie in
33	From Europe article on Wednesday, about economic threats to Russia's future, misstated the title
34	vanced warning radar stations in Ukraine. Gazprom threatened to sue if Ukraine siphons gas from
35	monopoly, grew more intense Tuesday as Ukraine threatened to take a portion of the gas
36	become so ensnared by corruption that it threatens to undo Russia's progress since the
37	hired to work for the organizations receive threatening visits and phone calls, telling them to
38	10 Georgian officials stopped by to issue veiled threats, warning that unless he wanted a full
39	the first to make good on that threat, which echoed one he made a year

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS **OCCUPATION, OCCUPIED, OCCUPANTS, OCCUPYING, OCCUPIES, AND OCCUPY**

Concordance Hits 28	
Hit	KWIC
1	nations like Latvia endured under the Soviet occupation after World War II. Mr. Bush is
2	said, "the war also marked the Soviet occupation and annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania
3	World War II "also marked the Soviet occupation and annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania
4	deals "went beyond mere recognition of Soviet occupation and conferred legality and international acceptan
5	Hitler. "When people today discuss whether we occupied anybody's country or not, I want
6	The presidents of Lithuania and Estonia, nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940 and reoccupied after
7	he presidents of Lithuania and Estonia -- nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940 and reoccupied after
8	was ever deliberately to make about my occupation," he said. Mr. Kennan served as a
9	Baltics -- and denying that Baltic states were occupied; it is also again trying to gloss
10	suggested, because "it meant slavery, it meant occupation, it meant subjugation and it meant Stalinist
11	's defeat without endorsing the subsequent Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. As one administration official
12	alliance. 7 Taking an active interest in the occupation of Japan and Germany, he incurred considerable
13	Nazi Germany in 1939, leading to the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania -- a question
14	Nazi Germany in 1939, leading to the Soviet occupation of part of Poland that year and
15	time-honored practice. After all, the principal occupants of the White House and Kremlin have

16	demands that Russia apologize for decades of	occupation. "Once would be enough," said President Vaira
17	II. Soviet troops joined German forces in	occupying Poland, and the next year the Soviet
18	II. Soviet troops joined German forces in	occupying Poland, and the following year the Soviet
19	of what would turn into 46 years of	occupation, prompting diplomatic and political sniping that
20	is threatening the other with invasion or	occupation, so the history of wars and partitions
21	the end of Israel's withdrawal from	occupied territory, new violence could break out. He
22	Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, who currently	occupies the European Union's rotating presidency, said
23	they are the only ones ever to	occupy the Kremlin. That was in the early 17
24	forces overran the three Baltic countries and	occupied them, with local support, until Soviet troops
25	forces overran the three Baltic countries and	occupied them, with local support, until Soviet troops
26	more, because he repeatedly used the word "	occupation" to describe the Russian acts in the
27	march in. "One cannot use the term "	occupation" to describe those historical events," Sergei Yas
28	Western Europe's -- a legacy of Russian	occupation, when the czars widened train tracks across

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *RISKY, RISKIER, RISK, RISKS, AND RISKED*

Concordance Hits 20		
Hit	KWIC	
1	. Paying cash is more transparent and less	risky, and it's a move investors should
2	, global investors dumped what they saw as	riskier assets -- and many emerging markets were hit
3	apital. Ukrainian officials have acknowledged the	risks. At a news conference on Thursday, Anatoly
4	to discourage multiple voting, might carry health	risks. Daniel Fried, an assistant secretary of state
5	in its president and that the nation	risks drifting to one-party rule. Human Rights
6	15 percent is also unstable enough that it	risks exploding from handling, electricity, heat or che
7	era munitions have aged, environmental and safety	risks have mounted. This was made clear last
8	people who want to go out and	risk having their heads beaten." The media coverage
9	what may be the biggest single proliferation	risk in the world. Administration officials rushed to
10	explosives used to make powerful bombs. This	risk is among the prospective worries in Ukraine. "
11	conflict with Ukraine, however, Gazprom is at	risk of appearing as a tool of the
12	health care system is in shambles. The	risk of suffering a violent death is nine
13	say his drive for national reunification has	risked rekindling latent civil wars. One of his
14	and industry analysts played down any immediate	risk, saying gas reserves in Ukraine would ensure
15	, but the reason Russia is cheap is	risk. Shifting politics can easily change economic dyn
16	with neighbors. That policy is not without	risk. The Kremlin and its allies at Gazprom
17	, even public health advocates -- is now at	risk. The latest challenge to civil society comes
18	. Bush and German citizens was too politically	risky. The proposed town-hall meeting raised the
19	state, one that has emerged as a	risk to post-Soviet states and to nations
20	, " he explained, "you assume a lot more	risk which is not priced in." The Yukos

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *DOMINATION, DOMINANCE, DOMINANT, DOMINION, DOMINATE, AND DOMINATED*

Concordance Hits 11		
Hit	KWIC	
1	, like Labor government in England, for moral	domination among elements which it is important for
2	- for clinging to historic grievances over Soviet	domination. He cuttingly said he hoped that Latvia
3	is locked in conflict with Washington for	dominance in the region's former Soviet republics.
4	aspects of Russian imperialism, the wish to	dominate its neighbors, like Ukraine, and certainly never
5	has been driven to penury by a	dominant new breed of post-cold-war America-
6	-Ribbentrop -- or of the Soviet Union's	domination of Eastern Europe after the war -- appears
7	to invade Poland in exchange for Soviet	dominion over Finland and much of the Baltics --
8	its huge energy resources, is still the	dominant partner, with a high trade surplus of 10
9	onary sentiment against the autocratic rulers who	dominate the former Soviet Union. Then Ukraine fell
10	alim Saidullayev would succeed Mr. Maskhadov that	dominated the news, drawing perplexed and sneering reaction
11	which it is important for Communists to	dominate. What is to be done? In summary,

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *AUTHORITARIAN AND AUTHORITARIANISM*

Concordance Hits 10	
Hit	KWIC
1	in the old Soviet Union that remained authoritarian: "Belarus is really the last true dictatorship
2	's uniquely "Eurasian" destiny, which implies an authoritarian domestic order and a foreign policy that
3	chwork of corrupt and semifunctional states where authoritarianism has proven durable and political liberalization h
4	and former, express some wonder that the authoritarian leaders in these states put up with
5	. Putin remains intact. In fact, the worrisomely authoritarian Mr. Putin seemed to come off rather
6	role of a classic victim of Russian authoritarianism, of an honest businessman victimized by a
7	Putin is intent on building a semi-authoritarian regime that's prepared to kill its
8	ut Putin. "Nowadays, people understand that under authoritarian rule, development is impossible. This government,
9	to accusations that their rule amounts to authoritarianism. Stung by criticism of Russia's role
10	scientists cause to devise a new classification: authoritarianism without authority. To be sure, he has

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *DICTATORSHIP, DICTATORSHIPS AND DICTATOR*

Concordance Hits 10	
Hit	KWIC
1	description of Belarus as Europe's last dictatorship "an appeal to overthrow the administration of
2	"Western-style liberal democracy" and "a budding dictator," between democrats and "Soviet leftovers." Baker
3	the Soviet Union, he felt certain a dictatorship could be defeated by a free society,
4	authoritarian: "Belarus is really the last true dictatorship in central Europe, and it is time
5	previously declared that Belarus was the last dictatorship in Europe, warned bluntly on Thursday that
6	and fair" elections in Belarus, 2 the last dictatorship in Europe, whose president, Aleksandr G. Lukashen
7	the 1950's when he sacrificed Stalin's dictatorship in the name of Lenin. Now the
8	rather than exulting in the downfall of dictatorship." It has been a time, the authors
9	." Russians can applaud Putin's goals, "the dictatorship of law" at home and the rebirth
10	be seen. Belarus and Turkmenistan have become dictatorships to different degrees, squelching political opposi

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *TYRANNY AND TYRANT*

Concordance Hits 5	
Hit	KWIC
1	stakes of other generations appeasing or excusing tyranny, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit
2	culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." Eleven months on, Mr.
3	Elbe -- "it was Stalin, the most odious tyrant of the century" -- and that the pact
4	www.nytimes.com/2005/05/04/world/europe/still-the-tyrant-stalin-refuses-to-bewished-away.html By
5	By STEVEN LEE MYERS MAY 4, 2005 14. Still the Tyrant, Stalin Refuses to Be Wished Away MOSCOW,

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS *TROUBLED, TROUBLING AND TROUBLES*

Concordance Hits 4	
Hit	KWIC
1	. It is a measure of how deeply troubled and chaotic the region is that despite
2	situation in the United States and certain troubling aspects of Washington's policies." He noted
3	two years in prison. 3 The society's troubles, including the tax claim against it, could
4	they work to overcome a complicated and troubled relationship dating back decades. Yet their diffe

CONCORDANCE HITS TO THE TERMS
TRAP, TRAPPING AND TRAPPED

Concordance Hits 4	
Hit	KWIC
1	, some of whom attended. Mr. Maskhadov was trapped by Russian commandos on Tuesday in a
2	and Slaves: American P.O.W.'s Trapped by the Nazis' Final Gamble" (Knopf).
3	the mainstream of the modern world, or trapping itself in an eddy of reaction and
4	at the border as part of a trap, which the terrorists sidestepped. The Russian au

APPENDIX 3

Articles from *The Guardian*

January

**News
Europe**

Business

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2005/jan/12/media.russia>

Jonathan Watts in Beijing

Wed 12 Jan 2005

'Ten of our journalists have been killed in 15 years. Living with a bodyguard is no fun'

The head of Russia's Interfax news agency on powerful friends and deadly enemies

The following correction was printed in the Guardian's corrections and clarifications column, Friday February 18 2005

In the article below, we said that Mikhail Komissar served as Boris Yeltsin's interior minister, when his position was an advisory role as the deputy head of presidential administration. In an interview, Mr Komissar said 10 journalists had been killed in the past 15 years, but he has asked us to point out that only three of these were Interfax journalists. He also asks us to clarify that, contrary to the article, Interfax was one of the first news agencies to report on the scale of the killings in Beslan. He adds that his comments about the problems facing Interfax, himself and his family relate to a period in the early 1990s, and are not current.

The price of success in the Russian media industry is death threats, ever-present bodyguards and murderous moral dilemmas. So as the most successful information entrepreneur in post-Soviet history, Mikhail Komissar has had to get used to 24-hour protection and constant questions about whether he is too close to the leaders his organisation reports on.

He has changed his will and the ownership structure of his company, Interfax, to prevent his rivals seizing control through assassination; he has sent his daughter to study overseas, where she is less likely to be kidnapped, and left letters with lawyers in other countries that are to be opened in the event that he is murdered.

Such precautions are, Komissar explains, business as normal in one of the world's roughest emerging markets.

"This is a difficult place to establish a media organisation," he tells the Guardian in a rare interview. "Ten of our journalists have been killed in the past 15 years. It is a hard life, I can tell you - living with a bodyguard is no fun."

Yet Komissar has been remarkably adept in outfoxing both his rivals and critics while building one of the fastest growing providers of business information in the world.

Interfax was founded in 1989 by Komissar and a handful of journalists from Radio Moscow during the death throes of the Soviet Union. Its name derives from its initial means of distribution - Russia's first fax machines. In those early days, these devices were at the cutting edge of technology. For years, income from fax rentals was higher than revenues from news service fees.

Since then, the initial client base of 50 embassies and foreign businessmen in Moscow has expanded to 20,000 customers around the world. Although Interfax does not publish its business results, it is now the most influential - and probably the most profitable - media organisation in Russia.

Komissar says he was lucky. "We appeared at the right time, in the right place, with the right people.

"It was a time when the world was very interested in the Soviet Union, when a lot of things were possible."

Interfax now has more than 1,000 staff and a fast-growing, multi-layered business model. This year, it has signed alliances with the UK personal credit rating agency, Experian, and the American commercial rating agency, Moody's. More than just a media organisation, Interfax now offers databases, ratings services and a range of specialist information on fields ranging from Russia's vast military-industrial complexes to Chinese mining.

Assassination fears

Komissar says profits have grown by between 10% and 15% for each of the past five years, but he will not divulge who is reaping the benefits because, he says, the Russian business world is plagued by oligarchic gangster bosses.

"Interfax is owned by several journalists but we don't divulge how many," says Komissar. "It can be physically dangerous. Someone might decide this is a nice business, let's have it. We've had to fight off attacks from several oligarchs."

All he will say is that he and his family have a controlling stake, which has been structured in such a way that it would be difficult to seize, even if two or three of them were assassinated.

"Interfax is very attractive to powerful oligarchs because it is influential and profitable. It could be a good instrument for their vanity," he says. "At the peak of our popularity, one oligarch came up to me with a piece of paper that showed the route my daughter takes to school and five places where she could be attacked."

Such threats appear not to have distracted Komissar from building a media empire not only in the former Soviet Union but also in the old eastern bloc.

He was speaking in China, where Interfax has established a news bureau that is beginning to rival Reuters and Bloomberg in the frequency of its business scoops, particularly in the area of heavy industry.

Komissar says modern China reminds him of Russia in the 80s, before the collapse of communism. But he does not expect history to repeat itself.

"China has managed to create a very interesting model. Unlike Russia, it has avoided the disintegration of the state and the anarchy that goes with such a break-up. Instead it has a strong government that has created a favourable business environment. That is why international investors come here. In Russia we first destroyed so much, including positive things, and we humiliated our own people. First, we changed, and then we thought about the consequences. The Chinese are smarter. First, they think, then they change."

Interfax now has 30 journalists in China - mostly in Shanghai - and it is expanding fast, both in terms of staff and sales, which grew last year at more than 30%. With the media market slowly starting to open up, Komissar is on the look-out for business partners.

"Until now, the Chinese authorities have been very cautious about joint ventures in the information area. But this society is changing very quickly, so I hope for more opportunities."

What might endear him to Beijing is a pragmatic approach to media ethics. Komissar makes no apology for occasionally withholding sensitive stories and getting close to those in power.

It is a lesson he learned in the chaotic years that followed the break-up of the Soviet Union. At that time, he recalls, the media was so unregulated that it regularly divulged state secrets, published libellous claims and revealed private information such as credit card bills and transcripts of bugged mobile phone conversations. Interfax once acquired and reported on detailed military plans to ship nuclear missiles - including the exact schedule of the train they would be carried on.

"We were so stupid to publish that," Komissar recalls. "I don't like that kind of freedom."

He is more cautious today. In covering the Beslan school massacre in September, Interfax held back reports about the scale of the killings because he feared that worried parents "all armed with guns" would try to storm the building and make the situation worse.

"When I have a choice of whether to withhold news or be involved in thousands of deaths, I chose the former. It may not be pure in a journalistic sense but I don't want that heavy moral problem."

Critics say Komissar compromises so much that he has become part of the establishment. It is certainly hard to imagine how he could get much closer. In 1997, he worked as Boris Yeltsin's interior minister for 18 months. Earlier this year, he was awarded the medal of friendship by president Vladimir Putin.

But the former radio journalist insists he is close enough to get information but independent enough to make his own decisions about when to publish.

As evidence, he says Interfax broke the news of the death of the Chechen president in May, while the state-run agency, ITAR-Tass, remained silent for hours because it had to wait for the official Kremlin line.

"In our country you have to be brave to distribute information when the Kremlin doesn't want it out. I've been on the inside. I have seen why those in power want to withhold news. They are not bad people. It is politics," he says.

Having seen the media pendulum swing wildly from excessive secrecy to excessive liberty over the past 15 years, Komissar now finds himself supporting a new anti-terror bill that would strengthen the state's control over journalists.

"Our modern reality is that we are surrounded by terrorists so something must change in the rules. If we publish information about anti-terror exercises, it can result in many deaths. We support the new anti-terror law, so does all of the media industry."

Hearing his enthusiastic endorsement of restrictions on the freedom of expression, it is hard not to wonder whether the former independent journalist has indeed joined the establishment.

Given his recent move to create Russia's leading credit and business rating agency, and the launch of a corporate database, Spark, which he claims is more powerful than anything in the Kremlin, conspiracy theorists might even now see something sinister in his growing domination of the Russian information business. But Komissar wants to sell information, not hide it. If he is a big brother at all, it is as part of a global capitalist family. The media regulations he says he wants to see implemented in Russia are those that have been in place for more than 100 years in the UK.

And at least he professes a respect for words and rules, rather than the bullets and threats preferred by the oligarchs.

It is to distance himself from them that he insists on changing for the photograph. Instead of the casual attire he sported for the interview, he returns to his hotel room to dress in a suit and tie.

"The oligarchs always wear casual clothes," he says. "I wouldn't want anyone to mistake me for one of them."

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2005/jan/27/pressandpublishing.radio>

Julia Day

Thu 27 Jan 2005

Russian reporter 'silenced' for Chechnya coverage

A Russian investigative reporter who covered the Chechnyan war has been found guilty of forging his passport, in a verdict condemned by international journalists' groups.

Yuri Bagrov has been effectively stripped of his passport in a move that media watchdog Reporters Sans Frontiers described as an "unprecedented" action against a journalist.

The watchdog also said he and his wife - who is pregnant - had been harassed by the Russian secret police and had received anonymous phonecalls asking for "Bagrov's widow".

Bagrov, an ethnic Russian who works for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Associated Press, was the only remaining western correspondent working in Vladikavkaz, capital of the Russian North Ossetia state, scene of last year's Beslan school massacre.

He was fined 15,000 roubles - £278 - for "forgery" on January 19 in a court hearing that he said gave him no chance to plead his case.

The Russian authorities questioned the validity of the passport Bagrov obtained in 2003 as a replacement for his former Soviet passport.

"They didn't give me a chance. The case was held at 4am on 19 January," Bagrov said. "No witnesses were called and the hearing was over in five minutes."

Now, without a passport, the journalist finds himself stripped of his nationality and effectively stateless.

Reporters Sans Frontiers said the case amounted to "systematic legal hounding" of an investigative reporter.

"It is simply a case of silencing a journalist who had expressed himself on issues that local journalists do not touch because of the pressure they are under," said a spokesman for the watchdog.

"Yuri Bagrov, deprived of his passport and of his nationality, now finds himself in legal limbo. If he was threatened with expulsion he would have no country prepared to take him," the spokesman added.

The only recourse Bagrov has to overturn the court decision is to appeal to the North Ossetia supreme court after he has paid the fine. The Russian supreme court would be his final recourse.

He has complained before that he was prevented from covering the Chechnyan elections or the Beslan school massacre after Russian secret service agents confiscated his travel documents.

Bagrov has reported for Associated Press since 1999, writing numerous stories that included closely guarded casualty figures for Russian military and police forces in Chechnya.

An ethnic Russian, he moved from Georgia to Russia in 1992 and his mother and wife both have Russian passports - normally enough to obtain a passport for the country.

On October 6 he was told he was being charged with "forgery" despite having received the passport in 2003 after a regional court ruling according him Russian nationality.

Then on December 29 local authorities ordered Bagrov out of a room of journalists gathered for a press conference held by the president of North Ossetia.

Reporters Sans Frontieres recently condemned the obstruction of media coverage of the Beslan tragedy - when 329 people, mainly children, died - and voiced its concern at a possible extension throughout the region of the media blackout in force in Chechnya.

There are growing concerns about press freedom in Russia following the massacre in Beslan, with two journalists claiming they were poisoned in an effort to hamper their reporting of the siege.

Anna Politkovskaya, a respected Russian investigative reporter, fell ill after drinking tea given to her on a plane, while Nana Lezhava, from Georgia's independent Rustavi-2 TV station, believes she was given tranquillisers after being detained by the Russian authorities.

Lezhava was arrested with a colleague on suspicion of violating visa rules but was never charged.

After the tragedy Raf Shakirov was dismissed as the editor of Russia's best known daily, Izvestiya, two days after the newspaper carried strong criticism of the government's handling of the Beslan seige.

A Russian non-governmental media-monitoring group in Moscow, the Glasnost Defence Foundation, believes that more journalists are being killed as a result of their work in Russia than many think. It says 13 journalists were killed in 2004 with another missing and presumed dead.

· To contact the MediaGuardian news desk email editor@mediatheguardian.com or phone 020 7239 9857

· If you are writing a comment for publication, please mark clearly "for publication".

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jan/30/globalisation.comment>

Fred Halliday

Sun 30 Jan 2005

It's time to bin the past

Fred Halliday, a leading expert on international affairs, says we are still infected by Cold War ills: an arrogant West, shabby dictators, naive protests

The thinkers and managers of world hegemony met amid the snow in Davos, Switzerland, last week while the anti-globalisation forces convened in the tropical summer of Porto Alegre, Brazil. As they assembled, the international system presented a much clearer picture than that through which the world had moved in the 14 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

In America we can see a President resolute in international bellicosity and a national consensus arrogantly indifferent to external concerns. We can also see the impact, within the US and internationally, of 9/11. The battle lines are drawn. Al-Qaeda does not have the capacity to destroy the West, but it does have the capacity to mobilise for years to come. In Ariel Sharon and George Bush it has found two stalwart recruiting sergeants. More important still has been the consolidated rise of China. After five centuries when the Atlantic was the strategic and economic centre of the world, the focus has shifted to East Asia and the Pacific. This, not Iraq, is the dominant story of 2004.

Last year marked the end of the interregnum following the end of the Cold War, the third chapter in the great European civil war in which the two world wars marked the initial two chapters. Yet this apparent distance between the contemporary world and the Cold War is delusory and dangerously so. The intellectual challenge is how to characterise this condition.

We have had some grand, if preposterous, theories: the New World Order, the New Middle Ages, the End of History, the Clash of Civilisations, now the War Against Terrorism. In an attempt to comprehend the contemporary international system, this article proposes another narrative: the Three Dustbins Theory.

The Three Dustbins Theory rests on the claim that, despite the receding of the Cold War, we remain, in key respects, prisoners of its legacy and will, unless we face up to these questions, remain so. As with all unacknowledged influences from the past, these repositories of conflict and myth are all the more powerful because unacknowledged.

Dustbin Number One contains the legacies of the Soviet and communist periods. Among its contents are: an array of uncontrolled and unmonitored nuclear materials; a set of unresolved, sanguinary inter-ethnic problems inherited from the Soviet period - Bosnia, Kosovo, Transdniestria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya, Eritrea-Ethiopia - in all of which the costs of ethnic expulsion and fragmented government have provided a context for entrenched mafioso power; and the consolidation, in nearly all of the former Soviet Union and much of former pro-Soviet Africa (as in the Horn of Africa and Mozambique) of corrupt elites, a transition not to democracy but to post-Marxist kleptocracy.

Most significant of all of these is the political character of the two most important states to have undergone the communist experiment: the neo-authoritarian dictatorship of Vladimir Putin in Russia, and the politically immobile dictatorship of the communist leaders in China. No transition to democracy here and none likely, not least because these two groups of rulers play the coquette to Washington in the matter of their 'wars' against Chechen and Sinkiang opponents.

The Second Dustbin is that of the West, and the US in particular. One of the costs of winning the Cold War is that the West has failed to rethink its assumptions about the conduct of international relations. Instead, and above all with the Bush administration, we have seen the recycling, often by veterans of the confrontations with the Soviet Union in the 1970s, of policies that were as wrong then as they are now: the fabrication of threats, accompanied by dire warnings about how time 'is running out', about hostile states; the repetition ad nauseam of platitudes about the role of force in international affairs that no first-year student could get away with; a suspicion, if not disdain, for international institutions, notably the UN and international law; a facile, historically short-sighted and grossly exaggerated set of claims about how many states conform to an acceptable model of democracy (the 'Free World' of the 1950s and 1960s recycled).

Of the cruel, and intellectually bankrupt, certainties of neo-liberalism, which has undermined the social provision and regulation roles of the state across the world, there is no need to say more. Meanwhile, US neo-conservative family planning policy, by blocking the use of contraception and abortion, is in league with the patriarch of St Peter's Square, condemning millions to avoidable death.

However, the greatest, and least acknowledged, legacies of the Cold War on the Western side lie in two other domains. Here pervasive denial, compounded by self-righteous declamation, reign supreme. One such legacy concerns the origins of the terrorist threat itself: al-Qaeda and its like did not arise suddenly in 2001, or from the subconscious of the Islamic or Arab minds, but from the Cold War, in particular the financing, training and arming of tens of thousands of jihadi militants by the US, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan for the war in Afghanistan in the 1980s. That war was to the early 21st century what the Spanish Civil War was to the mid-20th, the devils kitchen in which the criminal practices later unleashed on the world were first brewed.

It is the greatest, if not the only, solecism of Bush's anti-terrorist campaign that he is incapable, as is American public opinion as a whole, of recognising how far the US helped to prepare this movement, as it did the Unita murderers in Angola, the Contras in Nicaragua, and, at one remove, Renamo in Mozambique.

The other, now more evident than ever, legacy of Cold War on the Western side is both simple and all-pervasive: the mental attitude accompanying the exercise of power over other peoples, and the discussion of it, by Washington, one predominantly of arrogance, ignorance and instinctive resort to force. This mindset, often decked out with frothing claims about 'imperial burdens' and 'grand strategy', was evident in the Cold War itself, not least in the grotesque continuation of a nuclear arms race over four decades, but also draws in the US, as it does in much of post-imperial Europe, on the unacknowledged cultural legacy of colonialism.

The West has still not learnt to treat the rest of the world on an equal footing, a point most graphically illustrated by the photographs from Abu Ghraib: it is, above all, not because the victims were Muslim, Arab, or even non-white, but because they were from a subordinate people that they were subjected with such levity and sadism to their tortures.

It might be thought prudent to stop the argument there, with a denunciation of the powerful in East and West. But the unacknowledged legacy of the Cold War does not stop there, and is equally to be found among those protesting against globalisation and meeting in Porto Alegre.

The Third Dustbin is that of the contemporary global protest movement, to a considerable degree a children's crusade of intellectual demagogues, recycled 1960s bunkeristas with their fellow travellers in literary circles, dreamers and political manipulators, of the old and new lefts, whose claim to moral and analytic superiority too often masks a set of unexamined, and themselves often recycled, platitudes from the Cold War period and, indeed, from the ideology of the communist world.

It is as if, having appeared to die in Moscow in 1991, the anti-capitalist world movement leapt from the coffin, like James Joyce's corpse Finegan at his Wake, at Seattle in 1999, having learnt nothing at all.

Indeed the contents of this Third Dustbin are familiar enough: a ritual incantation of 'no war' that avoids any substantive engagement with problems of international peace and security, or reflection on how positively to help peoples in zones of conflict; a set of vague, unthought out, uncosted and often dangerous utopian ideas about an alternative world; a pleasing but vapid invocation of global human values and internationalism that blithely ignores the misuses to which that term was put in the 20th century (for example by Stalin or Mao); a complacent attitude, innocent when not indulgent, towards political violence (witness the cult of Che Guevara, a cruel and dangerous man, and the invitees from Northern Ireland, Palestine and Iran, to name but three at the London Social Summit in October). This was a capitulation, that would have shocked their socialist forebears, to nationalist and religious bigots (as in the reception by the supposedly left-wing Mayor of London of Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the descendant of a line of Muslim fascist thinkers). There is also a vapid and politically ineffective attitude to nature, forgetting, as the tsunami should have reminded all of us, that nature can also kill. And all of this is mixed up with a shallow, repetitive critique of globalisation, in the name of what we are never sure, and a naive, uninformed, analysis of the US.

Such a critique applies, in the first place, to the Western and affiliated Third World protest movement. But it applies with even greater force to the murderous vapidities promulgated by the most prominent alternative centre of resistance, that of radical Sunni jihadism, be it of Bin Laden or al-Zarqawi: these people are devoid of any substantive ideas about how to run a modern society, economy or political system.

Here is in essence the Three Dustbins Theory. That unchallenged ideas and political legacies take their toll was familiar to the wise of earlier times. Marx remarked that the legacy of past generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. Keynes said that behind the ideas of every politician lay the thought of some dead economist. Freud warned us of the toll taken by the repressed. All would find much that is familiar in the world today.

We can assess the outcome of discussions in Davos and Porto Alegre to see if thinking on the current crises of the world has moved on. Here ideas and policies should meet what I term the 'Vilanova Test', named after the flinty Spanish writer Pere Vilanova, who, on the basis of years of political engagement and debate in Spain and the Arab world, has argued consistently for *pensamiento duro*, 'tough thinking', in the contemporary world. We certainly have, and may again be treated to, plenty of the other.

• Fred Halliday's 'The International Relations of the Middle East' (CUP) and 'One Hundred Myths About the Middle East' (Saqi) will be published in the spring

February

World Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/02/russia.tisdallbriefing>

Simon Tisdall

Wed 2 Feb 2005

Asylum decision suggests that US patience with Putin is wearing thin

When the US granted political asylum to Alyona Morozov last month, it gave no explanation for its decision. But the reason is not hard to discern.

Ms Morozov accused Russia's secret services of involvement in a series of apartment block bombings in Moscow and elsewhere in September 1999 which killed 246 people. Making such an allegation is potentially harmful to health.

Chechen separatists were officially blamed for the attacks. They led to the launch by Vladimir Putin, then Russia's prime minister, of the second Chechen war. Mr Putin's tough response impressed voters. He won the presidency the following March.

Ms Morozov, aged 28, whose mother was killed in their Moscow apartment, demanded an international investigation.

She suspects that the FSB, successor to the KGB, masterminded the bombings to boost support for Mr Putin, himself a former KGB agent.

Mr Putin has denied any official involvement. "It is immoral even to consider such a possibility," he said. But Ms Morozov is not alone in her suspicions.

The independent television station NTV reported on the eve of the March 2000 election that police had detected FSB agents allegedly planting another bomb in apartments in Ryazan two weeks after the attacks.

The FSB claimed its agents were conducting a security exercise. In June 2000, NTV's owner, Vladimir Gusinsky, was arrested. The state took control of NTV in 2001 and he was forced into exile.

In 2002, a parliamentary commission was created to investigate the bombings. A year later, two of its four members were dead.

Yuri Shchekochikhin, an MP and deputy editor of the investigative journal Novaya Gazeta died of a mysterious allergy.

His symptoms were similar to those of the Ukrainian leader, Viktor Yushchenko, who was poisoned last year.

Another commission member, Sergei Yushenkov, was shot down outside his home. His murder has never been solved.

Mikhail Trepashkin, a retired FSB agent turned private investigator who worked for the commission and was also Ms Morozov's attorney, ran into trouble in October 2003.

A week before he was to publish his findings, Mr Trepashkin was accused of espionage.

He was arrested, allegedly tortured, jailed for four years last May, and faced further charges in December.

Mr Trepashkin had reportedly identified a photo-fit picture of a bombing suspect as that of a former FSB agent, Vladimir Romanovich. But Romanovich, it transpired, was also dead, killed in a car crash a few months after the 1999 attacks.

Two Chechens received life sentences last year in connection with the bombings. But despite the scale of the outrages, no one else has been charged. And western governments have not challenged the official account for fear of upsetting Mr Putin.

The US decision to grant Ms Morozov's asylum application may be a tacit signal that this is changing.

Alarmed by Mr Putin's increasingly authoritarian rule and his meddling in Ukraine, the US is reviewing bilateral relations ahead of a Bush-Putin summit in Slovakia this month.

George Bush is being urged to take a second, harder look at the man he called a soul-mate and nicknamed Pootie-Poot when they first met in 2001. Russia's G8 presidency next year could be a casualty of this reappraisal.

Russians are also having their doubts. A recent poll found that only one in four trusted the president. A Russian civil liberties group has condemned Mr Trepashkin's treatment.

Human Rights Watch said recently that while Mr Putin "continues to present himself as a believer in democracy and human rights, by his re-election in 2004 both the political opposition and independent television had been obliterated".

Yelena Bonner, widow of the celebrated communist-era dissident Andrei Sakharov, has spoken up for Ms Morozov and other government opponents who remain in Russia.

"Mr Trepashkin and his fellow political prisoners ... are in the same situation as the dissidents from Soviet days," Ms Bonner wrote recently. "Just as Mr Putin carries on the traditions of his KGB predecessors, they stand up bravely to repression."

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/19/syria.iran>

Nick Paton Walsh in Moscow and **Julian Borger** in Washington

Sat 19 Feb 2005

Putin defends Iran and eyes up nuclear fuel deal

President Vladimir Putin openly defied Washington yesterday by announcing a visit to Iran less than a week before a summit with President Bush.

Mr Putin welcomed Iran's national security chief, Hassan Rohani, to the Kremlin and declared that Tehran was not pursuing nuclear weapons, flatly contradicting repeated allegations by the US.

Moscow has also signalled that Alexander Rumyantsev, head of Russia's Federal Atomic Energy Agency, will fly to Tehran next Saturday to sign a deal that would open the way for delivery of nuclear fuel to a Russian-built reactor in Bushehr.

Ahead of the US-Russian summit in Bratislava on Thursday, Mr Putin has also defied Washington over Syria, another state the Bush administration is trying to isolate. Russia has announced the sale of anti-aircraft missiles to Damascus.

Under the Iranian nuclear deal, spent fuel would be returned to Russia, but only after 10 years. Nuclear proliferation experts fear that without adequate safeguards the spent fuel could easily be converted to plutonium for bombs. The spent fuel repatriation deal would also open the way for nuclear fuel deliveries to the Bushehr reactor.

The fuel is ready for delivery within weeks, officials have said, and the plant could be operational by 2006.

After his meeting with Mr Rohani, President Putin declared: "The latest steps by Iran convince Russia that Iran indeed does not intend to produce nuclear weapons and we will continue to develop relations in all sectors, including peaceful atomic energy."

He added: "I have received an invitation from the Iranian leadership to visit your country and we are preparing for a visit to Iran".

If signed, the nuclear fuel deal could upset European efforts to persuade Iran to cease uranium enrichment - another possible route to a nuclear warhead. Tehran has agreed only to suspend enrichment until next month.

President Bush refused again yesterday to rule out military action, but said diplomacy was his preferred course.

"First of all, you never want a president to say never, but military action is certainly not, is never, the president's first choice," he told Belgian television. "Diplomacy is always the president's, or at least always my first choice, and we've got a common goal, and that is that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon."

David Albright, a nuclear expert and director of the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), said: "Russia should respect the uncertainty of the situation and hold back until this is clarified, but people [in the Russian nuclear power industry] may just want to make money and they're thinking, 'Let's do this now'."

ISIS published satellite photographs yesterday which showed the construction of big tunnels near a uranium conversion plant in Iran. The tunnels have been shown to the International Atomic Energy Agency, but Mr Albright said they could be used to move equipment underground with the intention of processing uranium away from international scrutiny and sheltered from a possible air strike.

Russia is not only building Iran an \$800m nuclear plant at Bushehr, but training hundreds of Iranian scientists across Russia, a transfer of materials and knowledge that has infuriated Washington.

The US has long maintained that Iranian nuclear energy development is a front for a weapons programme, while Israel has said Iran is six months away from having the knowledge to make a nuclear bomb.

· The Syrian president, Bashar Assad, has appointed his brother-in-law, Brigadier-General Asef Shawkat, to replace the chief of military intelligence, General Hassan Khalil.

World Europe

Russia

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/19/russia.weekend7>

Veronica Martin

Sat 19 Feb 2005

The oligarch's revenge

Boris Berezovsky made his billions from cars and oil, and styled himself king-maker and fixer in Russian politics - until things turned sour. Now, in exile in the UK, an enthusiastic convert to democracy and human rights, he finances all-comers who'll oppose his old protégé Vladimir Putin. Does he have presidential aspirations himself? He talks to Veronica Martin

Vladimir Putin is master of all he surveys. It's less than a year since he was re-elected president of Russia with an overwhelming 70%-plus of votes cast. His government is full of reliable colleagues from his old workplace - the FSB security police, or ex-KGB. Parliament has gone tame. And, since last summer's massacre of the innocents at the school in Beslan, the Kremlin leader has attacked all potential enemies or rivals harder and faster than ever. Chechnya's separatist fighters are suing for peace (but being ignored). Putin has done away with regional elections, preferring to appoint loyal governors personally. National newspapers and TV stations bend to his will, especially since two troublesome press barons have taken fright and fled Russia. And business is running scared.

Not everyone likes the president's ever-growing power. Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, on her recent European tour said more than once that Russia would need to do more to show it is committed to democracy if it wants closer relations with the west. And in Russia mutterings and muted protests surface; Putin's ratings are dropping. The poor are uneasy about his latest painful economic reforms, and the way he ignores their worries. The rich fear that he's coming after them, and are quietly exporting their money. But no one complains aloud. Even the oligarchs - the tycoons who grabbed their commercial empires under Russia's first president, Boris Yeltsin, and used to think of themselves as the real power in the land - have been silenced. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, once the richest, is in prison; his oil company, Yukos, has been dismembered and its most valuable part effectively renationalised. Today's richest man, Roman Abramovich, is loyal to the president, and anyway spends much of his time prudently in the west. The rest are keeping mum and hoping to avoid Khodorkovsky's fate.

Except, that is, for one man.

In faraway Britain, in the somewhat unlikely setting of a manicured Surrey estate, Putin's lone enemy is gathering his forces. Rebel billionaire Boris Berezovsky is hoping that the power of his chequebook will be enough to strike down Russia's latest empire-builder - his own former protégé, who turned on him soon after moving into the Kremlin in 2000.

Berezovsky, who made his immense fortune during Russia's lurch into capitalism a decade ago, can't go home while Putin is in power. He's wanted there on a long list of charges: he is accused of embezzling \$13m from his car empire, Logovaz, back in 1994; of defrauding Russia's biggest car company, Avtovaz; of embezzling money from another former asset, the airline Aeroflot (at the time when Berezovsky also controlled much of Russia's aluminium industry, its biggest TV station and the oil firm Sibneft); and of financing guerrillas in Chechnya. More sensational charges have come from unofficial sources. For five years Berezovsky pursued America's Forbes Magazine through western courts for libel after its reporter, the American Paul Klebnikov, suggested he had a hand in the murder of one of his own TV employees in 1995 in a tussle over advertising. The case was finally settled when Forbes accepted that the allegation was false.

Since he won asylum in the UK 18 months ago, Berezovsky has been operating from his mansion on the four-golf-course Wentworth estate near Weybridge, a house in Chelsea, a vast apartment in Belgravia and a Mayfair office kitted out in blond suede and sepia photos of Moscow. His flashier antics - playfully putting on a rubber mask of Putin's face on the way out of a London courtroom during Russia's failed attempt to extradite him; trying, Al Fayed style, to muscle into the British establishment; or organising a 100-limo protest in central London against Khodorkovsky's imprisonment (making him the darling of traffic wardens, as he picked up tens of thousands of pounds of parking fines) - mask the seriousness of his political purpose. Berezovsky is trying to publicise the Putin regime's dubious civil rights record and thus undermine western support for it.

"I'm very surprised at how long it takes for people in the west to understand quite ordinary things," he says. "Putin is clearly building a completely different country from Yeltsin's Russia - a return to something like the Soviet Union on a smaller scale. So I'm trying to convince western politicians to act. The price of doing so will be high. The price is also high for Russia - a return to authoritarianism. But the west will pay twice. Russia could again become its military opponent - because that's the logic of an authoritarian system."

If your idea of a Russian billionaire is a heavy in sunglasses, Boris Berezovsky comes as a surprise. He's a slim, slightly stooping, yet sprightly figure nearing 60. He has courtly manners - apologising politely for running late, which he always is - and he loves to talk, very fast, pouring out ideas in his well-bred Russian, surely intended for something

slower and more decorous. Every now and then he'll invite you to agree with his latest thought with a staccato "Da?"

This is how Berezovsky's friends from his first career, as a mathematician at the Soviet Institute of Control Sciences, remember him in the 1980s: full of ideas that were "half nonsense, half genius", driven by enthusiasm and ambition. They made the mathematician's joke that he was "distributed over time: always in several places at once". He wasn't a brilliant scientist, but he was an inspired collector of people and a career-builder.

"His real goal was the Nobel prize. This was not a joke. It was an absolutely real thought," recalls his friend Leonid Boguslavsky who, in the turbulent days of perestroika, lent Berezovsky the battered red Zhiguli car that started him thinking about the car sales business instead - and led him to wealth.

Until recently, Berezovsky was known as the godfather of the Kremlin. He says the accusations against him were maliciously laid at his door by his enemies in Russia. His own view of his fall from grace is simple and heroic. As he sees it, Russia in the 1990s was a battleground for the progressive forces of capitalist democracy (represented by him and the half-dozen other billionaire "oligarchs") and the dark forces of reaction (represented by secret policemen, soldiers and state planners, nostalgic for their Soviet heyday). The reactionaries would stoop to anything - including smearing his good name - to turn back the clock. In this version of events, when the KGB man Putin came to power, the secret policemen finally won. Now they are revelling in a new era of poisoned umbrellas and dirty tricks. They must be stopped.

In September 2003, the British government reluctantly endorsed Berezovsky's claims, at least to the extent of granting him asylum. (A separate extradition hearing ended two days later, when a defence lawyer dramatically told the court, "We have good reason to believe that organs of the Russian state have attempted to use the proceedings of this court to murder Berezovsky.") British hesitation - Berezovsky got asylum only on appeal - hasn't gone unnoticed. "The English government has constantly and, I think logically, distanced itself from this situation, putting the responsibility for it on the courts," he says. "This wasn't purely a government decision."

This squeamishness isn't hard to fathom. Berezovsky's image problem goes way back. He's not the richest oligarch - Forbes Magazine put his value, while he was still in Moscow, at a modest \$3bn - but he's among the oldest and by far the keenest on publicity. His sheer flamboyance makes it easy to pin the blame on him personally for stealing a nation - which is what Russia's millions of have-nots think is the true story of the 1990s. Liberals in both Russia and the west might worry about the direction in which Putin is taking Russia, but these worries are tempered by a feeling that some counterweight was needed to the excessive liberties taken by oligarchs such as Berezovsky in the 1990s. Berezovsky is loathed as one of those who created a form of government in which the greed of a very few men - billionaires who could order politicians around and run Russia as if it were a company and they the board of directors - damaged, and perhaps destroyed, a newborn democracy.

Berezovsky's business career began innocently enough. During perestroika - when Soviet citizens were edging their way into business, setting up private firms and making deals with state companies - Berezovsky struck up a relationship with Logovaz, the firm that made the little rattletrap Zhigulis of Soviet days. As hyperinflation hit post-Soviet Russia, Vladimir Kadannikov, director of Avtovaz, gave him a loan to buy 35,000 Zhigulis - which he was to pay back in two and a half years, in roubles. By then, the rouble was worth so little that Berezovsky pocketed a cool \$100m. He denies that he also made

fortunes from the dirtier tricks of the mafia-ridden car trade: faking exports and pocketing the mark-up.

But he certainly disappointed investors who put money into his 1994 project, the All-Russia Automobile Alliance (AVVA). The idea was to create a new Russian "people's car" that the investors would have a stake in. It didn't happen. But some of the proceeds (which totalled between \$15m, according to published financial records, and \$50m, according to Berezovsky and Kadannikov) went on buying Berezovsky and Kadannikov private ownership of a big slice of Avtovaz. The losers were the 2.6 million people who'd put their savings into AVVA. The first of several attempts on Berezovsky's life - a car bomb that summer - killed his chauffeur, but Berezovsky escaped; his bandages, displayed at a Kremlin reception, won him his first conversation with Yeltsin.

He was on his way. In 1995, he was one of the half-dozen entrepreneurs rewarded for political support of Yeltsin with an extraordinary series of sweetheart privatisation deals - in which ministers sold off state assets to favourites for a fraction of their value. Berezovsky's share of the swag was Sibneft, a newly created oil company, which he got for a whisker over \$100m. Its value was later estimated at \$1bn.

Berezovsky masterminded the 1996 re-election of Yeltsin for a chaotic, bedridden, vodka-soaked, corruption-tainted second term. He organised his millionaire friends to put up £140m to bankroll what at first seemed a doomed campaign, with the communists in the ascendant. His eventual success, he believed, gave him carte blanche. He later boasted that seven oligarchs "controlled 50% of the economy". His detractors say he spent the late 1990s digging himself into the Kremlin, Rasputin-style: whispering in Yeltsin's ear, plotting, scheming, grabbing - trying to privatise political power itself.

Madness for money filled the air. The billionaires couldn't restrain themselves. When Yeltsin's chief of privatisation, Anatoly Chubais, told them in 1997 they had to start playing by the rules and buying state assets at more realistic prices, they ignored him. When he insisted, the oligarchs' media outlets began first savaging him and then each other. The vicious feud that became known as the "bankers' war" of 1997 destroyed reputations; the financial crash no one saw coming in 1998 decimated fortunes. But Berezovsky, with an oil company and a TV channel, survived virtually unscathed. After 1998, he began planning to install a successor to Yeltsin who would passively let him rule from behind the scenes - a far from democratic scenario which he called "continuity of power".

Whoever was prime minister when Yeltsin retired would be the likeliest next president. So prime ministers started coming and going with dizzying speed, raised and felled by behind-the-scenes manipulation, much of it by Berezovsky. He saw off one political threat - and an arrest warrant - with a blitzkrieg of TV smut about his enemies, which resulted in an overtly hostile prime minister being fired.

The next "caretaker" prime minister but one, the little-known Putin, was appointed in 1999. Berezovsky saw his opportunity and backed this quiet newcomer to the hilt. He paid for a new party, which formed Putin's parliamentary base - and it soon became parliament's second biggest group. But Putin turned out not to be a puppet. The two men fell out many times once he became president in early 2000: over Putin's renewal of war in Chechnya; his limitation of democracy in the regions; and his wish to reassert control over Berezovsky's TV channel. Outwitted, Berezovsky gave up, sold up and left Russia. David E Hoffman, author of *The Oligarchs: Wealth And Power In The New Russia*, recalls meeting a bewildered Berezovsky afterwards. Berezovsky, he says, was haunted by his last conversation with Putin: the cold stare, the icy words. "You," said Putin, "you were one of those who asked me to be president. So how can you complain?"

Berezovsky, the archpriest of expediency - who had ruthlessly used his media power to undermine victim after political victim with allegations of vice and corruption - had been the loser in someone else's power play. For Russians who gloated over his downfall, it is ironic to see him try to grab the moral high ground by reinventing himself as a cheerleader for democracy.

Berezovsky says he's trying to be a "minimal irritation to the English authorities", but that doesn't mean laying off Putin. Far from it. "My task is to consolidate political forces in a struggle against the regime," he declares. With a base now assured in Britain, he's imported his vendetta here - Britain is, apart from Israel, pretty much the only country where he is free from the long arm of Interpol, thanks to the fact that he's been granted asylum.

Left, right, it doesn't matter: greens, communists, liberals and Chechens with an animus against Putin are coming to London, as well as clogging Berezovsky's many phones with appeals for financial help. It's an easy trip: England is just three hours away, and there are already 100,000 Russians living here. Berezovsky is, in some ways, the ideal donor. His pockets are deep - he says he's spent at least \$10m on politics since he's been in Britain. More importantly, he doesn't see a problem with backing all his protégés' conflicting views. "It's vital to have a tactical union of all the different forces opposing the authoritarian authorities," he explains eagerly. He doesn't seem to mind that, so far, none of the ideas fizzing in his brain has actually paid dividends.

Strategy number one was creating a free market, human rights political party, Liberal Russia. Its members disliked the president's growing control over civil society and the economy, as well as his brutal Chechnya policy. Yet their relationship with Berezovsky didn't go altogether smoothly. The liberals, some former political prisoners in communist days, were nettled to discover he was also giving money to communists. And they've had other problems. Two of their leaders have, like many Russian politicians, been assassinated.

Strategy number two was fielding a candidate for the presidency. Ivan Rybkin was one Muscovite who took to visiting Berezovsky in 2003. An unassuming suit of a man who had progressed from pragmatic communist to soft-spoken democrat, Rybkin had been speaker of the parliament under Yeltsin. But he had also headed the unelected Kremlin governing body, the Security Council, in 1996, when Berezovsky, briefly in government, had served as his deputy. Together, they'd worked on ending the first Chechen war. Rybkin was now part of Liberal Russia.

Rybkin only really swam into focus for me when I was told by a friend that he was planning to claim political asylum in London. He'd got nervous about staying in Russia after the assassination of his Liberal Russia colleague, Sergei Yushenkov. I could go and interview him after he'd lodged his claim. I waited by the phone for more news. None came. Rybkin must have changed his mind. A couple of months later, I saw him at a Chechen film festival in London. I asked why he'd briefly thought of leaving Russia, and what had stopped him. He went pale and stepped back, drawing me into a whispery huddle between two cinema seats. "Sometimes it seems too dangerous to go on working in Moscow," he said. "But you have to pick your moment to leave. For now, I'm more useful to my country at home." And he scurried off.

Next thing I knew, Rybkin was running for the 2004 Russian presidency, one of a dozen also-rans in last spring's election, in which Putin was expected to get almost the entire vote. His backer was Berezovsky, "for several reasons" he says: "I'd known him in the hardest of times - in Chechnya, where there was a real war, yes? And we were there when people were being killed nearby, yes? I knew he was brave, and experienced, and

liberal." But Rybkin became a laughing stock when he first disappeared for days, then pulled out of the electoral race altogether. Rybkin's Moscow mobile no longer answers.

Berezovsky shrugs off questions about the flaky Rybkin bid. He blames the authoritarian security services. "There are so many theories about what really happened. We talked about it afterwards - he came here. I did think he hadn't been stubborn enough, but it was just one of a mass of successful provocations against liberals. Remember, two of the three liberal leaders have been killed. Today's authorities are contemptuous of democratic norms. It was just one step on that road."

Berezovsky's third strategy since falling out with Putin has been to present himself as a convert to human rights causes. His Foundation for Civil Liberties - set up in 2000 in New York - is an umbrella for activists fighting state encroachments on civil society. They range from Yelena Bonner, the respected widow of the dissident scientist Andrei Sakharov and chain-smoking matriarch of today's activists, to the wilder fringes of campaigning. The Berezovsky-ites are well aware that his interest could be transient, geared towards getting publicity and scoring points against Putin. As one recipient of his largesse put it, with a laugh, "he's no Mother Teresa". Berezovsky himself makes no secret of his political motivation: "I'm not a human rights fighter. Everything I'm doing is rational from my point of view." But he's such a lavish source of funds that the human rights crowd try to make the necessary adjustments. "Money does not smell," Yelena Bonner reportedly said when accepting \$3m for her Sakharov human rights centre. Other rights groups, encouraged by rumours that she'd later regretted not asking the tycoon for a still more generous \$5m, have since joined the queue.

Among the worthy projects Berezovsky says he's backed to the tune of \$25m are support for soldiers persecuted by officers in the brutal Russian army, and funding lawyers to defend child offenders, to save them from being locked up for years in TB-ridden prisons.

Berezovsky's fourth strategy is his riskiest: playing dove to Putin's hawk in Chechnya. Having worked on peacemaking in Chechnya between the two wars there, he knows his stuff. One of his London protégés is the Chechen separatist Akhmed Zakayev, a dignified one-time actor who, like Berezovsky, won asylum in Britain last year. War took Zakayev's career in unexpected directions, from culture minister to green-headband field commander. In 1996 he became Chechnya's peace negotiator (his Moscow interlocutors were Berezovsky and Rybkin) - a moderate with whom moderate Russians felt they could do business. That changed with the rise of Putin and the start of the second war. On scanty evidence, Zakayev was declared a terrorist and arrested in 2002. But Russia's attempt to extradite him from Britain collapsed. (When one of the priests whom Moscow said he'd kidnapped and killed turned up alive and well on Russian TV, Zakayev's defence compared the messy Russian case to "the worst excesses of the Stalin era".) The actor Vanessa Redgrave paid for his Chelsea flat during the court case. But Berezovsky paid for his lawyers, and still supports Zakayev's work publicising Russia's continuing war in Chechnya.

The Chechen has only respect for Berezovsky's peacemaking. "Berezovsky made the breakthrough in 1996," Zakayev recalls. "We'd gone through two years of fruitless negotiations with all kinds of Russian bureaucrats. We were stuck on the basic question: we believed Chechnya was independent; the Russians said it was Russian. Then Berezovsky walked in. With Rybkin, but it was clear who was in charge. 'Right, guys,' he said. 'Let's agree on this. Russia wants to stop the war. You also say you don't want to fight. So, however irreconcilable our views seem, let's try to make plans that work for all of us.' It was straightforward and super-honest. He's a problem-solver: someone who works around the clock and gets things done. Then he said: 'Next, are we going to trust

each other or not? If not, there's no sense in trying to go on.' And we said: 'Until there's some contradiction from you, we'll trust.'

"And it worked. In the next three months, we succeeded in removing practically all the problems dividing us and the Russians - something Chechens and Russians had been unable to do for 300 years of conflict."

The success was temporary. Berezovsky was fired; Putin's war destroyed every compromise. Zakayev admits that Berezovsky is more of a Chechnya dove now that he's in exile than he was in office. The negotiator who used to insist that Chechnya was part of Russia now insists, with just as much passion, that it should be independent. But Zakayev refuses to call this change of heart opportunistic: "He isn't a man who changes beliefs because he wants revenge. He's a man of conviction. If he says Russia must do something, he might be wrong - but he'll be sincere."

Others are less forgiving. Berezovsky's eagerness to fight Putin on so many fronts lays him open to all kinds of countercharges. Last year, for instance, he lent public support to the much-discussed conspiracy theory which held that Putin knew a wave of bombings of Russian apartment buildings in 1999 had been carried out not by Chechen separatists, as the authorities alleged, but by the FSB (run at the time by Putin). The attacks killed 200 people. The allegation that Chechens were to blame led Putin into the second war on Chechnya (which in turn sent his ratings shooting up and secured him the presidency a few months later). "I don't say Putin ordered the attacks; but I do say he knew such things were taking place," Berezovsky said at the London launch of a film he'd sponsored in which these accusations are made public.

For this, Berezovsky was accused by Moscow of sponsoring Chechen terrorists; but also, more plausibly, of "breathtaking feats of selective memory". As Time magazine's Moscow expert, Paul Quinn-Judge, commented, if Berezovsky was so sure that Putin and the FSB were behind the apartment bombings, why didn't he say so at the time - when he was backing Putin for the 2000 presidency?

Time has done nothing to soften Russian suspicion of Berezovsky. Elaborate conspiracy theories about his possible devious plots and ploys are still voiced on the internet and in Russian kitchens. Did he pay million-dollar ransoms for Russians and westerners kidnapped in Chechnya between the two wars, thereby creating a dirty market in the violent trafficking of people? (No, he ripostes: that's an FSB smear; he got people out, yes, but purely by negotiating.) To some in Russia, the very fact that Berezovsky's oil profits from Siberia rose when the second Chechen war started - because oil from the Caspian region near Chechnya became harder to transport - is proof enough that he must have had a cynical hand in stirring up the second conflict.

Berezovsky has no choice but to take this rough handling; but he does his best to dish it out, too. When I ask how he feels about the apparent contract killing of his journalist nemesis, Paul Klebnikov, he fulminates about Klebnikov's lack of professionalism and writing skill ("I prefer Nabokov to Klebnikov," he quips). Berezovsky's view is that he always played fair with Klebnikov - fighting the libellous American in the courts - but that Klebnikov played dirty. The dying journalist's last words, Berezovsky says, were, "I'm an American journalist. Tell the FSB I've been attacked" - proof, to the Russian at least, that Klebnikov had been getting his anti-Berezovsky stories from FSB sources.

These days, Berezovsky is far from the only Russian with a bee in his bonnet about what the ex-KGB is up to. Russia's few remaining liberals are so scared about the way FSB power is growing that the commentator Masha Gessen recently nicknamed the country "Paranoiastan". Yet thinking the same way as Berezovsky - and taking his money - hasn't

made the freedom fighters of Paranoiastan learn to love the oligarch who supports their causes. He's regarded as, at best, only an accidental good guy.

That in itself seems to spell doom for the billionaire's chances of getting Putin squeezed out of the presidency before his time is up in 2008, or of halting Russia's slide back towards a more centralised, authoritarian form of government. If Berezovsky can't even get liberals who think the same way to show public enthusiasm for his projects, there seems precious little chance that he could ever win hearts in the sprawling, conservative Russian provinces - where Putin's strongman tactics are still mostly admired and Berezovsky's deviousness is detested.

For now, having so far failed to dent Putin's huge popularity, Berezovsky is hunkering down in Surrey with his children, his third wife and the other rich Russians of the Wentworth estate, and paying court to the British establishment. He's seen about town with Tory grandees - Lord Bell, the Conservative PR guru, Prince Michael of Kent, Carla Powell and Michael Ancram. He goes to Ascot with the Duke of Devonshire. He's lectured at Eton and at Chatham House, the foreign policy wonk club, and at the war reporters' Frontline Club. He's showing the same tireless enthusiasm for cultivating the great and the good that stood him in such good stead during his rise to power in Moscow. Yet for all his efforts, and determination to get his politics into the press ("An event only happens if it's reported on TV," he likes to say), he remains less known in London than this country's most famous visiting oligarch, Roman Abramovich.

The 39-year-old Abramovich, another former protégé of Berezovsky, doesn't bother with politics. Yet, with the instinct of a younger man for today's trend, he became an instant legend in Britain (and Russia) by buying Chelsea football club. In an era when governments struggle to get voters to take even a passing interest in elections - but millions of people follow matches with almost religious reverence - Berezovsky's belief that the only route to power is through conventional politics may be a sign of the inflexibility of age.

So should Putin worry about the hate campaign from over the water? Probably not - but that doesn't mean Berezovsky won't go on trying to unseat him. The one thing no one's ever accused the oligarch of is failing to think big enough. He isn't applying for British citizenship, because he's optimistic that he will soon go home to a Putin-free Russia, in which democratic pluralism can flourish as, he says, it did in the Yeltsin years.

When I ask if he might even dream of taking on the presidency himself, Berezovsky says no: "Why would a rich man want a job in politics?" Then a wistful goodbye-Surrey, hello-Kremlin look steals into his eyes. "Look, I'd much prefer to organise my own day than have the country organise it for me - but if it had to be done, and no one else could do it, I wouldn't rule it out."

• Veronica Martin is a pseudonym

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/23/tisdallbriefing.russia>

Simon Tisdall

Wed 23 Feb 2005

Next stop Bratislava and a testing time with his pal Putin

George Bush's new politics of conciliation will face its biggest test tomorrow when the US leader meets Russia's insecure and recalcitrant president, Vladimir Putin, in Bratislava.

Despite a good personal relationship with Mr Bush, Mr Putin's authoritarian domestic policies and frequently oppositional international stance have caused increasing alarm in Washington.

His weekend championing of Iran's nuclear programme typified the broader problem. It looked like a deliberate eve-of-summit provocation and recalled the angry rift over Iraq. Officials admit that, preoccupied by 9/11 and the Middle East, the Bush administration took its eye off the Russian ball during its first term.

Mr Putin's backing for America's "war on terror", which suited his purposes in Chechnya, and for counter-proliferation efforts, as in North Korea, meant his more objectionable actions largely escaped critical US scrutiny.

But the relentless eastward expansion of the EU and Nato, coupled with western-backed democratic uprisings in Ukraine and Georgia, has fostered fear and resentment in the Kremlin, resurrecting historical concerns about encirclement.

"It could easily be argued that Russia has gained no specific, lasting benefits from the pro-American policies and concessions proclaimed by Putin in the two years after September 11," wrote Robert Cottrell in the New York Review of Books.

According to a Kremlin adviser, Gleb Pavlovski, future challenges around Russia's borders could be addressed through "preventive counter-revolution" - a potentially unsettling riposte to the Bush doctrine of preventive war.

So now Mr Bush has choices to make. He must find effective ways of drawing Mr Putin into the Euro-Atlantic community; or risk "losing Russia", with all the damaging strategic consequences that might entail. And while pursuing his missionary aim of supporting human rights and liberty in all countries, he must avoid pushing Mr Putin into entrenched, cold war-style defiance.

Republican senator John McCain, an old Bush rival, has led a growing storm of bipartisan US criticism. A "creeping coup" against Russian democracy was turning into a "gallop", he warned recently. "When are we going to get tough with Russia?" Democratic senator Joe Biden demanded.

Mr Bush has not lacked pre-summit advice. Civil liberties groups have urged him to "publicly challenge President Putin's authoritarian course". He has been lobbied over the Yukos affair. And an international journalists' organisation this week expressed "extreme concern about the dramatic decline in press freedom", citing persecution in Chechnya and proposed internet censorship.

All the same, Mr Bush appears torn. An internal policy review reportedly concluded there was no viable alternative to constructive engagement and quiet cajoling.

Top US priorities remain terrorism and counter-proliferation measures, especially concerning Russia's vulnerable Soviet-era weapons stockpile. Russia's role as a major energy exporter and its expanding ties with India and China also influence US thinking. Yet politically Mr Bush cannot afford to ignore pressing human rights concerns arising inside Russia and in "transitional states" such as Moldova, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

If he does nothing, he risks being trapped by his own inauguration rhetoric. Then he promised to "persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: the moral choice between oppression ... and freedom".

The first sign of a change of tack came on Monday in Brussels when Mr Bush told Russia it must "renew its commitment to democracy".

He hinted that future Russian membership of the World Trade Organisation and its G8 affiliation could be in jeopardy. His meeting with Ukraine's new pro-western leader, Viktor Yushchenko, also made a point to Moscow.

In recent interviews, Mr Bush seemed reluctant to come down hard on Mr Putin, whom he referred to as his friend, Vladimir. "I mean, he's done some things that have concerned people," Mr Bush told a Slovak journalist. He would politely try to suggest a better way, he said.

But Mr Putin has not taken kindly to such prompting in the past. Mr Bush needs to show a little steel if he is to make headway.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/25/russia.usa>

Leader

Fri 25 Feb 2005

Candid criticism

George Bush got a warmer popular reception in snowy Bratislava yesterday than he did in Belgium and Germany earlier on his five-day tour of Europe, though Donald Rumsfeld-style distinctions between the "old" and "new" parts of the continent are now firmly banned in official US discourse as part of the president's post-Iraq, second-term charm offensive. Slovaks turned out in force to welcome him, and, on the surface at least, bonhomie reigned too when he met the man he calls his "friend", Vladimir Putin. The background, though, was cooler than during their first summit encounter in Slovenia in June 2001, when Mr Bush famously looked deep into Mr Putin's eyes, got a feel for his soul and found him trustworthy.

In some ways, it is still possible to sustain the illusion that these "two leaders of great nations" (Bush) are equal: their agreements on nuclear security and Russia's attempt to join the World Trade Organisation are both important. But in the first case the need is dictated by post-Soviet problems of control over ageing nuclear weapons and materials and the fear that they might fall into the hands of terrorists, not by the danger of cold war-style mutually assured destruction.

Less was said about the poor state of freedom on Mr Putin's watch, despite Mr Bush's warning in Brussels earlier in the week that Russia "must renew a commitment to democracy and the rule of law". But he did speak of his "concerns", about "the rule of law, protection of minorities and a free press and a viable political opposition", while immediately paying tribute to the "tremendous progress and amazing transformation" that had taken place since the demise of the Soviet Union. He noted too - surely a more Russian than American view - that democracy contained both universal principles as well as reflecting a country's "culture and customs". Hardly a stinging rebuke, but better than nothing.

Under the general heading of "authoritarian drift", critics of Russia point to the legal vendetta against the oil giant Yukos and other actions that suggest greater interest in reasserting state control over the economy than pursuing liberalisation. Then there is the alarming concentration of political power in the Kremlin, the end to the popular election of provincial governors and a continuing crackdown on the independent media. Mr Putin insisted there would be no return to "authoritarianism," but warned that democracy was not "anarchy". Beyond that, there were no promises.

None of this sits easily with Mr Bush's strident emphasis on democracy, whose advances he trumpets in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Ukraine, where old regimes have been supplanted by American military muscle in the first two cases and western-assisted people power in the others. Nor has anyone forgotten Russia's clumsy anti-democratic role on the eve of the "Orange Revolution" in Kiev, its continued military presence in

Georgia and Moldova as well as a general assertiveness in the Baltic states, now safely part of the EU.

American appreciation of Russian help in the "war on terror" - the dominant theme in their relations since 9/11 - has faded as calls have multiplied from influential quarters in Washington for firm action to curb backsliding from democratic norms. Yesterday's assurances that Mr Putin now agrees with Mr Bush that neither Iran nor North Korea should be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons may have decreased the pressure.

Mr Bush's words will have been monitored carefully elsewhere in Europe. The EU has little to show for its much-vaunted "strategic partnership" with Moscow, which precludes speaking out about Mr Putin's hardline Chechnya policy. It's all a reminder that however big, different and difficult Russia is, it must not be allowed to escape criticism.

World **Europe**

The Editor press review
US news

Source:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/26/usa.russia>

The Editor press review
Sat 26 Feb 2005

'It was a model of civility'

Friendly words hide divisions over Russian democracy

USA Today
Editorial, February 25

"At Thursday's mini-summit at a castle in Slovakia, George Bush and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, called each other 'George' and 'Vladimir' and insisted they remain good friends. But their body language spoke volumes ... Mr Putin barely smiled. Mr Bush at times seemed ill at ease. Back-slapping and soul-searching were out. Sparring about democracy was in ...

"Russia, Mr Putin insisted on Thursday, has chosen democracy and is committed to it. The words were reassuring. But Mr Putin has been rolling back democracy in Russia ... Mr Putin's moves raise the spectre of a return to Russia's authoritarian past ...

"Immediate leverage on Russia is joining the World Trade Organisation, which Mr Bush said on Thursday he'd work to expedite. Dealing with Russia means pressing US interests while holding Mr Putin's feet to the democratic fire. Mr Bush began that balancing act on Thursday. For all of Mr Putin's rhetorical commitment to democracy, his actions will speak more loudly."

Boston Globe

Editorial, February 25

"If Mr Putin expects to gain entry to the WTO, he will have no choice but to meet WTO terms and cease staging sham legal procedures and phony auctions to steal energy companies such as the oil giant Yukos from impertinent private owners ...

"What the two leaders actually said behind closed doors may not be known for some time. Mr Bush should be telling Mr Putin that the path to Russian prosperity and security must pass through a political resolution of the war in Chechnya, removal of Russian military bases from Georgia, an end to meddling in Ukrainian politics, the creation of an honest and independent judiciary at home, and a decision to refrain from changing the Russian constitution to allow himself a third term. Those are tickets Mr Putin should have to punch if he wants to become a full-fledged member of the democratic club."

New York Post

Editorial, February 25

"Mr Putin doesn't like being reminded by Mr Bush (and other western leaders) that Russia is backsliding on democracy. And though Mr Putin explicitly rejected any criticism of his domestic policies, Mr Bush made clear that he had raised his counterpart's commitment to the 'universal principles' common to all democracies directly in their talks, albeit in a 'friendly and constructive manner'. But there was no denying that Mr Bush and Mr Putin remain united on an even more critical front: global terrorism and nuclear proliferation ...

"Both stressed the importance of keeping North Korea and Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. They also announced Russia's agreement on new measures to safeguard its ageing nuclear stockpile ... [This] underscored the growing alliance between Washington and Moscow on combating global terrorism - an issue with which Mr Putin, still battling Chechen separatists, is all too familiar."

Yekaterina Grigoryeva

Izvestiya, Russia, February 25

"The Bratislava summit was a model of civility in relations between two heads of state. The time of looking into each other's eyes, as was the case in Ljubljana [where the two leaders held their first meeting in 2001], is long gone. However, the style of relations established there persists: the presidents demonstrate that any latent (or sometimes open) confrontations pale before the force of their personal relations."

Via BBC Monitoring

Arkadiy Dubnov

Vremya Novostey, Russia, February 25

"If it was proper to ask who was the winner at the Bratislava summit ... I would venture to announce the Russian president ... Despite numerous statements by Mr Bush that he would confront Mr Putin on problems with democracy in Russia, the press heard nothing of the sort from the US president. Quite the opposite: Mr Bush radiated contentment and even pride at the assurances received from his 'friend Vladimir' that Russia continues to uphold the values of democracy and will not betray its choice, which it made 14 years ago.

"During the press conference both Mr Bush and Mr Putin ... stressed their adherence to common values. However, Mr Bush did that somewhat too pointedly, as if apologising for something."

Via BBC Monitoring

Semyon Novoprudsky
Gazeta, Russia, February 25

"Mr Bush and Mr Putin looked into each others' eyes as if into a mirror. The future empire met with the old one ... Both are taking resolute strategic steps towards the same imperial theft ... [But] at least in Mr Bush's case there are several objective reasons for calling him an emperor: the world's most powerful economy is behind him. In Mr Putin's case there is nothing to justify his behaviour except his own personal inferiority complex and the inferiority complex of that part of the country whose worldview he reflects.

"However, neither man is an emperor: they are merely leaders of two large but not great countries that are experiencing different stages of an identity crisis. In America's case it is a teenage crisis. In Russia's unfortunately it has gone beyond a midlife crisis."

World
World news

Source:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/feb/28/iran.russia>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*
Mon 28 Feb 2005

Russian deal will send nuclear fuel to Iran soon

Russia and Iran signed a long-awaited agreement yesterday which paves the way for the delivery within weeks of nuclear fuel to a regime which Washington claims is seeking an atomic bomb and sponsors terrorism.

It was signed at the Russian-built Bushehr nuclear plant on the Gulf coast opposite Kuwait by the Iranian vice-president, Gholamreza Aghazadeh, and Alexander Rumyantsev, head of the Russian atomic energy agency, which is responsible for building the plant.

The United States insists that Iran's atomic energy programme is a front for developing nuclear weapons and has openly clashed with President Vladimir Putin, who says he is satisfied that the programme is peaceful.

Iran has agreed to return the spent fuel to Russia after its use in the reactor. Moscow maintains that this, coupled with international inspection, will prevent the enriched uranium from being processed by Iran to extract plutonium for use in a weapons programme.

Mr Rumyantsev told AP: "In the next few weeks many Russian technicians will arrive in Bushehr to speed up the assembly operation."

After touring the plant he said: "This storage house is ready to receive nuclear fuel."

Russian officials have said that the nuclear fuel is ready for delivery and may be in Iran in a matter of weeks, although a delivery date has not been set.

Mr Rumyantsev insisted that the delivery would not be immediate. Moscow hopes the plant will be operational by the middle of next year.

The agreement was signed on the eve of the International Atomic Energy Agency's board meeting in Vienna, which will discuss how to tackle Iran.

George Bush has made it clear that he is prepared to wait for the results of an initiative from France, Germany and Britain to persuade Iran to scrap enrichment plans in exchange for economic aid.

But Washington will ask for tougher measures, including perhaps referring the matter to the UN security council, if the European initiative fails.

On Friday Hassan Rowhani, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, told a French newspaper that the European countries were "incapable of keeping their promises".

The IAEA has put off publishing a report on the Iranian nuclear programme, perhaps fearing that it would irritate Tehran.

But evidence of Iran's nuclear ambitions is growing. Yesterday diplomats leaked details of an IAEA inquiry which has established that Iran was offered the knowledge needed to make a nuclear bomb by the rogue Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan as early as 1987.

Officials told the Washington Post that Iran bought centrifuge designs and a starter kit for uranium enrichment at a meeting with Dr Khan in Dubai.

Iran has insisted that it opted not to buy the remaining items needed to build a bomb, but officials said it might have bought them elsewhere. Tehran handed over the written documents it bought from Dr Khan to the IAEA, the diplomats said.

"The offer is the strongest indication to date that Iran had a nuclear weapons programme, but it doesn't prove it completely," a western diplomat told the Post.

Another told AP that the evidence, which suggested that Iran was working on acquiring a bomb as long ago as its war with Iraq, was not the "smoking gun" Washington is seeking to demonstrate the existence of Iran's continued programme.

March

**World
Europe**

Simon Tisdall's world briefing
World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/03/russia.tisdallbriefing>

Simon Tisdall

Thu 3 Mar 2005

Dark arts cloud Moldovan path to prosperity

A fraught election battle in Moldova, an impoverished former Soviet republic sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine, is being portrayed as the latest showdown between Russia and the west after populist upheavals in Kiev and Georgia.

Moldova's president, Vladimir Voronin, whose job depends on Sunday's parliamentary polls, has repeatedly protested of meddling by leaders of Moldova's Moscow-backed breakaway region of Transdniestria.

Without directly accusing Russia, Moldova's prime minister, Vasile Tarlev, complained last week of "provocations" by "political and criminal forces" in Transdniestria bent on vote-buying, intimidation and general destabilisation.

Russia, whose troops have patrolled a security zone between Moldova and the separatists since they fought a brief war in 1992, rejects such claims. A foreign ministry statement yesterday accused Moldova of "consciously aggravating tension".

Moldova's recent expulsion of 19 Russian "poll monitors" prompted Russia's parliament to call for sanctions. The EU, the US, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for the Security and Cooperation in Europe have all voiced concern about possible fraud and violence.

Meanwhile Igor Smirnov, the leader of Transdniestria base in Tiraspol, blithely blames the other side. He says Mr Voronin is suffering from "election hysteria".

Despite supposed similarities with Ukraine's "orange revolution", the battle for Moldova runs more deeply and deviously than claims of an east-west struggle. In Moldova's capital, Chisinau, and in Tiraspol, black arts trump orange banners.

Moldova's murky politics are complicated by its chequered history as part of both Romania and the Soviet Union and divisions between ethnic Romanians, Russians, Ukrainians and Gagauz (Orthodox Christian Turks).

In reality, the newly pro-western Mr Voronin is an old-school communist who sheltered under Moscow's wing until Russia's plan in 2003 for a Moldova-Transdniestria federation.

To Moscow's dismay, Mr Voronin switched sides last year, invited the US to step in as a Transdniestria mediator, and declared Moldova's future lay with the EU. He has been busy this week cultivating ties with Ukraine, Georgia and other post-Soviet states.

But his Communist party - projected to win 60% of the vote - continues to rely on Soviet-era allegiances, particularly in the conservative countryside where most voters live and work.

Far from championing freedom, the ruling party tightly controls apparat and media. Reporters who said this week "the principles of free and unbiased journalism are disregarded on a daily basis" were denounced as opposition agents.

A wary EU suspects that Mr Voronin could yet upset its new politico-economic "action plan" to woo Europe's poorest country.

The EU external relations commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, said EU concerns included "problems with the accuracy of voter registers, reported abuse of administrative resources and ruling party control of the public media" (Brussels-speak for fraud). Rather than advocating a Kiev-style uprising, the main opposition grouping, the centre-left Democratic Moldova Bloc, wants closer relations with Russia, the country's biggest export market and its main supplier of raw materials and fuel.

In contrast, the Christian Democrats are so keen to follow Ukraine's path, they have made orange their campaign colour. The party is advised by Dick Morris, Bill Clinton's disgraced electoral strategist. But with only 15% support, it will struggle.

Undeterred by such facts, Mr Smirnov, Transdniestria's leader, claims to detect a western plot. He has warned that "external forces" want to force Russia out of the region. While advocating reconciliation, Mr Smirnov continues to hurl insults across the Dniester.

Picking its way through this maelstrom, Russia is trying not to repeat past mistakes. Moscow-based analysts have warned against a policy "driven by irritation". Some predict that once Mr Voronin is re-elected, he can be induced back into the fold.

Russia must play by the new rules of the post-Soviet struggle for influence in its "near abroad", analyst Gennady Konenko told the Moscow Times. "Russia has not learned yet how to use its economic levers in diplomacy. Why not start in Moldova?"

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/04/russia>

Staff and agencies

Fri 4 Mar 2005

Russian school siege suspects killed

Five people suspected of involvement in last year's Beslan school massacre have been killed by Russian authorities while resisting arrest, an official said today.

Four suspects were also said to have been arrested in an operation that targeted some of the alleged organisers of the hostage-taking raid at the school in the town of Beslan, in southern Russia, last September.

Nikolai Shepel, the regional prosecutor leading the Beslan inquiry, would not elaborate on where or when the operation took place but said in a statement that it had targeted those involved in the "preparation stage" of the atrocity.

At least 32 gunmen raided the school in Beslan and held 1,227 people hostage for nearly three days before the siege ended in gunfire and explosions that killed 330 people, almost half of them children.

Officials said at the time that all the gunmen had been killed, apart from one who was captured, but the Russian media suggested there were more than 32 gunmen and that some of them had escaped.

The Chechen separatist militant Shamil Basayev has claimed responsibility for the school seizure and other attacks in Russia, including two plane bombings in August.

Mr Shepel said today the suspects arrested in the latest raid were also accused of involvement in an attack on police facilities in Russia's southern region of Ingushetia, near Chechnya, in June last year, in which about 90 people were killed.

He said that Abu Dzeit, a suspected al-Qaida-linked mercenary from Saudi Arabia, was a key organiser of the school seizure and other terror attacks. Dzeit died in a Russian security sweep last month.

Investigators say the six-month criminal investigation into the Beslan atrocity has provided some answers as to how the raid was organised but there has been anger in Russia at the slow pace of the inquiries.

Russian authorities have been accused of hiding information about the attackers and how they were able to slip into town with a huge quantity of weapons so easily. Five local police officers have been charged with negligence in relation to the tragedy.

Last month Mr Shepel told the Guardian the first explosion at the school had come from within the building and was not caused by some "outside influence". Russian forces have been accused of causing the first explosion, leading to the bloody ending to the siege.

Investigators say tests revealed that 21 of the 31 gunmen who died in the storming of the building had heroin or morphine in their bloodstreams. Another six apparently used light drugs ranging from codeine to marijuana.

Mr Shepel said the group was led by Ruslan Khuchbarov, known as "the colonel", who he said he had seen on a videotape meeting with Abu Dzeit a few days before the attack.

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/07/russia.nickpatonwalsh>

Nick Paton Walsh in Moscow

Mon 7 Mar 2005

Communists poised to win Moldovan poll - and reject Russia

Moldova yesterday voted in a parliamentary election that appeared to speed the impoverished European country towards being the latest former Soviet Union country to wrestle itself free from the grip of Moscow through the ballot box.

The ruling Communist party, the last in Europe, won 40% of the vote, according to exit polls, on a ticket of EU integration and economic growth that bore no resemblance to its Soviet roots.

The exit poll gave the opposition Moldovan Democratic Bloc, which has threatened protests if the vote is "stolen", 29%.

Moldovan MPs appoint the president, and the Communist party, headed by incumbent President Vladimir Voronin, needs to secure 61 of the 101 seats on offer to give him a second term. However, last night's figures suggested the party may fall short of enough seats for a clear majority.

Turnout at 9pm local time was nearly 64%.

Ana Vasentciuc, 70, who receives a monthly pension of 437 lei (about £18), told Reuters: "I voted for the Communists because they look after the old people and they doubled my pension."

The Central Elections Committee said yesterday officials had not detected any violations and the head of the opposition bloc, Serafim Urechean, told reporters that he did not think there would be a "revolution in the republic".

The common pro-western platform of the three main parties focused the campaign on the differing degrees of distance they want from Russia. A quarter of the country's working population lives abroad, many in Russia. Moscow also has 1,500 troops in the breakaway Moldovan region of Transdniestria.

The three parties are also hoping to capitalise on the new pro-western sentiment sweeping across Moscow's former sphere of influence.

The government has polished its new anti-Russian credentials, denying access to 100 Russian "observers" at the weekend, according to the Moscow media, and earlier expelling 20 Russians as spies.

Mr Voronin, who has said he will move to rename his party after the election, said while voting yesterday: "I voted for the Moldovan people, for Moldova's prosperity".

Mr Urechean, the leader of the opposition Moldovan Democratic bloc, told Interfax while casting his vote: "The future of Moldova and of its further development is being decided today. Voters must think about their country's future and the future of their children and grandchildren."

His bloc has the least hostile approach to Moscow. It was formed last year with the help of American NGOs.

News Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/07/russia.secondworldwar>

Tom Parfitt in Moscow and Luke Harding in Berlin

Mon 7 Mar 2005

Baltic states agonise over Putin's invitation

Russia and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are locked in a diplomatic row over festivities to mark the end of the second world war.

The Kremlin has invited the presidents of the three states to Moscow on May 9 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany. It has also invited world leaders including Gerhard Schröder, who would be the first German leader to attend such an anniversary in Moscow.

However, the Baltic leaders are coming under intense public pressure not to attend an event that also marks the start of the region's forced subjugation to Moscow.

The Red Army occupied the three countries during the second world war after fierce fighting with nationalists. In 1941, Nazi Germany invaded and thousands of volunteers from the Baltic states joined German units in an attempt to fend off the Soviet advance.

The era remains deeply sensitive for the three countries, not least because many residents enthusiastically collaborated in the Nazi massacres of Jews.

Moscow argues that its occupation liberated the Baltics from Nazi tyranny.

The Baltic countries did not break free from Moscow's embrace until the break-up of the Soviet Union in the early 90s.

For many in the three states, which have all joined the EU and Nato, the thought of their leaders bowing and scraping in the Kremlin is too much to bear. Wary of a domestic backlash, the presidents of Latvia and Estonia are considering a boycott of the celebrations.

The Estonian president, Arnold Ruutel, consulted MPs last week and said his decision must "preserve Baltic unity". He said he might send his prime minister, Juhan Parts, in his place in what would be seen as a snub to Moscow.

The Lithuanian leader, Valdas Adamkus, has said he will not answer Moscow's invitation until it is "strategically convenient" for the country.

A poll in Lithuania last week showed 34% of people thought he should refuse the visit. Opposition politicians are campaigning against the trip.

President Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia has agreed to travel but infuriated Moscow with the prediction that, "on May 9, Russian people will place a Caspian roach on a newspaper, drink vodka, sing folk songs, and recall how they heroically conquered the Baltics".

In Germany, opposition politicians have suggested it would be better for Mr Schröder to avoid a parade by the Red Army, which, they say, brought about the division of Germany.

Tatyana Zhdanok, an MEP from Latvia's Russian-speaking community, said the president had no desire to attend the Moscow events but had capitulated under EU pressure.

"It would be better for her to stay at home if she does not want honestly to join the celebrations," said Ms Zhdanok. "She will only use the anniversary as a platform to claim the Red Army occupied Latvia rather than liberating it."

In an attempt to sweeten the May 9 visit, Russia is offering to finalise border agreements and sign a declaration on shared objectives with the Baltic leaders the next day.

But the president, Vladimir Putin, warned: "We are extending a hand of friendship. Whether it will be taken, shaken or not does not depend on us."

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/08/russia.chechnya>

Russians kill Chechen leader



Mark Tran *and agencies*

🐦 @marktran

Tue 8 Mar 2005

The Russian military today said it had killed the Chechen rebel leader, Aslan Maskhadov, one of its most wanted men, in a "special operation".

The Interfax news agency quoted a spokesman for the Russian forces as saying that Mr Maskhadov had been killed in Tolstoy-Yurt, a village in the northern sector of Chechnya that has been under the tight control of Russian forces.

The television channel NTV later showed footage of a corpse claimed to be that of Mr Maskhadov. Another Chechen rebel leader, Akhmed Zakayev, said Mr Maskhadov was probably dead, but that he had no personal confirmation.

Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, asked Nikolai Patrushev, the head of the FSB security service, to double-check that Mr Maskhadov had definitely been killed, although Chechen police had confirmed the dead body was his.

Earlier, Russian officials reported that three rebels who were planning a terrorist attack on the administration building in Tolstoy-Yurt had been detained.

Mr Maskhadov, a former Soviet general, led the Chechen separatists who fought Russian forces to a standstill in the 1994-96 war. He became the republic's president after the Russian military withdrew, leading Chechnya during a brief period of independence.

He appeared to lose substantial influence to the Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev later on. By the time Russian forces returned to Chechnya in 1999, he was believed to command loyalty among only a relatively small faction of fighters.

The Kremlin put £5.5m bounties on both leaders' heads after the Beslan school siege in which more than 300 people, half of them children, were killed.

Mr Maskhadov last September tried to distance himself from extremists in the independence movement by declaring that his former commander-in-chief Shamil Basayev would one day stand trial for ordering the Beslan siege.

Mr Maskhadov condemned Beslan and promised to punish those behind such "illegal acts", while Mr Basayev claimed responsibility for the attack.

Russia's counter-terrorism forces have accused both Mr Maskhadov and Mr Basayev of being involved in the planning of the Beslan atrocity. Mr Basayev and his Arab mercenaries, they said, were hiding behind Mr Maskhadov's independence movement to legitimise their plan of creating an "Arab caliphate in the north Caucasus".

The Russian security service, the FSB, said Mr Maskhadov and Mr Basayev "cannot stand each other" but cooperated against Russia. Mr Basayev, who has shunned politics in favour of mass hostage-taking and terrorism, has been blacklisted by the UN for his alleged links to al-Qaida.

The ties between the two men led Mr Maskhadov to fall out of favour with the US, which once saw him as the key to a negotiated settlement in Chechnya.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/08/chechnya.russia>

Tue 8 Mar 2005

Chechnya loses its Yasser Arafat

The reported killing of Aslan Maskhadov will be mourned by veterans of the Chechen war and heralded as a triumph in Moscow, writes Rafael Behr



Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov. Photograph: Sergei Shakhidjanyan/AP

Aslan Maskhadov, whose death at the hands of Russian forces was reported today, is the man with the best claim to be the legitimately elected president of the Chechen people, having emerged victorious in a poll held in January 1997, during a brief window of de facto independence from Russia.

Maskhadov had led the forces that drove Russia from the republic, forcing the then president Boris Yeltsin to negotiate a face-saving ceasefire. That was the end of what has come to be known as the first Chechen war and it was, in the eyes of the shamed Russian military and the world, a victory, albeit a scrappy one, for the Chechens.

Yeltsin's successor Vladimir Putin came to power determined to efface that memory. Meanwhile, the republic that Maskhadov had inherited, war-torn and lawless, was becoming the fertile breeding ground for a new generation of Chechen fighter - radical Islamists, trained in an ideology of fundamentalism and prepared to commit acts of terror.

Putin went to war again in 1999, provoked by bomb attacks against civilians in Moscow. Maskhadov went underground. The onslaught on Chechnya was as intense and brutal as it had been in 1994, but the second Chechen war has been conducted in very different times. Since September 11 2001, the international community has been readier than it was before to accept Moscow's claim that military action in the breakaway province is a component in a globalised war on terror. Maskhadov, who like most of his generation was originally motivated to fight on a platform of secular national liberation, was re-

branded a terrorist. US silence on the issue of Russia's war was a quid pro quo for Moscow's quiescence on military action in Afghanistan.

Events in Chechnya have unfolded with the grim inevitability of self-fulfilling prophecy: with no other sources of support or funding the rebels increasingly turned to Islamists; in so doing they changed the nature of their conflict; once labelled as terrorists they forfeited international sympathy and the terror tacticians in their ranks gained the upper hand. The seizure of a school in Beslan, in Russia's North Caucasus, last year would have been unimaginable 10 years before. Maskhadov denied responsibility. Moscow blamed him outright. The truth may now be lost for a generation.

For some outside observers, Maskhadov was the Yasser Arafat of the Chechen conflict - beyond the pale for negotiations as far as the occupying power was concerned, but the only person with the combination of military credibility and diplomatic experience to carry his people to the peace table. Even moderate Russian politicians, who are now marginalised in Moscow, had called for dialogue with him, at least before the horror of Beslan. But the idea of talks with Maskhadov - indeed the mention of his name - seemed to produce uncharacteristically emotional rage in Putin. The Russian president will declare Maskhadov's death a victory to celebrate as if Osama bin Laden had been captured or killed.

Meanwhile, in Chechnya, a puppet administration loyal to the Kremlin will redouble its security, expecting retaliation from rebels/terrorists loyal to their deceased president. Chechnya will remain, for the foreseeable future, in a state of dirty civil war.

· Rafael Behr is a former correspondent in Russia and the former Soviet Union

World
Europe

Russia

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/09/russia.comment>

Eric Hobsbawm

Wed 9 Mar 2005

The last of the utopian projects

Perestroika plunged Russia into social ruin - and the world into an unprecedented superpower bid for global domination

I have a lasting admiration for Mikhail Gorbachev. It is an admiration shared by all who know that, but for his initiatives, the world might still be living under the shadow of the catastrophe of a nuclear war - and that the transition from the communist to the post-communist era in eastern Europe, and in most non-Caucasian parts of the former USSR, has proceeded without significant bloodshed. His place in history is secure.

But did perestroika bring about a second Russian revolution? No. It brought the collapse of the system built on the 1917 revolution, followed by a period of social, economic and cultural ruin, from which the peoples of Russia have by no means yet fully emerged. Recovery from this catastrophe is already taking much longer than it took Russia to recover from the world wars.

Whatever will emerge from this era of post-Soviet catastrophe was not envisaged, let alone prepared, by perestroika, not even after the supporters of perestroika had realised that their project of a reformed communism, or even a social-democratised USSR, was unrealisable. It was not even envisaged by those who came to believe that the aim should be a fully capitalist system of the liberal western - more precisely, the American - model.

The end of perestroika precipitated Russia into a space void of any real policy, except the unrestricted free market recommendations of western economists who were even more ignorant of how the Soviet economy functioned than their Russian followers were of how western capitalism operated. On neither side was there serious consideration of the necessarily lengthy and complex problems of transition. Nor, when the collapse came, given its speed, could there have been.

I do not want to blame perestroika for this. Almost certainly the Soviet economy was unreformable by the 1980s. If there were real chances of reforming it in the 1960s they were sabotaged by the self-interests of a nomenklatura that was by this time firmly entrenched and uncontrollable. Possibly the last real chance of reform was in the years after Stalin's death.

On the other hand, the sudden collapse of the USSR was neither probable nor expected before the late 1980s. A prominent CIA figure interviewed by Professor Fred Halliday of the LSE thought that, supposing Andropov had survived in good health, there would still have been a USSR in the 1990s - clumsy, inefficient, in slow and perhaps accelerating economic decline, but still in being. The international situation would have been, and remained, very different. International disorder followed the collapse of the single Russian state that had been a great world power since the 18th century - as it had the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires after the first world war. For a few years even the existence of Russia itself as an effective state was in question. It is so no longer, but the necessary restoration of state power in Russia in recent years has been at heavy risk to the political and juridical liberalisation which was the major - I am tempted to say the only real - achievement of perestroika.

Did perestroika herald "the end of history"? The collapse of the experiment initiated by the October Revolution is certainly the end of a history. That experiment will not be repeated, although the hope it represented, at least initially, will remain a permanent part of human aspirations. And the enormous social injustice which gave communism its historic force in the last century is not diminishing in this one. But was it "the end of history" as Francis Fukuyama proclaimed in 1989, in a phrase that he no doubt regrets?

He was doubly wrong. In the literal sense of history as something that makes headlines in newspapers and TV news bulletins, history has continued since 1989, if anything in a more dramatic mode than before. The cold war has been followed neither by a new world order, nor by a period of peace, nor by the prospect of a predictable global progress in civilisation such as intelligent western observers had in the mid-19th century, the last period when liberal capitalism - under British auspices in those days - had no doubts about the future of the world.

What we have today is a superpower unrealistically aspiring to a permanent world supremacy for which there is no historical precedent, nor probability, given the limitation of its own resources - especially as today all state power is weakened by the impact of non-state economic agents in a global economy beyond the control of any state, and given the visible tendency of the global centre of gravity to shift from the North Atlantic to the zone of south and east Asia.

Even more questionable is the wider - almost quasi-Hegelian - sense of Fukuyama's phrase. It implies that history has an end, namely a world capitalist economy developing

without limits, married to societies ruled by liberal-democratic institutions. There is no historic justification for teleology, whether non-Marxist or Marxist, and certainly none for believing in unilinear and uniform worldwide development.

Both evolutionary science and the experiences of the 20th century have taught us that evolution has no direction that allows us concrete predictions about its future social, cultural and political consequences.

The belief that the US or the European Union, in their various forms, have achieved a mode of government which, however desirable, is destined to conquer the world, and is not subject to historic transformation and impermanence, is the last of the utopian projects so characteristic of the last century. What the 21st needs is both social hope and historical realism.

· Eric Hobsbawm is author of *The Age of Extremes: The Short 20th Century 1914-1991*; this is an edited version of an address to the world political forum on perestroika 20 years on, held last weekend in Turin by the Gorbachev Foundation

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News
Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/09/chechnya.russia1>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*

Wed 9 Mar 2005

Chechen rebel leader killed in Russian assault

Death of former president Aslan Maskhadov ends hope of a negotiated settlement to end the 10-year conflict with Russia

Aslan Maskhadov, the leader of the Chechen separatist movement, was killed yesterday during a raid by Russian special forces.

General Major Ilya Shabalkin, spokesman for the Russian forces in the North Caucasus, told the Guardian Mr Maskhadov died when troops from the elite Alfa and Vimpel units of the Russian security services, the FSB, tried to arrest him in the Chechen village of Tolstoy Yurt, but that he had been killed, apparently by accident, in an explosion.

The death of the former Chechen president and the more moderate of the separatists still carrying out attacks on Russian troops will quash what dim hopes remained for a negotiated settlement of the 10-year conflict, in which Mr Maskhadov, 53, was the only player prepared to negotiate.

In a well co-ordinated media operation his corpse was shown on the Russian TV channel NTV laying in a pool of blood in the courtyard of the house in whose basement he had been hiding. A masked soldier pulled from the wreckage a plastic bag containing the flag Chechnya used during its independence under Mr Maskhadov from 1996 to 1999.

Mr Mashkadov's corpse was dressed in a blue tracksuit pulled up to reveal his stomach. His right eye was swollen with bruising and he had a puncture wound in his head.

The chief of the FSB, Nikolai Patrushev, told President Vladimir Putin his men sustained no losses during the operation and that investigators were examining the body.

Akhmed Zakayev, Mr Maskhadov's spokesman who has political asylum in London, told the Guardian by telephone: "I can confirm his death. I have spoken to people there [in Chechnya]. He was killed in a fight, a shootout. He was without his security, practically alone. The Russians would know themselves he would never be taken alive."

The Kremlin will seize on the death as a significant political victory for Mr Putin's hardline policy on Chechnya, coming at a time when domestic reforms have plunged the Kremlin head's ratings to an all-time low.

Mr Putin said: "There's still a lot of work to do there. We have to build up our forces to protect the people of the republic and citizens of all Russia from the bandits." He told Mr Patrushev to investigate further to "confirm" the information.

Mr Shabalkin said: "We received information that there was an international terrorist [in Tolstoy Yurt] and undertook a special operation to arrest him." He said troops had to detonate an explosive to gain access to the bunker, in which Mr Maskhadov and three accomplices had barricaded themselves. Mr Shabalkin said Mr Maskhadov was probably killed as he was too close to the blast.

However, Ramzan Kadyrov, the influential son of the late pro-Russian president of Chechnya, Akhmed Kadyrov, said the separatist had been killed by a careless shot fired by his bodyguards. Mr Kadyrov told Interfax the death was a "gift" to all Chechen women on the public holiday of International Women's Day yesterday.

Mr Shabalkin added that Mr Maskhadov had been officially identified using witnesses and photographs and doubted the three accomplices arrested during the operation had information that could assist them in killing the Chechen separatist militant, Shamil Basayev, Russia's most wanted man.

Mr Zakayev said: "He was caught absolutely accidentally. The village is small and he did not have his usual security detail so as not to attract attention." He said a Chechen separatist committee would soon meet and appoint Mr Maskhadov's successor, declining to name any candidates.

"For the resistance it is a loss, but another will take his place. Russian propaganda has for hundreds of years tried to say that the problem is not with the Chechen people but with one of their leaders.

"Maskhadov was a young and promising Soviet commander who headed our forces at the start." He added: "All the peaceful initiatives in past years had come from Maskhadov's side".

He said the "political killing of our president will increase the position of the radical side," namely Mr Basayev.

Life of conflict

- Aslan Maskhadov was born in Kazakhstan in 1951, his family having been deported from Chechnya by the Soviet leader Josef Stalin, along with the rest of the Chechen people, in 1944.
- Maskhadov became a Soviet artillery colonel. Later he led his breakaway region's forces in a 21-month war which ended in 1996 with a humiliating defeat of the Russian troops.
- Maskhadov won a landslide presidential election victory in January 1997. In May, he and President Boris Yeltsin signed a peace accord but Chechnya's final status was left unresolved. Moscow said Chechnya must remain a part of the Russian Federation, albeit with wide autonomy.
- In 1999 Vladimir Putin, then the prime minister of Russia, blamed Chechen rebels for a series of bombings in Russian cities. Troops were sent back to Chechnya and the separatist leaders fled. Maskhadov had been in hiding since the Russian troops retook the Chechen capital, Grozny, in 2000.
- Last month Maskhadov was said to have ordered a ceasefire by his forces as a gesture of goodwill aimed at ending the conflict. Leaders of Chechnya's pro-Moscow government rejected the offer, calling it a cynical ploy to allow the rebels to regroup.
- Moscow blamed Maskhadov, who had a \$10m reward on his head, for a string of deadly operations in Russia. These included the occupation of a Moscow theatre, a bombing near the Kremlin and last year's hostage-taking at a school in Beslan, in which at least 326 hostages died, half of them children.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/09/chechnya.russia>

Ian Traynor

Wed 9 Mar 2005

Spurned by Putin, rejected by militants

Analysis Ian Traynor

Last week Aslan Maskhadov was calling for peace talks with the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, asserting that a half-hour tête-à-tête would be enough to settle a decade of war in Chechnya.

Yesterday he was dead, according to Russian sources, killed by Moscow's forces in his native northern Chechen plain, which has always been more pro-Russian than the highlands of the south.

Russian television showed what appeared to be his corpse in a northern village, Tolstoy-Yurt. Chechen sources admitted that Maskhadov, one of the three or four key figures of the Chechen guerrilla movement of the past 10 years, was dead.

It is a notable coup for Mr Putin, who has insisted since he became president five years ago that Maskhadov was a terrorist, and refused to have any truck with him.

Maskhadov offered innumerable chances for talks. He declared a ceasefire earlier this year in the hope that it might lead to negotiations. But one reason why his overtures were repeatedly spurned by Mr Putin was that the Kremlin doubted that he could deliver.

"A commander of rare and original genius," according to the analyst Anatol Lieven in a 1998 book, *Chechnya - Tombstone of Russian Power*, Maskhadov chalked up his greatest achievements when Mr Putin was still an unknown Russian civil servant.

Maskhadov was an artillery officer in the Russian army who became chief of staff to the wayward Chechen president Dzhokhar Dudayev. He masterminded the brilliant guerrilla campaign of the first Chechnya war in 1994-1996 and became the de facto Chechen leader when the Russians killed Dudayev in 1996.

He was elected Chechen president in January 1997 - it was regarded as the only legitimate election in the republic since fighting began in 1994 - with 59% of the vote, beating his rival and partner, Shamil Basayev, whose increasing Islamist militancy, boldness and charisma nevertheless eroded support for the more moderate Maskhadov thereafter.

Maskhadov proved an outstanding military leader in the first war against Boris Yeltsin's Russia, which he won, making an advantageous peace deal and becoming president.

Then he lost the peace.

Under his presidency in the late Yeltsin years, Chechnya descended into appalling lawlessness, gangsterism and violence.

Mr Yeltsin showed little interest. But the arrival of Mr Putin, first as prime minister in the summer of 1999 and then as president the following March, changed all that.

President Putin claimed to see in Chechnya's autonomous mayhem a spreading threat to Russia's integrity and cohesiveness. He resolved to reconquer Chechnya, and exploited the conflict to cement his power as Russia's leader.

As a relative moderate, always seemingly reasonable but uncompromisingly independent, Maskhadov got in the way of the Kremlin's portrayal of the Chechen resistance as a central element of trans-national Islamist terror.

"A 30-minute face-to-face dialogue [with Putin] should be enough to stop this war," Maskhadov told Radio Free Europe last week. But he also indirectly claimed that he could expand the conflict with Russia to neighbouring parts of the Caucasus.

He claimed to have guerrilla fighters under his command in Ingushetia, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Karachayevo-Cherkessiya, saying: "This is not just empty talk, but reality."

The Russians were more concerned about the threat implicit in such talk than they were in his peace talks offer.

And they had long been seeking, with some success, to marginalise Maskhadov.

The hard line pursued by President Putin radicalised parts of the Chechen resistance, increasing its international Islamist inclinations and marginalising the Maskhadov types: orthodox anti-colonialist separatist guerrillas. That may have been the Kremlin's aim.

Whatever the intentions, Basayev's more radical followers gained the upper hand through international dramas and terrorist outrages such as the Moscow theatre siege in the autumn of 2002, and last year's school seizure in Beslan, whose blood-soaked denouement cost the lives of 330 people, half of them children.

Maskhadov deplored the atrocity, but the Russians blamed it on him.

He was on the UN's wanted list of international terrorists. The Russians consistently accused him of a double-act, appearing moderate and denying any involvement in headline-grabbing atrocities outside of Chechnya while being deeply complicit with Basayev and his fanatics and gangsters.

Squeezed between the hard men in the Kremlin, Islamist militants in Chechnya and the local corrupt and brutal quisling regime imposed by Moscow, Maskhadov's room for manoeuvre became narrower by the month.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/mar/10/guardianobituaries.russia>

Nick Paton Walsh

Thu 10 Mar 2005

Aslan Maskhadov

Chechnya's former president, whose fight for independence was undermined by violence

A common sight in the bare bones of a city that is Grozny, the Chechen capital, is spray-painted graffiti declaring: "Maskhadov is our president". It is, of course, like much in the dysfunctional Chechen separatist movement, a symbol of defiance rather than a working political declaration. Chechnya's president is Alu Alkhanov, installed by a rigged election last year after his equally pro-Moscow predecessor and boss, Akhmed Kadyrov, was assassinated in May, apparently by separatists.

Aslan Maskhadov, who died in a confrontation with Russian special forces aged 53, was the last president of Chechnya, elected in a vote which is broadly accepted to have been a reflection of popular will. Opinions differ as to how his death was caused - by a careless shot from his bodyguards, by a grenade blast, or an explosion designed to break down the barricade shielding him - as do opinions of his life and legacy.

To many of the embattled Chechen people he was a symbol of the popular struggle against "Russian imperialism" that extends back to the 1800s. He was born in exile, two years before the death of Joseph Stalin, in the steppes of Kazakhstan. The entire Chechen people had been dumped there by the Soviet dictator, who, in 1944, had feared their rebellious temperament would make them ideal collaborators with the Nazis.

Returning to Chechnya during the Brezhnev renaturalisations, he rose quickly in the ranks of the Soviet army to command his own battalion, stationed in Hungary and then the Baltics. In 1992 he retired and returned to Chechnya, and when Chechen president Dzhokar Dudayev's conflict with Moscow burgeoned into war in 1994, Maskhadov was made head of the Chechen army. His inspired battlefield leadership led the Russians into a bloody defeat and a brief period of Chechen independence.

Yet it was in trying to contain the volatile clans which burden Chechen society that his battlefield talents failed. After he was elected president in 1997, Chechnya, a failed state after a two-year war, slipped into further anarchy. No symbolic status for Maskhadov as a national leader could prevent the lifelong Chechen mercenary, Shamil Basayev, from in part provoking Kremlin retaliation through incursions into neighbouring Russian Dagestan in 1999.

From here on, Basayev proved his undoing. The second war swiftly restored Moscow's control, leaving Maskhadov on the run. He continued to claim credit for ongoing attacks against Russian forces, while Basayev rose to prominence as the separatist movement's more ruthless personality.

Maskhadov continued his ambidextrous stance of being open to a negotiated settlement while continuing military action against "Russian occupiers". A group of Russian MPs tried to engineer a negotiated settlement in the summer of 2002, an opportunity that reportedly led Maskhadov to appoint Basayev his commander-in-chief in a bid to rein him in.

Yet the international disapprobation of the separatist movement that followed the Nord Ost theatre siege in October that year led Washington to slowly turn its back on the man it once held as a key player in its desired political solution. From that point on, Basayev's actions amplified: from the first Moscow suicide bombing in July 2003, to the Beslan school massacre that killed 330 last September. As the separatist movement grew to rely more on Islamic militants for funds and fighters, Maskhadov was reduced to simply denouncing Basayev's actions.

His last statement - that he could solve the conflict after a 30-minute chat with Mr Putin - testified to his growing obsolescence. Yes, he may have had a chance of uniting some Chechens to the point that the violence ebbed. But the warped ideology and pursuit of money that fuels today's Chechen-on-Chechen, Russian-on-Chechen and Chechen-on-Russian violence would go on. His day had long passed.

President Putin's hardline supposition - that Chechen separatists were now terrorists who could not be negotiated with - became a self-fulfilling prophecy. While the Russian security services brim with information about how Basayev is linked to "terror attacks", their information on Maskhadov's alleged role as a main organiser is scant. They "just know".

Yesterday they were palpably crowing. For years they had tried to simplify the conflict into "state versus international terrorist". Maskhadov's political struggle for independence gave fuel to those in the west who thought the conflict was not that simple. Now the figurehead for that idea is gone, and only Maskhadov's as-yet-unnamed successor and the extremists remain.

Casting Maskhadov as the "Chechen Yasser Arafat" ignores his desperate attempts to stay clean, or the complexity of the conflict. Maskhadov's mandate came from his prowess as a commander, not from his historic role and tenacity. He did not appear to court or justify those who attacked civilians. And, unlike Arafat, death was not the only thing that could dislodge him from power.

The mutual extermination practised for years by extremists on both sides of the Russo-Chechen border achieved that goal long ago.

· Aslan Maskhadov, politician, born September 21 1951; died March 8 2005.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/11/russia.comment>

Fri 11 Mar 2005

What the west condemns in Putin, it condoned in Yeltsin

Jonathan Steele



Privatisation and welfare cuts are being rammed through by diktat

Twenty years to the day since Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Kremlin and launched the programme of modernisation known as perestroika, Russia has not stopped changing. You don't even need to go there to see that.

In a window on the screen where I'm writing this article, I have the online version in Cyrillic of the daily newspaper Izvestia. A coloured panel offers a piece by the ageing popstar Alla Pugacheva complaining about marriage. Another contains a sensational headline asking if the US is about to declare war on Russia. There are links to celebrity gossip web-pages, and a voting site where you can select your candidate for the person most responsible for destroying the Soviet Union.

It is not just Izvestia's content and approach that are new. When Gorbachev took the helm of the Communist party in March 1985, the paper belonged to the Soviet government. Now it is the privately owned plaything of Vladimir Potanin, a Murdoch-like media tycoon, friend of Peter Mandelson, and one of the richest oligarchs in Russia.

Yet while the newspaper-of-record seriousness of the old Izvestia has given way to consumerism and interactive reader-friendliness, is the new paper bolder politically? Not much, to judge by what happened after the massacre of close to 200 children in the Beslan school siege last year. Izvestia accused officials of lying and bungling and suggested the authorities had to share the blame with the hostage-takers. But when the Kremlin complained, Potanin sacked the editor and softened his paper's anti-government tone.

The episode touched the central questions of post-communist Russia. Have the shifts in property ownership really brought democracy? Is the new economic elite any less intertwined with those who hold power in the Kremlin than party managers were in the Brezhnev period? Do ordinary Russians feel more in charge of their lives under the new capitalist system than they were under Soviet communism?

In recent months, most western discourse on Russia has focused on the alleged revival of dictatorial tendencies at the top. Two versions clash. Vladimir Putin's defenders define the issue as order versus chaos. They characterise Boris Yeltsin's rule as a time of zigzags and loose government in which the rulers of Russia's regions developed so much power that the country was in danger of falling apart.

Hence the need for Putin to take control in the centre, and to finish the war in Chechnya with victory rather than through talks. Where Yeltsin negotiated with the republic's last moderate leader, Aslan Maskhadov, Putin hounded him and this week obtained his death.

Western critics see the issue as democracy versus authoritarianism. But they also contrast Yeltsin and Putin, claiming the freedoms brought in by Russia's first president are being reversed by his successor. They cite the imprisonment of Mikhail Khodorkovsk (the major shareholder in the country's biggest oil firm), the state takeover of the last independent TV networks and a new law allowing the Kremlin to nominate the candidates from whom regional governors are elected.

Combined with Putin's appointment of army and security service officers to top political and managerial posts, these moves certainly amount to a tightening of what Russians call the "power vertical". Yet they pale against the similarities between Yeltsin and Putin; there is far more continuity than many of Putin's critics care to admit.

The intermingling of business and politics, the green light the Kremlin gives to crony privatisation schemes, the selective blind eye turned to tax fiddles and corruption and the use of pressure on judges go back to the Yeltsin era.

Russia's switch to democratic freedoms preceded Yeltsin. It was Gorbachev who introduced contested elections, permitted independent political parties, created a parliament, abolished censorship, ended the Communist party's "leading role" and gave Russians the right to travel freely outside the country. The retreat began two years after he and perestroika were driven from the stage.

In their eagerness to prevent a return to communism in the mid-1990s, western leaders and the advisers they sent to Moscow confused the introduction of capitalist institutions with democracy. As long as Yeltsin took steps towards "reform", by which they meant the fastest feasible switch to market economics, and the privatisation of as many state assets as possible, anything was tolerated on the political front.

When Russian MPs hesitated to authorise further change after the lifting of price controls launched hyper inflation, destroying people's savings and impoverishing the middle class, Yeltsin closed parliament and rewrote the constitution so as to strengthen the powers of the president.

When it looked as though a disappointed electorate might choose a Communist for president in 1996, albeit one who accepted multiparty pluralism and advocated only a mild review of the privatisation scandals, the west backed Yeltsin and the oligarchs to use their control of TV to shut out or distort opposition views. Many Russian "liberals" who complain of Putin supported Yeltsin's illiberal campaign for re-election then.

The key issue for contemporary Russia is whether some sense of civic responsibility can be revived. The social paternalism of the Soviet system in the years after Stalin's terror ended has given way to a policy of dismantling almost every form of welfare. Free education and health are being replaced by fee-paying and privatisation. The government is abolishing the subsidies that kept housing costs low.

Hundreds of thousands of Russian pensioners have taken to the streets in recent months to protest at having free transport and other benefits switched to cash payments, which they rightly fear will either be delayed or not keep up with inflation. This comes at a time when income inequalities have already widened enormously.

By now it may be too late to break from the Yeltsin-era equation that the less democracy there is, the easier it is to ram through rightwing economic changes. Putin is making it harder for independents to get elected to the Duma and raising the threshold for smaller parties.

Although the anti-communism of the 1990s has slackened slightly, as polls show increasing numbers of Russians are disillusioned with the "reform" process, it looks unlikely that a social democratic option can emerge any time soon. The left is still pilloried as communism in softer guise. Unlike in central Europe or the Baltic states, left-v-right politics has failed to develop in a mature way in post-communist Russia, or indeed in Georgia, Ukraine, and the other former Soviet republics.

Vague calls for "cleaning up corruption", strong as opposed to weak government and foreign policy stances for or against "Europe" and "the west" become the dominant themes. But beneath the slogans the main issue between challengers and incumbents is who can capture the state, and thereby enrich themselves.

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Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/14/chechnya.theeditorpressreview>

Mon 14 Mar 2005

The prospects for peace in Chechnya

Aslan Maskhadov, the Chechen separatist leader, was killed by Russian special forces last week. Could his death bring peace to war-torn Chechnya?

How was news of the death received? With more concern than relief by most observers, even though they compared the former president's slaying in a bunker near the breakaway region's capital to the capture of Saddam Hussein ... While Russian officials praised the operation, lauding special services for "destroying" Russia's most wanted man without a single injury, outside observers saw the last hope of peaceful negotiations to resolve the 10-year separatist conflict fade away.

From MosNews.com, March 9

What was Maskhadov's legacy? As head of the Chechen resistance, Maskhadov had some pretty horrendous crimes chalked up to his tenure. There were the suicide bombings in Moscow, a mass-hostage taking at a Moscow theatre ... and last year's horror of the year - the Beslan school massacre ... Still, Maskhadov often extended an olive branch to Moscow, asking for peace talks. All offers were summarily refused.

From Spiegel online, March 9

So why is his death not welcomed? The removal of Maskhadov will leave leadership in Chechnya open to more radical figures ... The commanders on the ground, with very few exceptions, are hardline ... fighters, basically. The most notorious one, of course, is [Shamil] Basaev, who has taken responsibility for attacks on Russian targets like Nord Ost [theatre] in Moscow and then Beslan.

From the Chechen Times, March 8

How will the killing affect Russia? The death ... will not end the war in Chechnya _ There is no one left among the separatists who wants to hold talks with Russia and who will work within the western - or at the very least Russian - framework. From the point of view of military tactics, Maskhadov's death has left the Russians in a less-than-favourable position ... The Kremlin has killed Russia's last hope of maintaining control over the north Caucasus.

Yulia Latynina in the Moscow Times, March 10

So why order his killing? The killing of Maskhadov, 53, gives President Vladimir Putin a badly needed boost at a time when his popularity is slipping. Mr Putin was elected five years ago on a platform of restoring Russian pride but, despite his army's brutal tactics in the volatile republic, the bloodshed in Chechnya continues ... The killing is certainly a setback for Chechen rebels, who have been seeking to force the Russians out of their republic since 1994.

Julius Strauss in the Daily Telegraph, March 9

What else is being said about the killing? Many Russians outside Mr Putin's orbit believed that Maskhadov was both sincere in his desire for a political solution of the conflict with Moscow and capable of bringing the Chechen people along with him in the event of an internationally backed peace settlement ... The crucial question that hangs over Maskhadov's murder is whether Mr Putin is waging war in Chechnya out of an unthinking Stalinist reflex or whether he wants to prolong the conflict so that he can use his own war on terrorism as justification for an increasing concentration of power in the Kremlin.

From the Boston Globe, March 11

What does the future hold? Just as before, Chechnya remains an explosive region caught in the crossfire of tracer rounds from automatic weapons. The guerrilla underground is spreading more and more actively through neighbouring republics of the North Caucasus as well. It seems that the spread of terror is halted neither by clearance operations nor by pinpoint strikes on key figures like Maskhadov. What is needed is an effective political strategy which will bring the meat-grinder of war to a halt.

Dmitriy Severyukov in Tribuna, Russia, March 10

But is a political solution likely? The Russian people are nothing if not dogged. They understand the grinding agony of a war of attrition far better than the cut and thrust of a blitzkrieg. In the current political climate, Mr Putin need fear no electoral backlash at the continuing cost in Russian blood and coin of his campaign to stamp out Chechen independence. There is now no foreseeable danger of peace.

From Arab News, Saudi Arabia, March 10

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/15/chechnya.russia>

James Sturcke *and agencies*

Tue 15 Mar 2005

Russia paid \$10m for Maskhadov lead



Aslan Maskhadov. Photograph: AP

Russia's security services paid a \$10m (£5.2m) bounty for information that led to the killing of Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov, officials confirmed today.

Maskhadov was killed last week in a special operation in the village of Tolstoy-Yurt, in northern Chechnya, after troops found his bunker. The government blamed Maskhadov for a number of terrorist attacks including the Beslan school siege last September in which 330 hostages, many of them children, died.

The security service, known as the FSB, announced last year that it would pay the reward for tip-offs on the top rebel leader's whereabouts.

The FSB, the successor to the KGB, said in a statement today that it would be prepared to help the informants to move to another region of Russia or to a Muslim country. It did not say how many people would split the reward.

"The Russian Federal Security Service confirms its preparedness to guarantee personal security and payment of an appropriate monetary award to citizens providing trustworthy information on the whereabouts of the terrorist leaders," the statement said.

It confirmed it would pay the same amount for information on another rebel, Shamil Basayev, who is also linked to the Beslan attack.

Russia's security services have struggled to penetrate the tightly-knit clan society of Chechnya, and the killing of Maskhadov, one of Russia's most-wanted men, was hailed as a major victory.

But Russian media have begun questioning the official version of events after the security services blew up the house yesterday in which he was supposedly found.

Officials said the building was destroyed because of fears it had been booby-trapped, but some human rights activists and critics have complained that troops destroyed all the evidence in the case.

The popular daily, Moskovsky Komsomolets, reported today that forces could have captured, interrogated and killed Maskhadov elsewhere before bringing his body to Tolstoy-Yurt.

It said it was highly unlikely that Maskhadov could have used the primitive basement for shelter.

Yakha Yusupova, who lived in the house with her family, denied the rebel leader had been there and said she suspected Russian forces may have brought him to the site.

Several prominent Russian rights activists criticised the security services yesterday for killing rather than capturing Maskhadov.



World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/16/russia.chechnya>

Tom Parfitt in Moscow

Wed 16 Mar 2005

Russia pays £5m to informants who betrayed Maskhadov

Russia announced yesterday that it had "fulfilled its promise" by paying a £5.2m reward to the informants who betrayed the Chechen separatist leader, Aslan Maskhadov, killed by special forces earlier this month.

The Moscow-backed administration in Chechnya said it was convinced the payment would persuade somebody close to Shamil Basayev, the radical warlord who is Russia's most wanted man, to give him up in the near future.

"I am sure that now Basayev is unlikely to feel safe, no matter what region, village, forest or mountains he is in," the Moscow-based Chechen president, Alu Alkhanov, told Interfax.

A £5.2m bounty was offered for each of the two rebel leaders days after the end of the Beslan school siege in September, for which Basayev later claimed responsibility. More than 350 people, half of them children, died in the hostage-taking by mostly Chechen militants. The Kremlin also blamed Maskhadov for the siege, although he denied involvement.

Ilya Shabalkin, chief spokesman for Russian forces in the north Caucasus, said the reward for locating Maskhadov was shared between several people, including fighters who were captured in a recent standoff with federal troops in southeast Chechnya.

"The offer of a reward was made public some time ago, but the FSB [federal security service] has fulfilled its promise and paid it," he said.

Maskhadov was killed in the village of Tolstoy Yurt, near Grozny, on March 8, after Russian special forces surrounded him in a basement of a house.

Mr Shabalkin said that the informants who gave information about the rebel leader's whereabouts were under armed protection.

The FSB confirmed the payment, but would not provide details about who gave the tip-off. "They have received the money, but their identity will not be officially announced," a spokesman said. The FSB was prepared to relocate the people who gave information to another region of Russia or to a Muslim country if they wished, he said.

Since Maskhadov's death, there have been rumours about the exact circumstances of his final moments.

The deputy prime minister of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, initially suggested he had been shot by mistake by a careless bodyguard, but later admitted this was a "joke".

The FSB says Maskhadov was killed by grenades thrown into the basement where he was trapped. Sceptics have pointed to the lack of wounds on his body and suggested he was killed elsewhere.

But Mr Alkhanov dismissed the speculation yesterday, saying there was "no reason to falsify the circumstances of [Maskhadov's] liquidation".

The killing of Maskhadov, one of Russia's most wanted men, was a victory for the security services, who have struggled to penetrate the tightly knit clan society of Chechnya.

Maskhadov and other rebel leaders appeared able to move about fairly freely in the region, where they boast of a large network of collaborators.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/mar/18/guardianobituaries.usa>

Harold Jackson

Fri 18 Mar 2005

George Kennan

US diplomat and historian who laid the foundations of American cold war policy

There are not many people who can be said clearly to have changed the shape of the age they lived in, but George F Kennan, who has died aged 101, was certainly one of them. Virtually single-handedly, he established the policy which controlled both sides of the cold war for more than 40 years.

However, the awful irony of the United States' "containment" of the Soviet Union, which Kennan proposed in 1947, was that it assumed exactly the opposite shape he thought he had recommended. The concept emerged when an unknown United States treasury official sent a message to the Moscow embassy asking why the Russians were being difficult at the World Bank. He could never have anticipated the page-upon-page response which clattered into the state department's telex room on the afternoon of February 22, 1946.

The ambassador, W Averell Harriman, was on leave, and Kennan had been left in charge. "The occasion, to be sure, was trivial," he acknowledged later, "but the implications of the query were not. Here was a case where nothing but the whole truth would do. They had asked for it. Now, by God, they would have it." Kennan divided his message into five parts so that "each could pass as a separate telegram and it would not look so outrageously long." What has gone into history as the Long Telegram eventually ran to 8,000 words and triggered a seismic change in superpower relations.

It was a detailed assessment of the psychology of the post-war Soviet regime and recommended a number of principles to guide Washington's dealings with the Kremlin. Citing Stalin's belief that permanent peaceful coexistence with the west was impossible because of its hostile capitalist encirclement of his country, Kennan stressed Stalin's determination to do everything to advance Russian might and to reduce the collective and individual strengths of capitalist countries. "This does not represent the natural outlook of the Russian people, who are, by and large, friendly to the outside world, eager for experience of it, eager to measure against it the talents they are conscious of possessing, eager above all to live in peace and enjoy the fruits of their own labour."

But the US was obliged to deal with a ruling elite which would cleave firmly to Stalin's implacable party line. These apparatchiks lived in an atmosphere of intense secretiveness with no belief in objective truth. "There is good reason to suspect that this government is actually a conspiracy within a conspiracy and I, for one, am reluctant to believe that Stalin himself receives anything like an objective picture of the outside world."

The most effective American response, Kennan argued, depended on the health and vigour of its own society. "World communism is like a malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue. This is the point at which domestic and foreign policies meet. Every courageous and incisive measure to solve the internal problems of our own society, to improve self-confidence, discipline, morale and community spirit of our own people is a diplomatic victory over Moscow, worth a thousand diplomatic notes and joint communiques."

The telegram caused a sensation in Washington, where it was immediately and widely circulated among senior policy-makers. Its impact on the secretary of state, Dean Acheson, led to Kennan's swift appointment as director of foreign policy planning. There was, however, no mention in the Long Telegram of the key strategy for which Kennan has gone down in history. The notion of containment only emerged 17 months later when Foreign Affairs magazine carried Kennan's analysis under the pseudonym "X".

Much of this second essay was simply a more elegant version of the Long Telegram, but Kennan's reflections after his return to Washington had led him to make what turned out to be a world-shaking addition. He first described Soviet political policy as a fluid stream, moving constantly towards its goals, in which the main concern was to ensure it filled every available nook and cranny of world power. "But", Kennan continued, "if it finds unassailable barriers in its path, it accepts these philosophically and accommodates itself to them ... In these circumstances it is clear that the main elements of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."

When he penned that sentence, Kennan may well have had in mind something allied to the self-improvement policy advocated at the end of his Long Telegram. At the time, however, that earlier message remained locked in the state department's archives, unknown to a wider world. The inevitable public response to the idea of containment was, therefore, entirely in military terms. Decades later Kennan acknowledged how jolted he had been by this reaction. He said he had never thought that the Russians had military designs on America: his idea, as originally outlined in the Long Telegram, had been to concentrate on political confrontation. "The real response", he remarked ruefully, "was the Marshall Plan" (announced in July 1947, just one month after the "X" article had appeared).

At this distance, however, his attitude seems strangely naive, given the disastrous diplomatic climate of the period. While America and Britain had by then largely demobilised, the Russians (still without nuclear weapons) were maintaining a vast standing army in the centre of Europe. Winston Churchill's March 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech made at Fulton, Missouri - echoed a few months later by a similar attack from the then secretary of state, James Byrne - had firmly signalled the end of the wartime alliance with Moscow.

Having unilaterally decided to combine the Anglo-American occupation zones in Germany, the west had unsurprisingly failed to make progress in its talks with the Russians about a German peace treaty. President Truman had proclaimed America's defence of Greece and Turkey against communist insurgents and promised help for any other threatened nations. Finally, Stalin's brusque rejection of Marshall aid for Russia and its satellites had set the seal on the Cold War division of Europe.

Against this background there was not the slightest chance of a purely diplomatic response to Stalin. Even less was it likely in the face of the Soviet blockade of Berlin and the consequent western airlift. With that blockade still under way, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was brought into being, followed by the elections from which the West German republic emerged, followed by Stalin's retaliatory creation of the German Democratic Republic. The shape of containment as a military strategy had been firmly fixed.

Kennan's curious misreading of America's likely domestic response probably stemmed from his personal background, in which he had spent very little of his adult life in his own country. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he was something of a loner. He graduated from St John's military academy and went to read history, with particular emphasis on modern European diplomacy, at Princeton University. In 1926, at the age of 24, he joined America's foreign service and was almost immediately appointed vice-consul in Geneva. America still had no diplomatic relations with the fledgling Soviet Union, so it used surrounding capitals as listening posts.

From Geneva, Kennan was transferred in quick succession to Berlin, Tallinn and Riga, to piece together what was happening in Moscow. In 1929 the state department decided to train him formally for the job and sent him to the University of Berlin where he learned Russian and studied that country's culture and thought. In November 1933, when the newly elected President Roosevelt established diplomatic relations with Moscow, Kennan became third secretary at the US embassy. But events in central Europe rapidly engaged Washington's interest rather more, and he was moved first to Vienna, then to Prague, and finally to Berlin.

As first secretary he reported on Hitler's steady march through Europe and into the Soviet Union. On America's entry into the war in December 1941, the Nazis initially interned Kennan, but released him after five months. He was reassigned to Lisbon, then a notorious espionage centre. However, as relations with Stalin assumed paramount importance in 1944, he returned to Moscow as minister-counsellor and chargé d'affaires.

While in Berlin, Kennan had expressed grave reservations to his fellow diplomat, Loy Henderson, about America's alliance with Russia. He thought that welcoming the Soviet Union as a defender of democracy could only identify the US "with the Russian destruction of the Baltic states, with the attack against Finnish independence, with the partitioning of Poland ... and with the domestic policy of a regime which is widely feared and detested throughout this part of the world".

He found on his return to Moscow that his warnings to treat Stalin with extreme circumspection had been wholly ignored in Washington, so he reiterated them when the Red Army failed to support the Warsaw uprising against the Nazis in 1944. "This was the point at which we should have insisted on a thoroughgoing exploration of Soviet intentions with regard to the future of the remainder of Europe," he cabled. He blamed Roosevelt for ignoring the warnings, saying that towards the end of his life FDR had clung to a concept of Stalin's personality that was far below his normal quality of presidential statesmanship.

It was against this background and after a continuous absence of some 20 years that Kennan returned home at the age of 43 to direct foreign policy planning. His career prospered in the early years, but the shadow of John Foster Dulles soon fell across it. Dulles had improbably been appointed a foreign policy adviser by the Truman administration. He and Kennan fell out immediately over the question of recognising Communist China. Dulles leaked to a reporter the substance of their highly secret internal discussion on the issue, to demonstrate how dangerous an official Kennan had become.

In 1949 Kennan resigned his policy planning post to become the state department's counsellor, but decided the following year to join the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. In 1952, however, Truman made him ambassador to Moscow, where he immediately fell victim to Stalin's growing paranoia. When Kennan complained forcefully about the isolation the Russians were imposing on western diplomats, he was unceremoniously thrown out.

In America, meanwhile, the detonation of Russia's first nuclear weapon in September 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean War nine months later, precipitated an anti-communist frenzy from which Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin emerged with his infamous list of "a great many known communists" employed by the state department. Kennan returned at the height of McCarthy's campaign to find himself among those in the firing line. He strongly opposed the new defence doctrine NSC-68, in which the National Security Council defined containment as "a policy of calculated and gradual coercion". He had also argued against the creation of NATO and maintained that developments in Korea and Vietnam sprang from nationalism rather than Marxism.

President Eisenhower's selection of Dulles as his secretary of state in 1953 spelled the beginning of the end. After McCarthy had denounced Kennan as "a commie lover", Dulles called the returned ambassador into his office to tell him that "we don't seem to have a niche for you." This was not a problem his brother Allen Dulles shared. As director of the CIA, he offered Kennan any job he wanted.

When Kennan left the state department, no one in the new Republican administration found time to offer him any acknowledgment of his years of public service. He returned to Princeton as professor of historical studies and, apart from a further brief ambassadorial stint in Yugoslavia for the Kennedy administration, passed the rest of his long life writing history, winning literary and humanitarian prizes, and mordantly observing the social and political turns of his own nation.

Apparently appalled by the way "containment" had turned out, he became a forceful advocate of superpower disengagement allied to progressive disarmament. He also despaired of a cultural evolution which had turned out so wildly differently from that he had championed in the Long Telegram. At the age of 95 he complained to the New York Review of Books that "we export to anyone who can buy it or steal it the cheapest, silliest, and most disreputable manifestations of our culture. No wonder that these effusions become the laughing stock of intelligent and sensitive people the world over."

In 1931 he married Annelise Sorensen, they had one son and three daughters.

• George Frost Kennan, diplomat and historian, born February 16 1904; died March 17 2005

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/25/russia.chechnya>

Fri 25 Mar 2005

Europe is risking silence to end its longest war

Jonathan Steele



Western leaders now refuse to condemn Russia's abuses in Chechnya

The boredom factor in world politics can never be under-rated. If a conflict goes on long enough, foreign leaders and the media lose interest. The spotlight switches and the international caravan moves on. Pick your metaphor, but the shameful reality is the same.

So it is with Chechnya, Europe's longest-running but least visible war. When Vladimir Putin, its architect, met the leaders of France, Germany and Spain in Paris last week, the subject was not discussed. Silence was also the order of the day when George Bush got together with the Russian president during his European foray a fortnight earlier. He mentioned his concerns about democracy and the rule of law in Russia, but saw no need to bring up Chechnya.

On the battlefield Putin also seems to have won a breathing space. Aslan Maskhadov, the titular leader of the Chechen resistance and the republic's last freely elected president, was surrounded and killed by Russian special forces in a house not far from the capital, Grozny. Whether it was a brilliant military coup, as the official Russian media claim, or the result of a tip-off by a traitor in the Chechen ranks is in dispute. Maskhadov's international representative, Akhmed Zakayev, puts it down to unguarded use of a mobile phone that gave away his leader's position.

Either way, Maskhadov's death does nothing to serve the cause of peace. With no justification, other than cruelty, the Russian authorities are refusing to hand the body to his widow. They brand Maskhadov a terrorist, although the record shows he favoured talks with the Russians and attempted, with diminishing success, to restrain the extremists from atrocities such as the Beslan school siege and the Moscow theatre seizure.

With Maskhadov gone, the risks of polarisation and new bloodshed have grown. The radicals in the Chechen resistance are moving the struggle outside Chechnya and have started to hit targets in several republics of the north Caucasus. On the government side, Putin's strategy of handing more authority to Chechens, in an effort to suggest that Russia is beginning to wind down its own involvement, is creating similar divisions between radicals and moderates.

Alu Alkhanov, the handpicked pro-Moscow president, presents himself as a legitimate leader (based on flawed elections last year), but barbarities in Chechnya are on the rise, as a report by Human Rights Watch makes clear, and he seems unable or unwilling to stop them.

Abductions and killings by Russian and Chechen security forces far exceed the number of victims taken by Chechen radicals at Beslan and in the Moscow theatre. And among the atrocities on Moscow's side, most crimes are committed by their Chechen puppets. Between 3,000 and 5,000 civilians have "disappeared" in the region since Putin launched the second war in 1999 (in addition to at least 80,000 killed by bombing and in crossfire).

Human Rights Watch point the finger at gunmen loyal to Ramzan Kadyrov, the son of a former president, who terrorise villagers and detain men of military age. Many never return, and the authorities claim no knowledge of their whereabouts. The researchers have visited Chechnya regularly in the past four years and report that fewer people now dare to complain to the authorities for fear of reprisals.

Faced with this horror, many outsiders, as well as Russian liberals, resort to cynicism. Some say the war is fuelled by greed more than politics, and will never end. Russian generals make money from it, as do Russian and Chechen officials. Millions of roubles earmarked for resettling refugees and rebuilding Grozny never reach their destination but are siphoned off into private pockets. With no TV coverage of these scandals or the war's brutality, there is no pressure for change.

The more hopeful response is to create openings for dialogue. In spite of the silence of western leaders and Putin's apparent success in killing Maskhadov, who could have been a peace partner, ripples of change have started. The committee of soldiers' mothers, one of Russia's biggest NGOs, signed a statement with Zakayev last month, saying a peace process was indispensable and urging the EU to support it. For relatives of belligerents to meet their supposed enemies was a step of unusual courage.

Almost equally unpublicised was a meeting at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg this week. Alkhanov and other pro-Moscow Chechens met the Russian soldiers' mothers and several independent Chechen human rights activists, as well as European politicians. They agreed to continue a triangular discussion in which, at a later stage, Zakayev's representatives may also take part.

It is too early to say if these "talks about talks" can lead to a peace conference. But it is progress to have Chechens of different positions sitting together to explore the war's causes and discuss solutions. Because the talks have no major official Russian presence, Putin can pretend he is not accepting international mediation, let alone talking to people associated with the resistance, even though it is clear Alkhanov would not accept such encounters independently of the Kremlin.

Separately, despite Gerhard Schröder's silence on the war, senior MPs from Germany's Social Democratic party have held two meetings with Putin's representative for the north Caucasus. They propose a programme of European reconstruction aid that would go beyond the food and humanitarian relief the EU gives people in Grozny.

Britain has offered around £11m for skills training for school leavers in the north Caucasus, and the European commission is planning a needs assessment in Grozny. None of these offers is conditioned on reaching peace. They are "loss leaders" that give the EU a basis for talking to the Kremlin about a settlement and exploring whether Moscow is ready to change its excessively narrow and military approach.

In short, Europe is replacing its old policy of publicly denouncing Russia over Chechnya. At the current session of the UN Human Rights Commission, the EU has not proposed a resolution this year. But, diplomats argue, the silence is not motivated by cynicism or "condemnation fatigue", let alone agreement with Moscow that Chechnya is a front in the war on international terror. It is part of a new policy of constructive engagement.

The hope is that low-key offers of help by European governments, and support at the Council of Europe for Chechnya's political forces to start a dialogue, could have a better chance of success. The policy is worth trying, but the risks are enormous. If it turns out that Russia is merely coopting the EU behind its brutal tactics of "Chechenisation", the new strategy must be dropped.

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April

**World
Europe**

Media

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2005/apr/11/mondaymediasection.russia>

Nick Paton Walsh

Mon 11 Apr 2005

The last stand for Russia's free press

As another daily newspaper disappears without a trace, Nick Paton Walsh in Moscow looks at the funding and future of liberal publications and assesses whether they will be able to survive

In a country where the state still considers the media an extension of the executive, a daily newspaper can disappear almost without trace: no shouts of protest, farewell editorials, or souvenir editions. On March 31, Russki Kurier, a young and vibrant paper with a circulation of 35,000 that is known for its vociferous and colourful attacks on the Putin administration, published its last issue and then ceased to exist, leaving many observers perplexed.

Alexei Simonov, from the Glasnost Defence Foundation, said: "The general director arrived one fine day and said that from the next edition it would close. No warnings to the journalists, nor the readers."

Yet Igor Yakovenko, the former editor of the paper and the head of the National Union of Journalists, said the reason was far from mysterious.

"It was simply commercial. Losses were higher than the incomes, which were in turn lower than the founders expected." He said he warned the founders and journalists months beforehand and could not warn the readers until the founders made a decision, which they did on March 31. The closure of the paper - which had for a while been one of most outspoken critics of the Kremlin - passed with little fuss in a country where most of the media pander to the state. But the Kurier's disappearance began a series of minor crises in Moscow's liberal print media which threatens to extinguish the last remaining voice criticising the government within Russia's political nerve-centre.

Since the Putin administration got into its stride in late 2002, few of the Moscow print media's best selling publications - tabloid giants like Moskovski Komsomolets and Komsomolskaya Pravda (circulation 1.4 million) - stray from a political line acceptable to the Kremlin. Indeed, when more serious titles like Izvestiya (circulation well over 300,000, excluding regional editions) take the Putin administration to task, the consequences can be severe.

The Kremlin was reportedly furious the day after the Beslan school siege, when Izvestiya ran a series of large photographs of the bloodbath in which 330 people, half of them schoolchildren, died. The paper's publisher, Prof Media, a consortium owned by metals billionaire Vladimir Potanin, reportedly made chief editor Raf Shakirov resign.

Yet despite these setbacks, the small section of the Russian print media calling themselves the "liberal press" have until recently carried on unimpeded. They occupy a peculiar niche: their circulation is too small for their coverage to rile the Kremlin, while the various business interests propping up their balance sheets often detract from the objectivity of their reporting. Yet while they could be both more influential and more credible, their unrestrained news and commentary is vital for Russians - and the local and foreign press - seeking to read between the lines of Putin's doublespeak and forge their own truth out of the capital's opaque political reality.

But the past few weeks have been brutal for most of this tiny group of about six newspapers, whose combined circulation rarely peaks above 1.1 million in a country of 144 million.

Moskovski Novosti (circulation 63,000), a weekly funded by a series of billionaires related to the Yukos oil empire, has almost lost its editor to an internal revolt. Its main financial supporter, Yukos shareholder Leonid Nevzlin, has also questioned whether he should finance a paper that makes a persistent loss.

The highly readable Gazeta newspaper - whose readership has apparently quadrupled since its launch in 2001 to about 726,000 - last week lost its editor Mikhail Mikhailin over "disagreements over the future of the newspaper". There are rumours that Nezavisimaya Gazeta (circulation up to 55,000) may soon experience financial problems. Novaya Gazeta and Noviye Izvestiya appear healthy for now.

Commercial reasons are to blame, says media expert Andrei Richter. "We have 40,000 media outlets in the country - far too many for such a small state." He added there was less "political money" being put into such papers because "most political decisions are made by the TV. There are less elections in Russia now, and so less of a political fight on the ground."

Simonov, of the Glasnost Defence Foundation, adds: "Today's problem is that liberal newspapers live on the aid of rich sponsors without making any big effort to make their business profitable." He said that, as in the UK, tabloid papers remain profitable and the remainder must fight to make money in the face of many "intellectual readers" turning to the internet, where access to news sites that often reprint newspaper articles in full is increasingly fast and cheap. And advertisers are not interested in courting the liberal papers, but target instead the pro-Putin business elite, he said.

The liberal press's collapse in part mimics the demise of its political equivalent - the liberal and libertarian parties virtually extinct in parliament and facing annihilation at the ballot box from new left and rightwing alternatives crafted by the Kremlin.

Critics of the Kremlin, like former kingmaker turned billionaire in exile, Boris Berezovsky, regard the crisis as "much more profound" than a commercial upheaval, and a direct result of the Putin administration's strangulation of the media.

"The authorities have deprived journalists of the chance to write what they want without expecting consequences", he said. "They are threatened, killed. As a result we have a strong self-censorship - the worst thing that can happen."

Berezovsky denied a report of possible redundancies at Nezavisimaya, saying he intended to continue to support it, "despite it being loss-making" to the tune of about "\$1m a year". He added that Kommersant, his highly critical business daily (circulation 117,000), remains profitable and that he plans to launch a sister paper in Ukraine, where the recent Orange revolution has created "more liberties" and "an enormous, attractive market".

As the Kremlin clumsily reacts to the spread of rough and ready popular revolutions in its near abroad, it is this tiny band of liberal journalists that will become increasingly seen as the fuel of any Russian "revolution" in the near future. Without some free media in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, their old regimes would still be in place.

Even as they appear to decline, the liberal press's role retains great significance. Gazeta's Mikhailin puts his departure down to disagreeing with the paper's downsizing to an A3 format earlier this year, and some publisher decisions - partly in the advertising department - that "lowered incomes". But he maintains: "the readership for liberal papers is increasing". He added that recent unpopular benefit and electoral reforms have left many Russians "unable to see how such moves are possible. They begin to turn to the press to try and understand what is going on."

But it is perhaps these faculties of judgment and criticism that the Kremlin seeks to annul in an electorate increasingly dissatisfied with what Russia's brand of managed democracy has brought them. Simonov said: "Our state does not defend the press, it defends its citizens from the press."

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2005/apr/17/russia>

Sun 17 Apr 2005

On Moscow, Mayfair - and Mikhail K

Silvano Giraldin, the consummately suave manager of Mayfair's best restaurant, Le Gavroche, could barely conceal his glee. 'We love having them here, and there have been so many of them this week!'

'Them' were Russians, and Giraldin was absolutely right. Dinner table conversation bounced between authentic Russian and heavily accented English, the talk was of oil, aluminium, President Putin and, of course, Chelsea football club. And the Gavroche wine-list, thick as a phone directory and with just as many long numbers, was being well-thumbed. The Russian Economic Forum had hit London, and you could be forgiven for mistaking Mayfair for downtown Moscow.

Russian businessmen (and, as Svetlana Graudt describes on page 16, women as well) have always been long on bravado and conspicuous consumption. Since the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, the 'new Russia' has been declared so many times that it became almost a cliché. The country was seen in the West as a land of enormous opportunity and incredible potential wealth, populated by embryonic capitalists just itching to join the global consumerist village.

But, just as regularly, some crisis or other reared its head to remind you that 70 years of communism was a difficult legacy to shake off. Political and economic instability seemed to be built into the post-Soviet system, and western businessmen were scared off by the 'wild east' image. This has been especially true of western bankers.

And so it was, too, at last week's forum. Despite all the optimistic noises from delegates, reality came crashing back with reports of the closing stage of the trial of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the oil oligarch facing charges of defrauding the government of billions of dollars in tax. The case is seen by some in the west as a return to the 'show trials' of communism, with the defendant as the scapegoat for the excesses of Russia's post-capitalist phase.

Many ordinary Russians, however, see Khodorkovsky as an asset-stripper and a gangster who enriched himself and his friends at the expense of the country's huge natural wealth. There you have the Russian enigma in a nutshell.

Given all that, who would have thought dear old Dixons would have shown the way with a ground-breaking deal that could become a modus operandi for future transactions in Russia. Towards the end of the week, Dixons boss John Clare announced a \$2 billion takeover of Eldorado, an electronics and white goods retailer that dominates the market in Russia and the Ukraine.

But Clare has not just handed over a bundle of greenbacks to Eldorado's founder and owner, Igor Yakovlev. He will spend the next three years getting to know his Russian partner, doing due diligence on the hoof while Dixons expands its business there. He will only begin to pay out - some 10 per cent of the final price - in 2008, and finalise the deal in 2011. That seems an eminently sensible way to do business with Russia.

And there are hints from Moscow that president Putin may soon act to reassure western capitalism in the most effective way possible: 9 May is 'Victors' Day' in Russia, when the country celebrates the decisive role it played in defeating Nazism 60 years ago. There is speculation he may use the occasion to pardon Khodorkovsky. If that happens, the stampede eastwards will be back on again.

World Europe

Russia

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/18/russia.chechnya>

Mon 18 Apr 2005

Licensed to kill?

In January 2002, Russian soldiers killed six innocent Chechen civilians. During their trial for murder, they said they were just following orders - and were acquitted by the jury. But now a retrial has been ordered which could result in members of the Russian government being tried for crimes against humanity. Nick Paton Walsh reports

Dusk had begun to hang heavy over the remote Chechen village of Dai, when the radio crackled into life. "You have six 200s," the officer told Captain Eduard Ulman from Russia's elite special forces. Ulman asked the officer to repeat himself, holding the receiver out for his colleagues to hear. "You have six 200s," the voice allegedly intoned.

The phrase - military slang for "six corpses" - spelled death for the Chechen civilians cowering in the farmyard ditch below Ulman's men. The unit had held them there in the snow since mistakenly shooting up their bus when it approached their checkpoint that morning, on January 11 2002. Ulman's men calmly handed out ammunition among themselves and then told the civilians to walk out of the ditch towards the mountainous road. Then they opened fire. A final shot to each head ensured Ulman soon had "six 200s", as apparently ordered.

The trial of Ulman and three colleagues for premeditated murder in 2003 was supposed to be a rare example of Russia holding its troops to account for their numerous and mostly unchronicled excesses in the war-torn republic. But three years later, Ulman's unit remains unpunished. The case has instead become the focus of critics of the Putin administration, recently accused of "crimes against humanity" by Human Rights Watch because of their apparent complicity and indifference towards ongoing brutality in Chechnya.

Ulman and his colleagues confessed to the murders, but took the Nuremberg defence of saying they were following orders, and were subsequently set free by a Russian jury. The military supreme court overturned the verdict in August on a technicality and this week their retrial continues, again in the military town of Rostov-on-Don. For many it has become a test case for both the Russian government and - now with the recent introduction of jury trials - the Russian people, as to whether they think the Chechen people, dogged by two wars with Moscow in a decade, have the same right to life as ethnic Russians.

Oleg Orlov, from the human rights group Memorial, says: "This is an unprecedented case. The first jury thought Russian soldiers are 'ours guys' and the Chechens are the enemy. [The case] will either show that Russian soldiers can kill peaceful citizens and go unpunished if they say they were following criminal orders, or show that it is not a crime to refuse a criminal order."

Blood was running hot that January morning in 2002. Unit 513 of Russia's super-elite GRU (Chief Intelligence Directorate) had been scrambled in pursuit of Chechen rebel leader Khattab and 15 of his men. The Saudi-Jordanian mercenary - before his death later that year from a poisoned letter - was one of Russia's most wanted men. He was moving slowly through Chechnya's rugged hills after being wounded in a recent clash. Ulman's 12-strong unit was one of 10 being coordinated from the hilltops by their commanders, and was ordered to set up a checkpoint on the road into Dai.

The bus that approached the makeshift checkpoint, according to Ulman's lawyers, looked like a military vehicle. Ulman rushed towards it, witnesses told the court, waving his arms at it to stop. The defence claims he then saw what appeared to be the barrel of a gun emerging from a door at the back of the bus. He sprayed the side of the bus with gunfire, killing its oldest passenger Said-Magomed Alaskhanov, the director of the village's school. Two others were wounded, one of them, a pregnant mother of seven, Zaynap Dzhavat'hanova, who apparently died of her wounds.

A brief check of the passengers' documents revealed to Ulman and his men their error. They led the civilians into a nearby farm, and Ulman radioed in. "I have one frozen and two warm," he said, slang for one dead and two wounded, and allegedly asked for a helicopter to evacuate the wounded. Yet he was simply told to await further orders. Ulman's unit bandaged the wounded, clearly reeling from their blunder.

During the day, the unit held their position, but their mistake attracted attention. Local military officer Major Nevmerzhitsky passed the checkpoint, noticing Ulman's men were interrogating the bus passengers.

As dusk fell, Ulman radioed in to Major Alexei Perelevsky, who was directing the operation to catch Khattab from a nearby hilltop. It was then, claimed Ulman's defence counsel, that Perelevsky gave the order to execute the five survivors.

The defence for Ulman, and two of the other accused, Lieutenant Alexander Kalagansky and Sergeant Vladimir Voevodin, has at times referred to the secretive operations code for Russia's special forces in which they claim soldiers are trained to leave no trace of their actions behind them, even if that includes killing witnesses. Yet Perelevsky's alleged order was, according to Ulman's defence, strange enough for Ulman to ask for clarification. Ulman claimed he asked: "So what, you want me to wipe them out?" Perelevsky, who is also on trial alongside Ulman, allegedly replied: "Yeah, wipe them out." Ulman further claims Perelevsky said, "Good lad. Everything was done properly; go rest", when he learned the order had been fulfilled.

Ulman had his men prepare the civilians, telling them they were going to be released and that they should walk back to the bus. They loaded a machine gun and a pistol. One of the unit refused to help and another ran away.

It was then they opened fire, using a special-issue silenced machine gun. The deputy director of the local school Abdul-Wahhab Satabayev, forester Shakhban Bahayev and the bus's driver, Hamzat Tuburov, were killed, but young villager Magomed Musayev fled into the woods but died later from loss of blood.

The bodies were dragged to the bus and stripped of the bandages Ulman's unit had given them. The prosecution claims Ulman initially hoped to make it look as though the bus had hit a landmine. They tried to blow up the vehicle and set fire to the corpses. The relatives of the six dead say the bodies were so badly damaged they were returned for burial in "small packets", not coffins.

Soon afterwards, Major Nevmerzhitsky passed again. He called in prosecutors who, according to Tikhomirova, did an "excellent" job collating evidence. In preparation for the trial, 36 hours of video evidence from the nine other troops there were taken. Radio operators have confirmed the orders relayed from Perelevsky to Ulman. It seemed an open and shut case.

Yet in April last year, the lengthy trial collapsed when a jury acquitted all four men. The prosecution blamed the composition of the jury, still a novel juridical concept in Russia, only introduced in 1994 and not expected to be widespread until 2007. Half the jurors were middle-aged women from the town of Rostov-on-Don, a military hub where mothers often grieve for their sons lost to the conflict with the "barbaric" Chechen people. Tikhomirova said: "They think the Chechens at day are peaceful and at night become militants. This is a very widely held opinion. It's the only way I can explain why seven of the jury applauded when they announced a not-guilty verdict."

The new trial jury has been drawn from across southern Russia, although Tikhomirova still fears they may sympathise with the soldiers and return the same verdict in the next fortnight. Such a verdict would fuel claims by groups such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) that, because Moscow now admits the existence of abuses in Chechnya and appears to do little to prevent them, it is in fact complicit in them. HRW last month said this amounted to a "crime against humanity", a drastic claim that could, if recognised, legally see any member of the Putin administration stand trial in a foreign state. HRW has said it will push the US and German governments to take action, increasing the significance of trials such as Ulman's.

But for Koka Tuburova, 49, the bus driver's sister, only this culture of impunity is to blame. She says: "Federal troops usually work according to their own initiatives, knowing they will be unanswerable for their actions."

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/21/russia.usa>

Agencies

Thu 21 Apr 2005

Kremlin disputes Rice's claim on US nuclear inspections

Condoleezza Rice's first trip to Moscow as US secretary of state ended amid disagreement last night when the Kremlin contradicted her claim that Russia was considering letting American inspectors check its nuclear sites.

The visit, which had been intended to smooth the way for a meeting between presidents George Bush and Vladimir Putin next month, lasted less than 24 hours. Yet it exposed their differences on issues ranging from arms control to press freedom.

Ms Rice told the Ekho Moskvyy radio station that she had "achieved an improvement of our access to [Russia's nuclear facilities]" during a dinner on Tuesday night with the Russian defence minister, Sergei Ivanov, who is a confidant of Mr Putin.

Washington fears that Russia's ageing nuclear stockpiles may fall into terrorists' hands, and wants its experts to inspect the security of storage sites.

Ms Rice added: "I don't consider the inspections that have to happen as a matter of sovereignty. This is a problem of cooperation ... no one wants the materials to get into the hands of bad people."

She said she hoped a meeting scheduled for May 9, to celebrate 60 years since the defeat of Nazi Germany, would "bring progress on this issue".

Mr Ivanov contradicted the claim, telling the Interfax news agency: "Visits by American inspectors to nuclear installations in Russia are not under consideration."

While Ms Rice said Russian-American relations were "very warm", she tackled sensitive topics. She intended to "follow" the sentencing of the oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky over fraud and tax evasion - a case critics claim is politically driven - to see what it said "about the rule of law in Russia".

And she repeated concerns about Russia's apparent retreat from democracy.

"It is necessary to have more independent mass media in Russia. For Russia to achieve its complete potential there must be democratic development and there should not be such a big concentration of power with the president."

The Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, said later: "As much as the US are interested in a strong and democratic Russia, we are interested in a strong and democratic [US] that performs responsibly on the world stage."

News **Europe**

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/25/russia>

Agencies

Mon 25 Apr 2005

Putin says Russia will choose pace of reforms

Vladimir Putin today delivered a rebuke to critics of Russia's apparent retreat from democracy when he said Moscow would choose the "pace, terms and conditions" of reforms.

In his annual state of the union address to parliament, the Russian president told MPs that Russia must develop as a "strong and democratic" nation - but not at the expense of maintaining law and order and the stability required to attract investment.

In a 50-minute speech that avoided flashpoint issues such as social welfare reform - which sparked the first mass protests of Mr Putin's presidency when he attempted to replace Soviet-era benefits with cash handouts - he sought to reassure investors that Russia was a safe place for their money.

He said tax probes that "terrorised" businesses, greedy bureaucrats and a shifting economic playing field would be consigned to the past.

But opposition politicians and economic analysts reacted sceptically, noting that the address came two days before a verdict was due in the trial of the oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the former head of Yukos, on tax evasion charges.

Sergei Mitrokhin, the deputy head of the liberal Yabloko party, said the president's words sounded like a mockery.

Mr Putin has been accused of concentrating an increasing amount of power to himself and the Kremlin. Last year, elected provincial governors were replaced with appointees, and critics have said Mr Khodorkovsky's trial is politically motivated.

Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, last week told a Moscow radio station she queried Mr Putin's personal power and said Russia needed an independent media to "debate and decide together the democratic future".

In an apparent reply to the criticism of his democratic record, Mr Putin told the MPs that "Russia ... will decide for itself the pace, terms and conditions of moving towards democracy. "We are a free nation, and our place in the modern world will be defined only by how successful and strong we are," he said.

He insisted such a transition was only possible through legal means. "Any unlawful methods of struggle ... for ethnic, religious and other interests contradict the principles of democracy," he added. "The state will react with legal but tough means."

Mr Putin is constitutionally barred from seeking a third term, but many Russians assume the Kremlin will ensure that a Putin loyalist wins the balloting in 2008.

News
Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/26/russia.nickpatonwalsh>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*

Tue 26 Apr 2005

Putin bangs drum for Russia's civilising mission

President Vladimir Putin yesterday said he would crack down heavily on any attempts to instigate a popular revolution in Russia, while laying claim to Moscow's continued role as a civilising influence across the former Soviet Union.

Mr Putin, dogged by protest-led regime change in three former Soviet states in the last 18 months, delivered a clear message in his annual policy speech that unrest would not be tolerated in Russia.

He told MPs and senior officials that Russian democracy would develop "only by legal means" and that "illegal methods in the fight for ethnic, religious or other interests are in contradiction with the principles of democracy". He added: "The state would react to them in a legal but tough way."

His speech appeared to respond to and reject a series of criticisms of the Kremlin's "managed democracy" made last week by Condoleezza Rice during her first visit to Moscow as US secretary of state. "As a sovereign state, Russia is capable of and would independently determine for itself the timing and conditions of movement in this direction," Mr Putin said.

In an attempt to appeal to growing nationalism in both Russia's political elite and electorate, he mourned the collapse of the Soviet Union. He said it was "the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the last century. Specifically for the Russian people it became a real drama. Dozens of millions of our citizens and compatriots found themselves outside of the borders of Russian territory".

Echoing nostalgia for Russia's imperial past, he added: "The Russian nation's mission to bring further civilisation to the Euro-Asian continent must be continued." He said this would involve "enriching and reinforcing our historical links through democratic values, multiplied by national interests".

The call for Russia to boost its geopolitical influence in the region came, however, as its foreign secretary, Sergei Lavrov, emerged from talks with his Georgian counterpart, Salome Zurbashvili. Mr Lavrov said they had made "substantial progress" over the withdrawal of troops from two Russian military bases in the neighbouring state, which could now take place before the end of this year.

The issue has been a bone of contention between Moscow and Tbilisi, which has distanced itself from the Kremlin since the "rose revolution" there in 2003. Analysts suggested the Kremlin is keen to have the issue resolved before the US president, George Bush, visits Georgia next month.

Mr Putin, who is also troubled domestically by unpopular benefit reform and increasing discontent from the business elite, used the speech to offer concessions across the political spectrum. He hinted at a tax amnesty, allowing Russians to declare capital and bring it back to the country. He added that tax police, whose back-tax bills have crippled the oil giant Yukos, should not be allowed to "terrorise business". He also suggested scrapping inheritance tax.

He held out a concession to US and EU criticism of the Russian media, calling for greater objectivity on nationwide TV news, and for equal TV access for political parties. And he launched a populist attack on Russia's bribe-hungry bureaucrats, saying they "represent themselves as a caste, closed and arrogant, perceiving state service as just another kind of business".

World Europe

Russia

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/26/russia.guardianleaders>

Leader

Tue 26 Apr 2005

Putin's way

Vladimir Putin was in confident form yesterday when he gave his annual state of the nation address to the Russian people. He promised continued advances towards freedom and democracy, but, in a Slavic variation on the "Sinatra doctrine", insisted that Russia alone would decide how to do that. It may not be surprising that, viewed through the eyes of the former KGB officer in the Kremlin, the collapse of the Soviet Union still looks like what he called "the greatest geo-political catastrophe" of the 20th century. The fact that, nearly 14 years on, it looks quite different for those peoples liberated from its rule, and for the millions of others whose lives were blighted by the consequences of the cold war, does not invalidate the nostalgia and bitterness felt by Mr Putin and many of his countrymen.

But his speech will do little to assuage the concerns of those of his critics, at home and abroad, who see, in the concentration of power in the presidency, the end to the appointment of provincial governors and curbs on the independent media an alarming "authoritarian drift" away from these laudable goals, as Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, warned on a visit to Moscow last week.

The president made much of seeking to reassure worried investors, especially in the energy sector, that their capital is safe. He sniped at "haughty" bureaucrats, declaring that tax inspectors do not have the right to "terrorize" business, and proposed a reduction, from 10 to three years, in the time limit for challenging past privatisation deals which handed prize assets at knockdown prices to "oligarchs" linked to Boris Yeltsin and his entourage. For many, however, his words on these issues have a decidedly hollow ring, since later this week a guilty verdict is widely expected in what is seen as the politically motivated fraud and tax evasion case against the ambitious Yukos oil billionaire, Mikhail Khodorkovsky. The outcome will inevitably be seen as a vital test of whether Mr Putin's oft-repeated commitment to the rule of law is genuine.

The president also offered a vigorous re-assertion of interest in the "near abroad" of the former Soviet Union, with a jarring reference to the "Russian nation's civilising mission in Eurasia". Against a background of friction with the US and Europe over Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Belarus, Mr Putin may be drawing himself up to his full height before he hosts George Bush and other world leaders on May 9 on the 60th anniversary of the end of the second world war in Europe. For many Russians, that will be yet another ambiguous reminder of how much their world has changed.

World **Europe**

The Editor press review **Russia**

Source:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/27/russia.theeditorpressreview>

Wed 27 Apr 2005

'It's no way to run a country'

The president's speech to the nation revealed the severity of Russia's problems

Financial Times

Editorial, April 26

"Vladimir Putin [on Monday] used his annual state of the nation speech to urge his government to stop terrorising companies on tax and to encourage investment. But he has pronounced such good intentions before, only for expectations of early improvement in the business climate to be quickly dashed by some further arbitrary action by the Russian tax authorities. This has raised serious doubts about whether Mr Putin ... is still really in control of the bureaucratic and judicial forces he unleashed on the Yukos oil group and its erstwhile owner, Mikhail Khodorkovsky ...

"The world will be watching for what [today's] sentencing of Mr Khodorkovsky and one of his business partners, after their trial on charges of fraud and tax evasion, says about the rule of law in Russia. The test will almost certainly be failed, even though Mr Putin contends this trial is only the equivalent of the Enron trials in the US. However, a more telling sign of how far the rot has gone in Russia will be whether the tax treatment of other businesses is even-handed and proportional."

Simon Saradzhyan

Moscow Times, April 26

"While eloquent and specific in outlining economic policy ... Mr Putin offered few new ideas on how he would tackle national problems ... [He] meticulously listed the problems facing the country, including terrorism, poverty, alcoholism, depopulation and corruption ... Mr Putin sought to defend his record by blaming events that took place before his presidency. Among other things, Mr Putin referred to the Soviet collapse in 1991 as the 'largest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century' which led to an 'epidemic of disintegrations' ...

"[Mr Putin] made no mention of the clear need for an overhaul in the law enforcement community ... The president also failed to offer any solutions to fight poverty and depopulation apart from calls to raise the salaries of public servants and to encourage legal migration."

Nikolai Vardul and Dmitry Kamyshev

Kommersant, Russia, April 26

"His annual address ... was little short of revolutionary - in effect, the president announced he was joining the opposition, both left and right simultaneously. While the liberal opposition could not help but support the economic propositions in the address, many of the president's political aims and conclusions reflect the longings of leftist and centre-leftist party members.

"Above all, the liberal opposition has always demanded freedom of enterprise and use of capital. Mr Putin demanded the same ... In turn, the political part of the address should make the left patriotic opposition happy. To be sure, it also has more than a few statements pleasing to the ear of a real liberal ... But a number of passages seem to have been taken in their entirety from programme speeches of leaders of the Communist party, Motherland (Rodina), and other leftist opposition parties."

Independent

Editorial, April 26

"There were ... depressing signs ... that Mr Putin has no intention of rolling back his recent authoritarian reforms. His claim that 'Russia will decide for itself the pace, terms and conditions of moving towards democracy' was a clear rebuff to those who have criticised repressive measures by the Kremlin, including against the media. And his assertion that 'any unlawful methods of struggle for ethnic, religious and other interest contradict the principles of democracy' suggests that he is not about to adopt a more enlightened attitude towards the Chechens or any other group that might try to challenge the Kremlin's authority.

"The world should remain suspicious of Mr Putin's government. The Russian president may now be saying some of the right things. But serious questions remain about whether he has the political will - or the authority - to deliver the liberalisation that Russia needs."

Michael Binyon

Times, April 26

"For all his talk about market reform, Russia's place in the world and friendship with George Bush, at heart Mr Putin still hankers for the empire into which he was born and for which he spied ...

"Mr Putin ... has a sure feel for the average voter's emotions. Stick with me, he said, as I too share your nostalgia for the days of glory. Stick with me and maybe you will have a chance to vote again for me - in 2012."

Baltimore Sun

Editorial, April 26

"What politician doesn't exaggerate the incompetence of his predecessors? But we still keep coming back to that nostalgia - which literally means sickness - for Soviet times. Plenty of Russians have vaguely happy memories of life before everything fell apart, but every sensible person understands that nothing could have kept the system together ...

"The Kremlin has blinded itself ... Of more immediate concern is Mr Putin's success in removing all checks and balances - within the business community, within the press, and in parliament. There's no one to catch the Kremlin's mistakes before they're committed, and some have been doozies. The tax man is coming down hard now on oil firms ... No one outside the Kremlin quite knows what's going on. It's no way to run a country. It's reminiscent, come to think of it, of the old Soviet methods. Maybe Mr Putin's on to something, after all."

World Israel

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/28/russia.israel>

Agencies

Tue 28 Apr 2005

Israel opposes Putin peace conference plan

Israel and the US today reacted coolly to an offer by the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, to host a Middle East peace conference as the Russian president began his historic visit to Israel.

Mr Putin, who arrived in Israel yesterday after travelling from Egypt, proposed that the conference should take place in Moscow in the autumn after Israel had completed its withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements.

He said he would raise the idea of a conference - which is called for in the road map peace plan and has been warmly welcomed by the Palestinians - in a meeting with the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, later today.

However, a senior Israeli official said Israel "strongly opposes this idea of an international conference" at this stage.

The road map - sponsored by the so-called quartet of Middle East mediators, including Russia - calls for a conference to be held at its second stage. Israel argues the plan has not yet been implemented because the Palestinians have not fulfilled their obligation to disarm militant groups.

Israel has also failed to meet its initial obligations, including freezing settlement construction and dismantling illegal West Bank settlement outposts.

Asaf Shariv, an adviser to Mr Sharon, today said holding a peace conference would "very premature", arguing that the two sides remained far from the second phase of the road map.

Israel accepts US mediation, but has traditionally objected to attempts by others to play a role in negotiating a peace deal, fearing pro-Palestinian bias.

US reaction to the conference idea was also cool. "We believe there will be an appropriate time for an international conference - but we are not at that stage now, and I don't expect that we will be there by the fall," the White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

Nevertheless, Mr Putin's visit - the first by a Russian leader to Israel - illustrates a dramatic improvement in relations between the two nations. "Not long ago, it would have been impossible to imagine a visit by the Russian head of state to Israel. It is a good sign," he said today.

Areas of disagreement include Russian aid to Syria and Iran. Russia has provided assistance for Iran's nuclear programme, and has agreed to sell anti-aircraft missiles to Syria. Mr Sharon has repeatedly said the missiles posed a danger to Israel, and wants Mr Putin to halt the deal.

The Israeli deputy prime minister, Ehud Olmert, said Russia was selling Iran components that could be used to make weapons, and that its assistance was a cause of concern. Israel accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, although Tehran insists its programme is peaceful.

On Wednesday, the US announced it had authorised the sale of as many as 100 large bunker-buster bombs to Israel, a move seen by analysts as a warning to Iran about its nuclear ambitions.

Israeli media today reported that Mr Sharon also opposed Russia's plan to sell military equipment to the Palestinians. Palestinian officials said Russia was interested in selling armoured vehicles to their security services for use in riot control, but Israel has voiced fears the vehicles could fall into militant hands.

Mr Putin this morning examined an honour guard of Israeli soldiers, and greeted Jewish, Muslim and Christian religious leaders during his official welcoming ceremony at the residence of the Israeli president, Moshe Katsav, who holds a largely ceremonial position.

During the ceremony, the Russian president - who has equated his fight against Chechen rebels with Israel's fight against Palestinian militants - said he wanted to cooperate more closely with Israel in fighting terror. Mr Katsav, in turn, said Russia needed to address the growing threat of anti-semitism.

The two leaders unveiled a monument donated by Russia to commemorate the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust. The Russian sculpture depicts six naked figures, one a small child, standing in a circle surrounded by barbed wire. "In the 21st century, there can be no place for xenophobia, anti-semitism or other forms of racial or religious intolerance," Mr Putin said. "This is not only our debt to the millions who died in the gas chambers, it is our duty to future generations."

He will tomorrow travel to the West Bank city of Ramallah, where he will hold talks with the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas.

Source:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/29/israel.russia>

Fri 29 Apr 2005

What they said about ... Putin's trip to Israel

William Cederwell

The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, became the first-ever Kremlin leader to visit Israel when he arrived in Jerusalem on Wednesday evening. He "brought to Israel a revolutionary proposal - to organise a Russia-Israeli-Palestinian summit, possibly even in Moscow", said Gregory Asmolov in **Kommersant**. Mr Putin had visited Cairo on Tuesday and is scheduled to travel to the West Bank today.

It might have been a "historic and important" trip, said Asmolov, but Israeli government officials were cautious. "They think that the sudden desire of the Russian president to visit the Promised Land is driven not by his desire to reinforce [the] relationship with Israel but rather by the course of strengthening Russian positions in the Middle East."

The Israeli press was just as suspicious of Mr Putin's motives. "Why is he veering from what had become Kremlin custom?" asked the **Jerusalem Post**. "His most immediate benefit is in the sphere of public relations ... He believes that the semblance of good ties with Jerusalem can improve his standing in Washington."

Mr Putin may also have wanted to improve his image with Israelis, argued **Haaretz**. News that Russia had sold anti-aircraft missiles to Syria and provided uranium to Iran had gone down badly in Israel, the paper warned. Israel's large Russian minority has also blamed Mr Putin for a "wave of anti-semitism" and "the regression of ... democratisation" in Russia.

The visit was spoilt by "the presence in Israel of some of Russia's most-wanted fugitives", including three oil tycoons, wrote **Mosnews.com**. Israel refuses to extradite the men because they hold Israeli citizenship.

There was scepticism in the Arab press, too. The "enormous goodwill" Russia once enjoyed among Arab nations had been "squandered" after the wars in Afghanistan and Chechnya, said the United Arab Emirates' **Khaleej Times**. "Without addressing ... Chechnya, Russia can never hope to mend ties with the Islamic world."

Saudi Arabia's **Arab News** was more supportive of Mr Putin, but worried that he was playing "international politics" and trying to "steal a march" on America in the race to bring peace to the Middle East.

World

Palestinian territories

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/29/israel.russia1>

Associated Press

Fri 29 Apr 2005

Putin offers to help Palestinians

Vladimir Putin said today that Russia would equip and train Palestinian security forces and offered to help rebuild crumbling infrastructure in the Gaza Strip.

The Russian president met the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, for about two hours in the West Bank city of Ramallah on the third day of his historic visit to the region. The two leaders focused on the Middle East peace process and Russian aid to the Palestinians.

Mr Putin was greeted this morning at the Palestinian headquarters in Ramallah, known as the Muqata, by an honour guard of Palestinian security forces. A military band played a halting version of Russia's national anthem and the Palestinian anthem as Mr Putin and Mr Abbas stood side by side.

Security officers then placed a wreath, with a banner reading "from the president of the Russian Federation", before the tomb of the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Mr Putin approached, bowed his head, stood silently to attention for a few seconds, bowed again and walked away.

The Palestinians and Moscow have a long history of political and cultural cooperation dating back to the cold war, when the Soviet Union backed Arab states and the Palestinians in their fight against the US-backed Israelis.

Around 15,000 Palestinians - including Mr Abbas - studied in Russian universities. In recent years, however, Russian ties with Israel have warmed. Mr Putin's trip to the region was seen as an effort to burnish Russia's credentials as a key Middle East mediator and a player on the world stage.

The Russian leader told a joint news conference he would provide the Palestinians, whose infrastructure was badly damaged in more than four years of fighting with the Israelis, with helicopters and training for their security services.

"We will provide the Palestinian leadership with technical help, supplies of equipment and training," Mr Putin said. "We want the cooperation to be completely open and not cause concern on the Israeli side, and we will resolve this together."

The helicopters would be used to transport Mr Abbas. Israel destroyed the Palestinian authority's presidential helicopters as part of its campaign to limit the movement of Arafat.

The Palestinian foreign minister, Nasser al-Kidwa, said Russia would provide two helicopters. Talks the provision of armoured vehicles would continue, he added.

Mr Putin had been expected to offer the Palestinian police 50 armoured patrol vehicles, but Israel objected to this, leaving the plan in limbo.

"If we expect chairman Abbas to fight terrorism effectively, he can't do it with slingshots and stones. We must understand this," Mr Putin said.

A senior US envoy in the region, Lieutenant General William Ward, asked Israeli officials this week if they opposed the armoured vehicle deal, Israeli security officials said. The Israelis said they objected, questioning the Palestinians' need for such vehicles and demanding that Mr Abbas disarm Palestinian fugitives.

Russia also offered to help rebuild the Palestinian infrastructure in Gaza.

Israel plans to pull out of the impoverished coastal strip this summer, and Palestinian efforts to maintain order there will be viewed by many as a test case for their handling of a future state.

Mr Putin's meeting with Mr Abbas followed talks yesterday with Israeli leaders, in which he discussed Russia's cooperation with Syria and Iran - two of Israel's bitterest enemies - and the growing problem of anti-semitism in Russia.

A day after pleasing his Israeli hosts with a stern call for Iran to do more to show it is not building an atomic bomb, Mr Putin reiterated in Ramallah that Russia had no intention of halting its nuclear-related cooperation with Tehran. However, he said his country remained committed to nuclear non-proliferation.

"Nuclear weapon proliferation is dangerous in general, and in such an explosive region as the Middle East it is very dangerous. From a military standpoint it is illogical, and from a humanitarian standpoint it is unacceptable," Mr Putin said.

Russia is building a nuclear power plant in Iran and Israeli officials have expressed concern to Mr Putin that Tehran would use the technology to further its nuclear weapons programme. Mr Putin said the nuclear components did not threaten Israel's security.

"We intend to continue in all our programmes with Iran because we believe such programmes have peaceful ends," he said today.

Yesterday Mr Putin also defended a deal to sell anti-aircraft missiles to Syria, a plan that has clouded Russian-Israeli relations and loomed over the historic visit.

Mr Putin arrived in the region promoting an autumn Middle East peace conference in Moscow and Palestinians responded enthusiastically, but the idea dropped off the table during Wednesday's talks in Jerusalem after Israel and the US expressed reservations. Mr Putin said today he was still committed to an international gathering, adding that it would not be a summit, but a meeting of high-level experts.

Russia is one of the four co-sponsors of the "road map" peace plan, along with the US, UN and the European Union, but the Americans have taken the lead. The US president, George Bush, formally presented the plan in June 2003, but it stalled after neither side carried out its initial requirements.

May

**World
Europe**

Russia

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/06/russia.secondworldwar>

Fri 6 May 2005

History shows this drive to the east could bring disaster

Denial of Russia's role in defeating Hitler feeds a dangerous mentality

As the old joke has it, "nostalgia is not what it used to be". Not so on Monday, when the world marks the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Union's stupendous prowess in defeating Nazism. Russians have always looked back on their wartime sacrifices with pride, but this year's events will be bigger than ever.

The range of foreign guests surpasses last month's papal funeral, as North Korea's Kim Jong-il shares the same reviewing stand in Red Square as George Bush. The leaders of China and Japan will be on hand, as will Britain's prime minister, happy to be congratulated on his election victory.

Like other recent "60ths" - D-day last June, and the liberation of Auschwitz in January - this year's remembrance in Moscow has the poignancy of being the last in which significant numbers of survivors will be able to join. But will it make the breakthrough in western minds that previous postwar historiography has failed to do? Will the Soviet Union's overwhelming role in defeating Hitler finally be accepted, or is Monday's event just another empty ritual of being polite to the memory of a foreign country's dead soldiers and civilians without understanding how much we owe them?

The "role denial" of what the Soviet Union and the Red Army achieved is not as perverse as "Holocaust denial" but it is considerably more widespread in the western world. During the cold war, western leaders routinely laid wreaths at the tomb of the unknown soldier below the Kremlin walls or visited the immense cemetery for the 1 million civilians who died in the siege of Leningrad. But their gestures often masked an inner view that Nazism and communism were somehow two sides of the same evil coin.

Few paid public tribute to the relief that swept through all of Europe with the victory of Stalingrad in 1943, bringing for the first time a sense that the fascist tide had turned. How many European or American politicians, let alone school textbooks, admit the Red Army inflicted 80% of the Nazi war machine's casualties, or that at the D-day landings the allied troops faced 58 German divisions in the west while Soviet forces had to overcome 228 divisions in their march to Berlin - and did?

With the end of the cold war the equation of Nazism and communism became more prevalent. It was given a superficial new legitimacy by Russians who could not say such things before.

But as Moshe Lewin and Ian Kershaw argued in their book, *Stalinism and Nazism*, the concept of totalitarianism distorts reality. "Looking for common ground is more fruitful than the search for sameness," they wrote, while also outlining crucial differences. "The Nazi regime, unlike Stalin's, cannot be regarded as a modernising dictatorship. Its concern was with national rebirth and supremacy built on racial purification and regeneration."

Under Stalin there was nothing comparable to the Nazis' compulsory sterilisation of the "unfit", euthanasia of people considered to be a burden on society, the concept of certain nations as "subhuman", and the extermination camps for Jews. Mass terror and purges were not intrinsic to Soviet rule, as was clear after Stalin's death. Millions of Russians look back to the long Brezhnev period as a time of personal security and economic stability.

The lifting of censorship in Russia has ended many historical taboos. Stalin's incarceration of returning Soviet PoWs was known to most families, but publicly suppressed for too long. Many Russians acknowledge his wartime blunders and the cruelty of his indiscriminate use of peasants as cannon fodder - not unlike the crassness of British generals in the first world war. As Alexander Yakovlev, the now fierce anti-Marxist and anti-communist who used to be Gorbachev's ideology chief, argues, "victory was achieved despite Stalin's leadership, not because of it".

But there are other black holes that ought to be explored in Russia. Around 1 million Soviet PoWs, or almost 30% of those in German hands, did fight for the Nazis, albeit usually under duress or to avoid starvation. The Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact which gave Stalin the chance to build better defences is well-known, but Russians still underplay the secret annexes that allowed him to send troops into eastern Poland, adding its lands to Soviet Ukraine and Belarus, and to occupy the Baltic states a year later. Or it is spuriously stated that the people in these places voted freely to join the Soviet Union.

To claim, as Vladimir Putin did recently, that the Nazi-Soviet pact was no worse than Britain's and France's earlier agreement with Hitler at Munich is misleading. By appeasing Hitler, London and Paris were certainly hoping he would move against the Soviet Union, but their immediate goal, however foolish, was to buy peace in the west rather than territory. But it is equally wrong of today's Baltic leaders to pretend the prewar Baltic regimes of the 1930s were not authoritarian and chauvinist, or to claim Soviet occupation was as bad as that of the Nazis or worse.

You only have to read the memoirs of the few Lithuanian Jewish survivors or the reports of the Nazi Einsatzgruppen when they invaded the Baltics to get a more accurate version. In his book, *Messages of Murder*, the historian Ronald Headland says of the anti-semitic massacres: "In the Baltic countries the collaboration in the killing operations was immediate and extensive."

Nor was Stalin's behaviour in Ukraine, however atrocious, on a par with Hitler's total extermination strategy. The Groucho Marx aphorism that "any club that's willing to have me as a member is not worth joining" has its all-too-serious counterpart in the chilling words of Reichskommissar Erich Koch: "If I find a Ukrainian who is worthy of sitting at the same table with me, I must have him shot".

So the leaders of Estonia and Lithuania, who are staying away from Moscow this weekend, only shame themselves.

But Monday's celebrations should not be about the past alone. The lesson for the future is that competing for influence or dividing Europe into "pro-western" or "pro-Russian" camps, whatever internal system a country has, leads to disaster.

In the first post-cold war years, that was accepted. Under Polish and, to a lesser extent, Czech pleading, Bill Clinton regrettably changed the line. Although Boris Yeltsin was doing all Russia could to build friendly relations, Washington embarked on expanding Nato. The appetite grew with the eating, and Nato's reach has been moving towards every one of Russia's neighbours. Consider US concern over Cuba, and then imagine all of Latin America plus Canada in a Moscow-led alliance.

Surely the time has come to call a halt to this dangerous process. Washington wants to continue, but haven't Europe's Nato members enough sense of history, enough understanding of geography, and enough political courage, to tell Bush this club has closed its list?

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World World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/06/russia.nickpatonwalsh>

Nick Paton Walsh in Minsk

Fri 6 May 2005

Europe's 'last dictator' defies calls for change

Opponents of the Belarussian president look to George Bush to step up pressure on the regime in a tour of the region this weekend

"Today Ukraine - tomorrow Belarus," cried Igor Guz as he marched with hundreds of protesters in Minsk, the Belarussian capital, on last month's 19th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. It wasn't much of an outburst by the Ukrainian town councillor, but it led to his arrest by riot police. Yesterday he was still in jail and on hunger strike with 12 others, including four of his countrymen.

"They were not the first such arrests in Belarus, and they won't be the last," said Artur Finkevich, 20, the organiser of the protesters, who complained of the state's poor healthcare response to Chernobyl.

The arrests, for an "unsanctioned rally", have sparked furious protests from Kiev and the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yushchenko. It has also fuelled calls for a Belarussian version of the "Orange revolution" that led to the electoral defeat of neighbouring Ukraine's authoritarian government last December.

Such calls have been loudest in Washington. The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, recently gave Belarus's fragile opposition a boost by meeting key members in neighbouring Lithuania.

She called President Alexander Lukashenko's administration the "last true dictatorship in Europe", and said it was "time for change to come to Belarus".

President George Bush is also expected to increase the pressure for "regime change" when he visits the capital of Latvia tonight.

"I hope Bush will say something in Riga," said Svetlana Zavadskaya, whose husband, Dmitry Zavadsky, a television cameraman, was one of four opposition figures allegedly murdered by Mr Lukashenko's regime in 2000.

Ms Zavadskaya, who met Ms Rice in Lithuania, added: "Lukashenko deserves the same fate as [Serbia's Slobodan] Milosevic."

However, any White House effort to export democracy to Belarus would put an extra strain on Mr Bush's fraught relationship with President Vladimir Putin.

The Russian leader, who is still reeling over the recent fall of the former Ukrainian administration that he supported, will meet Mr Bush on Monday during Moscow's Victory Day celebrations. The encounter could be tense. Sergei Yevtushenko, an adviser to the Ukrainian foreign minister, said he was "sure" Mr Bush would speak about the detention of the Ukrainian demonstrators in Belarus.

But he said a Belarussian revolution "would be disastrous for Putin", who retains a brittle alliance with Mr Lukashenko.

The Belarussian leader, a 50-year-old skiing fan who micromanages his tight regime, will not give up power easily. He has described the recent revolutions in parts of the former Soviet Union as "banditry", and has scorned Ms Rice's remarks.

"It's good that she knows there is such a country as Belarus," he said. "She was recently flying above us, and she must have seen that there are no terrorists here."

This "last European dictatorship" has become the final battleground for Moscow in its attempts to retain what is left of its sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union - as the Baltic states, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan have turned away from authoritarianism, towards the west.

Imperialistic

A senior western diplomat in Minsk said: "The key player is Putin. He retains imperialistic ambitions and still sees Belarus as part of his backyard. For example, if Russia turned off the gas tap to Belarus in winter, it would literally freeze within two days."

He added: "Moscow has apparently looked around for possible successors to Lukashenko [to run in presidential elections expected before June next year] but decided they would all be too pro-western.

"Putin has lost Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, so he is not going to rock Lukashenko's boat. Some think Putin is trying things out here to see what level of dictatorship would be acceptable for former Soviet citizens."

Minsk retains all the trappings of its Soviet past. There is little public advertising on its well-swept streets. The state accounts for at least 80% of GDP, according to diplomats, and is the only real employer in town, keeping civil servants loyal through renewing their contracts each year.

One of two remaining independent opinion pollsters operating in the capital was closed by the state last month, partly because it did not have the words "social organisation" in its title. Demonstrations are swiftly swooped on by riot police.

The opposition had yet to unite around a single leader owing to their "student" nature, said one western diplomat, adding: "They spend more time fighting each other than Lukashenko."

Some key figures are in jail. One staunch opposition figure, Andrei Klimov, has been charged with "slandering the president", which carries up to five years in jail. His wife, Tatyana, described his closed court appearances as being "like Kafka's Trial". She added that he had not used Mr Lukashenko's surname when referring to "a maniac, a killer and a little Hitler" in a satirical fable he wrote. She added: "I fear for his life. In my dreams, I see [war crimes prosecutor] Carla del Ponti arrest Lukashenko."

Most of the media is under tight state control. Even rock music, which buoyed opposition crowds during the uprising in Kiev, has faced a crackdown. Lyavon Volski, a singer in the band NRM, who are barred from concerts and the radio for their opposition support, said: "Banning us was a big mistake by the authorities as they force [our fans] who were indifferent to politics to join the opposition. We will go underground."

He said a new law requiring 75% of music on the radio to be Belarussian in origin had taxed DJ playlists. "Now they are starting to look for Belarussian roots among western singers. Apparently, Aerosmith's Steve Tyler has some."

Opposition efforts are focused on the forthcoming presidential elections, which western diplomats and critics of the regime say they fear will be falsified.

"Lukashenko plans the date of the election and we plan the revolution," said Vlad, 33, from the youth protest movement Zubr. "People can already smell future change. There has been an internationalisation of [our] conflict. I hope Bush will say something."

Yet many fear that unrest in Belarus could result in the kind of bloodshed that Ukraine somehow avoided.

"Putin does not like Lukashenko, but he dislikes Orange revolutions more," said the head of the opposition United Civic party, Anatoli Lebedko. "Lukashenko sells himself as a 'Berlin Wall' to protect Russia from revolutions. I really fear it could be like the fall of Ceausescu in Romania. Lukashenko would not want to give up being president, even for three hours."

Lukashenko's world

- There will not be any rose, orange or banana revolutions in our country. We will preserve peace, calm and stability - after the Ukrainian electoral crisis last year
- They tell me: you are a dictator. Am I a dictator? My position and the state will never allow me to become a dictator ... but an authoritarian ruling style is characteristic of me, and I have always admitted it - Belarussian radio, August 2003
- They've gone totally nuts. Those dumb-asses don't know what they're doing - On the US Congress after President Bush signed a law in 2004 imposing sanctions on the Belarussian regime

- The history of Germany is a copy of the history of Belarus. Germany was raised from the ruins thanks to firm authority, and not everything connected with that well-known figure Adolf Hitler was bad. German order evolved over the centuries, and under Hitler it attained its peak - Russian television, November 1995
- There will be no [Vojislav] Kostunica here. No way! This must be clear to you and all those who count on it - to "opposition scum" after the revolution in Serbia in 2000, Belarussian TV, July 2001



Russia

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/06/russia.usa>

Fri 6 May 2005

Balance in the Baltic

It is fitting that George Bush should be going to Moscow to join Vladimir Putin and other world leaders this weekend as they mark the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazism. Eyewitness accounts of the German surrender capture the sense of inexpressible relief when the 20th-century's defining conflict was finally over - at least on European soil. Nothing in all the years of the cold war or the decade-and-half since it ended has matched the scale and intensity of what the world endured between 1939 and 1945. Victory over genocidal fascism is still worth celebrating, especially since in another decade the number of surviving participants will be dwindling as the events pass from memory into history.

But the row over Mr Bush's itinerary is a reminder that history colours our memories. The president's first stop on his tour, in the Latvian capital Riga, is intended to symbolise US support for the liberation of the Baltic countries from a Soviet occupation which began - thanks to the devil's pact between Stalin and Hitler - in 1940, and ended only in 1991 when Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania regained their independence. With Mr Bush ending his trip in Georgia, whose "rose revolution" in 2003 was one in a series of blows to Russia's hegemony in its old "near abroad," it is hardly surprising that there is rancour in Moscow. It is, one analyst complained, as if Mr Putin bracketed a visit to Washington with stops in Havana and Pyongyang. That is over-stating the case, but the sense of insult and provocation is unmistakable.

It is not easy to get this balance right. Mr Bush has angered millions with a selective, freedom-focused foreign policy in which, as in Iraq, the end justifies the means regardless of the cost to alliances, stability or international law. But the US was right to welcome the "orange revolution" in Ukraine, and it is right too to call for change in Belarus, the last dictatorship in Europe, while condemning "authoritarian drift" in the Kremlin.

Closer to home, the European Union has been more pragmatic and solicitous, embracing the Baltic states (which are also now in Nato), as new members but encouraging them to deal fairly with the Russian minorities that are a legacy of the Soviet era, to come to terms with their wartime record - when for some collaborating with the Nazis and their atrocities was preferable to Red Army rule - while seeking a constructive relationship with Moscow. Those gathered in Red Square must remember the victory and sacrifices of 1945 - and avoid complacency, though the world has changed much for the better since then.

World Europe

VE Day: 60 anniversary
Russia

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/07/russia.secondworldwar>

Sat 7 May 2005

We must not forget how war was won

Richard Overy

Richard Overy: It was the Soviet and Chinese sacrifice that made victory possible

Imagine for a moment that around half the population of Great Britain - men, women and children - died in the second world war. What kind of extraordinary trauma would this represent? How would "victory" in 1945 now be viewed, or even celebrated? Yet 27 million is the estimate of Soviet deaths by the end of the war. Actual British losses represented around 0.6% of the population; American losses were smaller, around 0.3%. But Soviet losses, from war, starvation and repression, represented about 14% of the pre-war population.

These losses were the brutal product of German invasion in 1941 and the Soviet determination to resist that aggression and expel the Germans from their territory. The scarcely credible level of sacrifice exposes just how vast and savage the war on the eastern front was. It was here that the great majority of German casualties occurred. It was here that the war was won or lost, for if the Red Army had not succeeded against all the odds in halting the Germans in 1941 and then inflicting the first major defeats at Stalingrad and Kursk in 1943, it is difficult to see how the western democracies, Britain and the US, could have expelled Germany from its new empire.

By 1945 the material strength of the allies was, of course, overwhelming. The critical point came in the middle years of the war, with the Soviet Union teetering before Stalingrad, Rommel poised to take Egypt, the battle of the Atlantic not yet won and American rearmament in its early stages. Victory was not automatic. Soviet resistance meant the difference. Uncertainly, sometimes incompetently, the Soviet armed forces learned the lessons imposed on them by Germany's panzer armies in 1941. A hasty, improvised set of reforms and an economy geared almost exclusively to armaments turned the feeble efforts of 1941 into the vast setpiece battles from the summer of 1943, every one of which the Soviet side won.

German forces were defeated not by the sheer numbers (by 1943 millions of Soviet soldiers were dead or captive and the Red Army was desperate for men), but by the inventive tactics and sturdy technology of their enemy. If this had not been the case, Hitler's armies would have gone on winning, and a huge German-dominated economic empire in Eurasia would have confronted the western allies with a strategic nightmare.

Of course, it is now argued in the west that Soviet victory left a sour taste. Rather than the liberation brought by the western powers, Soviet liberation ushered in the trappings of the Stalinist state. The cold war after 1945 made it difficult to integrate the Soviet contribution into the collective western memory of the war, while it also allowed the Soviet Union to write the contribution of its allies out of the script.

In reality they needed each other. Soviet efforts required the flow of resources under the "Lend Lease" programme. Weapons were few, and the Soviets regarded them as second-rate. But the supply of raw materials, food and communications equipment was essential. It allowed Soviet industry to concentrate on weapons to fight back with. Without Lend Lease the rail system and food supply might well have folded up as they had in the first world war.

The sour taste has become more marked with the fall of communism 15 years ago. The opening up of Soviet archives has shown a system that for some critics makes it almost indistinguishable from the totalitarian enemy it was fighting. This makes it more difficult to embrace the Soviet contribution to victory. The ordinary Soviet people were not only numberless victims of war, but they failed to achieve any political reform as a result of their triumph. Yet it is their exceptional sacrifice that we should remember as we look back over 60 years. And in the end the peoples of eastern Europe were unquestionably better off under the new communist regimes than under German imperial domination. German plans by the middle of the war foresaw the deliberate starvation of at least 35 million people in the east as "useless eaters", and the genocidal destruction of the Jewish and Gypsy populations. The eastern peoples were described in German documents as the "helots" of the new empire. This grotesque imperial fantasy was won or lost on the eastern front, and who can regret its defeat?

The Soviet Union is not the only state to be written out of the victory story in the west. The Chinese people also lost an estimated 20 million as a result of Japanese aggression. Just as the Soviet armed forces held down the Germans, so the less effective but numerous Chinese armed forces kept the Japanese bogged down in Asia. This is a record that is still almost unknown in the west, yet if Japan had achieved quick victory in China, large resources would have been released for an assault on the rear of the Soviet Union, or a larger military presence in the Pacific. In this case, too, western allied casualties would have been much greater without the stubborn resistance of their Asian ally.

In the end, the western freedom to plan and execute a global strategy depended on the ability of the Soviet and Chinese forces to hold the main enemies at bay while western air forces bombed the Axis motherlands flat. When victory is celebrated tomorrow, it is important that we pause to remember the almost 50 million Soviets and Chinese who perished to contain the imperial aggression of Germany and Japan.

Nor should we forget, when condemning Soviet repression in eastern Europe that allied airforces bombed German and Japanese cities up to the very end of the war, inflicting the deaths of more than 600,000 civilians and opening the nuclear age. After 1945 Britain and France re-imposed undemocratic imperial rule in Africa and south-east Asia. None of the victors has anything to feel smug about. The pursuit of victory made all the allies do things they might never have imagined themselves doing.

One question that almost certainly will not be asked as the world indulges in what is probably the last great bout of victory nostalgia is why those states that viewed themselves as the bearers of progress and the modern age descended between 1914 and 1945 into a hideous orgy of war, civil conflict, repression and genocide. Mercifully, 1945 marked a real break with that 30-year crisis, but the nagging issues remain. If they could do it then, what are the restraints that prevent the developed world from once again plunging into the madness of mass war and state violence? Perhaps 1945 is a lesson learned, but those restraints need to be well understood. Next time the millions of dead may not be for our allies alone to bear.

· Richard Overy's book *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia* appeared in paperback last month

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World World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/08/usa.secondworldwar>

Peter Beaumont and Dan McLaughlin in Riga

Sun 8 May 2005

Bush condemns Allies' division of Europe at Yalta

President George Bush yesterday said the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe was 'one of the greatest wrongs of history' and admitted America's role in allowing it to happen.

He acknowledged that the 1945 Yalta agreement between Josef Stalin, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt laid the way for the Soviet occupation of Europe, and compared it to the appeasement of Hitler and the 1939 Soviet-Nazi pact.

Ahead of a visit to Moscow for a VE Day ceremony tomorrow, Bush said the US shared some responsibility for the division of Europe because of the agreement signed at the end of the war.

In a speech in the Latvian capital, Riga, Bush seemed determined to pour petrol on the already smouldering diplomatic row between the Baltic states and Russia over the demand that Moscow should apologise for its occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.

Bush's comments came as the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, writing in a French newspaper yesterday, said that Russia will not answer the demands of Baltic states to apologise for years of Soviet domination.

In a series of extraordinary comments ahead of his attendance at tomorrow's commemoration of the fall of Berlin in Moscow's Red Square, Bush chose largely to ignore the defeat of Nazism at the hands of the US, the Soviet Union and the UK,

choosing instead to focus his comments on the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe that followed, and the Yalta agreement that permitted it.

The pointed exchange between Bush and Putin delivered a sour note ahead of the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Europe from the genocidal scourge of Nazism in which the United States and the Soviet Union were partners.

Bush's remarks marked a sharp counterpoint to comments made by Putin in a recent 'state of the nation' speech in which he bemoaned the demise of the Soviet Union as 'the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century'.

Bush said: 'For much of Eastern and Central Europe, victory brought the iron rule of another empire.'

The President admitted for the first time the significant role that America - and one of its most revered leaders - played in the division of Europe.

Speaking at the beginning of a four-nation tour, Bush said: 'This attempt to sacrifice freedom for the sake of stability left a continent divided and unstable. We will not repeat the mistakes of other generations - appeasing or excusing tyranny, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of stability.'

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/10/georgia.usa>

Agencies

Tue 10 May 2005

Bush hails Georgia as 'beacon of liberty'



▲ Georgian dancers perform for the US president, George Bush, in the historic centre of Tbilisi. Photograph: David Mdzinarishvili/Reuters

The US president, George Bush, today praised the people of Georgia for establishing a democratic government that had inspired change "from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf and beyond".

Thousands of people crowded into Freedom square, in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, to hear Mr Bush make a speech honouring the country's rose revolution of 2003. He said that without the rose revolution, there would have been no orange revolution in Ukraine or cedar revolution in Lebanon.

"Georgia is a beacon of liberty for this region and the world," Mr Bush said. "The path of freedom you have chosen is not easy, but you will not travel it alone ... the American people will stand with you."

Earlier, the US president met Mikhail Saakashvili, the president of the former Soviet republic, who came to power last year.

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"Georgia is a beacon of liberty for this region and the world," Mr Bush said. "The path of freedom you have chosen is not easy, but you will not travel it alone ... the American people will stand with you."

Earlier, the US president met Mikhail Saakashvili, the president of the former Soviet republic, who came to power last year.

He told Mr Saakashvili that he had "a solid friend in America" - a sentiment likely to create ripples in Moscow, which has already expressed discomfort about the idea of the US securing closer ties with a pro-western government on Russia's border.

Mr Saakashvili was elected as the Georgian president in January 2004 after leading mass street protests against a fraudulent election. Ukraine's orange revolution last year forced the defeat of a Moscow-backed candidate, and Kyrgyzstan this year saw a popular uprising against an authoritarian regime.

Mr Bush flew to Georgia after attending yesterday's VE day commemoration in Moscow, where he risked further deterioration in the relationship between the US and Russia by meeting vocal critics of the Russian president, Vladimir Putin.

The US president was reported to have told Russian human rights and media freedom activists that they needed to continue working to expand democracy in Russia.

Mr Saakashvili boycotted yesterday's commemoration in protest at the continued presence of two Russian military bases in Georgia. Today, Mr Bush said he had spoken to Mr Putin about Georgian demands that the two bases be closed.

"He [Mr Putin] reminded me that there is an agreement in place - a 1999 agreement," Mr Bush said.

"He said that the Russians want to work with the government to fulfil their obligations in terms of that agreement. I think that's a commitment that's important for the people of Georgia to hear. It shows there's grounds to work to get this issue resolved."

Georgia wants Moscow to close the two Soviet-era bases, but the Russian defence minister, Sergei Ivanov, said it could take up to four years to build the barracks and other infrastructure needed to house the servicemen and their equipment in Russia.

The Georgian foreign minister, Salome Zurbishvili, has insisted the withdrawal must be completed before January 2008, prior to parliamentary and presidential elections.

Mr Bush also encouraged Mr Saakashvili to use peaceful means to settle disputes with two separatist regions - Abkhazia and South Ossetia - which are aligned with Moscow. Mr Bush offered to help resolve the disputes if his assistance was requested.

"I'm confident that the government of Georgia has got a good strategy to move forward to resolve the disputes," he said. Obviously if the president were to call and want me to make a phone call or two, I'd be more than happy to do so ... the United States cannot impose a solution nor would you want us to."

In today's speech, Mr Bush said the US respected Georgia's desire to join the EU and Nato. He also thanked the Georgian people for the contribution of nearly 1,000 troops to the war in Iraq, saying: "The Iraqi people are grateful and so are your American and coalition allies."

Reminders of last year's rose revolution were everywhere. The courtyard of the parliament was decorated with garlands of roses, as was the room in which the two presidents met.

Last night, the route taken by Mr Bush's motorcade was lined with crowds. The president and his wife, Laura, saw a display of traditional dancing in the city's old town by performers dressed in traditional red, black and white costumes and colourful headscarves.

Mr Bush had only planned to stay for 20 minutes, but remained for nearly two hours. He tried his hand at Georgian dancing and also ate in a local restaurant.



Simon Tisdall's world briefing
World news

Source:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/10/usa.russia>

Simon Tisdall
Tue 10 May 2005

The thorns in Georgia's rose

President George Bush will publicly congratulate the people of Georgia on their peaceful "rose revolution" in November 2003 when he addresses a crowd of up to 100,000 in Freedom Square, Tbilisi, today.

But his private message to President Mikhail Saakashvili is likely to be more nuanced. He will remind the Georgian leader that democracy means more than elections, and further reforms are essential if the former Soviet republic is to fulfil its EU and Nato membership ambitions.

Stephen Hadley, the US national security adviser, highlighted Washington's concerns about simmering disputes in the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia prior to Mr Bush's arrival. Georgia's attitude to its Russophile, Azeri and Armenian minorities and the rule of law were also seen as key tests of future progress, he suggested.

The US is anxious that an argument with Russia over the timetable for closing two Soviet-era military bases in Georgia should not rekindle broader tensions with the Kremlin. Despite ongoing talks, Mr Saakashvili cited the problem as his reason for boycotting yesterday's VE Day celebrations in Moscow.

Mr Bush has been quick to respond to a recent statement by the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, that the collapse of the Soviet Union was "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century".

He said at the weekend that post-1945 Soviet domination in eastern Europe and central Asia was "one of the greatest wrongs of history". He warned Mr Putin to eschew further interference in neighbouring countries while reserving that right for the US. His next target is Belarus.

But the US needs Mr Putin's cooperation on issues ranging from Iran to oil. It shares Moscow's concern about the use of Georgian territory by Islamist extremists attempting to destabilise Chechnya and the northern Caucasus. The US recently instituted a \$50m (£27m) military training programme in Georgia but has renounced any intention of replacing the Russian bases with Nato installations.

In other words, Washington will support Mr Saakashvili with words, advice and financial assistance - as long as he does not upset more important apple carts.

"There is still some optimism about the rose revolution but it is tempered by greater realism," said Professor Charles King, an expert on US-Georgia relations at Georgetown University in Washington. "Democratic assistance is all very well - but you have to have a functioning country first."

Continually blaming "the nefarious designs of the Russian Federation" for Georgia's ills was counterproductive, Prof King said. "In time even Georgia's friends may come to wonder whether a country with fictitious borders and no plan for making them real is a country worth helping." This increased sense of caution, teetering on disillusionment, is reflected in opinion polls indicating a 25% fall in Mr Saakashvili's approval ratings.

Street protests over electricity and water shortages, controversial anti-corruption measures, and mutterings about Mr Saakashvili's "arrogance" have prompted speculation that Georgia's rose is beginning to wilt.

"This is the very same wave of social discontent that propelled the rose revolution and brought down [former president] Eduard Shevardnadze," said Jaba Devdariani, writing in Transitions On Line. "The government should worry lest the unrest turn into an explosion." This was unlikely at present, Mr Devdariani admitted. Georgia's leader retained 38% support in the face of a fragmented political opposition.

Prof King said Mr Saakashvili had made progress in some areas, notably in Adjara and in improved tax collection.

But if Mr Saakashvili did not put his weight fully behind systemic reforms, popular counter-revolution was not entirely out of the question, Prof King said. "Saakashvili needs to listen to what is called 'the shout from the streets' or he could go the way of Shevardnadze. After all, he created the template."

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/10/russia.usa>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*

Tue 10 May 2005

Bush offers support to Putin's critics

US president takes advantage of Victory Day in Moscow to meet advocates of 'civil society' and democracy

George Bush risked a further deterioration in relations with the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, yesterday when he met critics of the Kremlin's human rights record and told them he supported their work to build a "civil society" and democracy.

The US president held a 35-minute meeting with some of Mr Putin's more vocal critics in his hotel minutes before he attended a Victory Day parade in Red Square at the invitation of Mr Putin.

The meeting, described by one of those who attended as an "important sign to Mr Putin that America is interested in the development of independent society in Russia", let Mr Bush hear from organisations working in the fields of human rights, media freedom and environmental issues in Russia.

Manana Aslamazyan, from the media support group Internews Russia, said Mr Bush told them the US was ready to support their work. "He said that we need to work for more democracy in Russia," she said.

The comments, confirmed by two others who attended, will widen the growing rift between Moscow and Washington over each other's democratic credentials. The US has accused Russia of reversing its commitment to democracy, while Russia remains furious at growing American influence in the states of the former Soviet Union.

Mr Bush's commitment to "export democracy" came to the fore again last night when he flew into the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, to meet Mikhail Saakashvili, its pro-western president. Mr Saakashvili boycotted yesterday's commemoration in Red Square because of a row with Moscow over two Russian military bases.

It is the first time Mr Bush has visited one of the three former Soviet Union countries that have undergone protest-led regime change against authoritarian rulers in the past 19 months. Today he will address tens of thousands of Georgians in Tbilisi.

Interfax quoted a Georgian minister as saying Mr Bush spent longer than scheduled watching Georgian dancing in the city's old town and, as he later left a restaurant where he had had dinner with Mr Saakashvili, Mr Bush tried to repeat a Georgian dance.

Mr Bush's meeting with the Russian organisations may anger Kremlin hardliners who see such groups as tools used by the west to foment popular unrest and pro-western "democratic change" in Russia's former sphere of influence.

Lyudmila Alekseeva, a human rights activist who attended the meeting with Mr Bush, said: "I value the meeting most in terms of the fact that it occurred. It gave us serious moral support." Ms Alekseeva, who is distinguished by her work in the Soviet era, said the meeting reminded her of the Reagan era, when the US government met dissidents and representatives of the state. "Now there are no dissidents, but a civil society," she said. "It is good that this tradition has been revived."

Ms Alekseeva has been one of the most outspoken critics of the "backsliding of democracy" that the Kremlin has recently been accused of masterminding. "Putin actually doesn't know how to be democratic", she is reported to have told a conference in Washington held by Radio Free Europe in February. "The whole spectrum of civil rights - civil, political, social and economic - is worsening across all strata of society."

Arseni Roginsky, from the group Memorial, which has documented abuses by Russian soldiers in Chechnya, said the general tone of the meeting had been "warm and supportive".

According to Ms Aslamazyan, Mr Bush also told the meeting that if he constantly criticised Mr Putin, there would not be a dialogue between them. The US president had said it was easier to resolve any question if there was mutual trust.

Mr Bush and Mr Putin tried to dispel the growing animosity between their administrations on Sunday when the US president joked with his Russian counterpart before a dinner at Mr Putin's country residence.

The White House spokesman said that the men's friendship "allows for the type of candid conversations on issues without there being any sort of recriminations for doing so".

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/11/russia.theeditorpressreview>

Wed 11 May 2005

'It must face up to its history'

Its celebration of a great victory hides its misdeeds, both past and present

Daily Telegraph
Editorial, May 10

"In his choice of European itinerary, Latvia and Georgia as well as the Netherlands and Russia, George Bush has underlined his commitment to freedom in Moscow's backyard. At the same time, Poland and the Baltic three have demanded that Russia apologise for the Soviet occupation.

"Vladimir Putin regards the westwards extension of Russian dominance after 1945 as a liberation rather than an occupation ... Such obtuseness ... goes hand in hand with an authoritarian tendency at home, whether towards parliament, the media or the oligarchs. Mr Putin was justified in making a great thing of [Monday's] anniversary. But history has moved a long way since then and he has yet properly to acknowledge it."

John O'Sullivan
Chicago Sun-Times, May 10

"No praise can be too high for the endurance of the Russian people or the bravery of the Russian soldiers who - as the old saying rightly goes - tore the guts out from the German army. But though they saved Europe from Nazism, they did not liberate it. With official Soviet permission ... they looted and raped their way across the continent and established a new and longer-lasting tyranny ...

"No word of the Soviet role in starting the second world war was allowed on Monday in Moscow... and the Russians even resent Mr Bush's mention of the Soviet Union's postwar despotisms. But the west cannot afford to gloss over these embarrassing historical truths - nor let the Russians deceive themselves about these shameful aspects of their past."

USA Today
Editorial, May 10

"Mr Bush was careful [on Monday] not to overshadow the moment by repeating harsh criticism of Mr Putin's slip-sliding away from democracy, or reminding him that the allies' triumph quickly soured into nearly half a century of cold war.

"That was as it should have been ... [But] the question: How to prevent a return to dictatorship? ... The best, if less-than-satisfactory approach, is to coax more democracy with what Mr Putin clearly craves most: legitimacy to shore up his authority ... That, in fact, is just the approach Mr Bush appears to be crafting ... Mr Bush has famously said he doesn't do nuance. But his trip to Russia and the former Soviet states has, so far, been an impressive display of nuanced diplomacy."

Ralph Peters

New York Post, May 10

"By digging his heels into the soil of two brave countries, despite the Kremlin's protests ... our president brought us back to the American tradition of sticking up for the little guy."

"When Mr Bush stood on the reviewing stand with Mr Putin, he honoured the single positive achievement of the Soviet era, the defeat of Nazi Germany. But when he bracketed the Kremlin's circus of nostalgia with visits to Latvia and Georgia, he honoured something far greater: the triumph of freedom."

Messenger

Editorial, Tbilisi, May 10

"The logic of Mr Bush's post-Soviet tour is clear. By travelling to Moscow, Mr Bush commemorates on behalf of his country all those who were lost in the second world war; by travelling to Riga and Tbilisi, he expresses Washington's view that Latvia and Georgia are active regional players in the modern day struggle for democracy ...

"The tour can thus be seen as an attempt by Washington to on the one hand maintain its strategic partnership with Russia - through the visit to Moscow - while at the same time discouraging Moscow's neo-imperialistic ambitions towards its neighbours ... The implication is that the danger posed by anti-democratic developments in Russia is fully understood in Washington, and that the visits to Riga and Tbilisi are part of a strategy to act against this danger."

Vaira Vike-Freiberga

Washington Post, May 7

"We the democratic nations of the world value respect for human life and dignity ... We value the rule of law as a basis for justice. For decades after the war, Europe's former captive nations, including Latvia and Russia, were robbed of the opportunity to flourish and to prosper in the framework of these values. And it is on these core values that the perspectives of our long-term partnership with Russia will depend."

"That is why all democratic nations must urge Russia to condemn the crimes committed during the Soviet era in the name of communism. Russia must face up to and come to honest terms with its history, just as Germany did and just as my own country is doing today."

Vaira Vike-Freiberga is the president of Latvia

"The significant piece of the puzzle that remains glaringly absent from these polemics is the fact that the Baltic peoples were eager Nazi collaborators, among the most zealous in exterminating their countries' Jews ...

"While Baltic leaders have issued pro forma apologies, these have not been accompanied by a serious effort to bring the guilty to justice and create a more accurate wartime narrative. Before the Baltic states can expect any apologies to them, they had better make a much more serious effort to come to terms with their own active participation in the Nazis' Final Solution."

World
Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/13/russia.nickpatonwalsh>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*

Fri 13 May 2005

Russia says 'spies' work in foreign NGOs

Russia's security chief accused Britain and America of using civic groups as a front for spies yesterday, and blamed similar operations for fomenting recent uprisings in other former Soviet republics.

Nikolai Patrushev, the director of the KGB successor Federal Security Service (FSB), told parliament that his agency had uncovered spies working for the British and US governments, as well as for Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, operating under cover of non-governmental organisations.

Among those he named was the British medical charity Merlin, which denied the allegation last night.

"Foreign secret services are ever more actively using non-traditional methods for their work and with the help of different NGOs' educational programmes are propagandising their interests, particularly in the former Soviet Union," Mr Patrushev said.

The FSB chief's comments, an unusually detailed reiteration of suspicions often voiced, came days after the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, hosted George Bush and other world leaders for the Victory Day celebrations in Moscow.

The visit of Mr Bush, who described the Soviet occupation of Europe as one of the great wrongs of the 20th century, underlined growing mistrust of the west among Kremlin hardliners.

During his visit, Mr Bush made a point of meeting Kremlin critics and telling them they could count on his support to build a civil society and democracy. The US has also been accused of involvement with opposition movements in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, three former Soviet republics transformed by popular uprisings.

In a broad reference to the supporting role that Washington and EU member states played in the protest-led regime changes, Mr Patrushev added: "Our opponents are steadily and persistently trying to weaken Russian influence in the commonwealth of independent states and the international arena as a whole. The latest events in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan unambiguously confirm this."

Mr Patrushev, a close Putin ally, also accused an American NGO of organising a meeting in Slovakia last month at which further "velvet revolutions were discussed". The International Republican Institute had, he said, earmarked £2.6m to finance opposition groups in Belarus, whose authoritarian leader, Alexander Lukashenko, has attracted strong censure in the west. Mr Lukashenko retains a brittle alliance with Mr Putin, with both leaders facing calls for greater democracy.

The IRI responded by saying it spends around £250,000 a year on programmes in Belarus and that the Slovakia retreat had been convened to discuss "programme initiatives".

Russia considers the old Soviet empire its own sphere of influence, off limits to western powers, and is irked by the suspicion of western intervention. Yesterday, Moscow and Washington again starkly disagreed about Russia's continuing military presence in Georgia, whose pro-west president, Mikhail Saakashvili, hosted Mr Bush this week.

Moscow vowed to take action if Tbilisi took measures against the Russian military bases still operational on Georgian soil.

Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, said that, instead, Russia should pull its forces out of Georgia. "We are really encouraging the Russians to get this done and remove their forces so that Georgia regains that element of their national sovereignty."

Mr Patrushev did not specify how many spies were uncovered in Russia or what they were accused of doing, except "pursuing the interests" of other states.

A year ago, Mr Putin attacked NGOs for pursuing "dubious group and commercial interests" and for taking foreign money.

The British charity Merlin "categorically denied" the spying allegations.

A spokeswoman said the group had been working in Russia in 1996 and had never experienced visa problems. "All of Merlin's programmes have been approved by the relevant authorities." She said it was funded by the EU.

Mr Patrushev also said spies were operating within the US Peace Corps, which was thrown out of Russia amid spying allegations in 2002, the Saudi Red Crescent and the Society for Social Reform, a Kuwait group.

In Washington, a Peace Corps spokeswoman dismissed the charges as "completely baseless" and untrue.

According to Interfax, Mr Patrushev said most industrialised states did not want "a powerful economic competitor like Russia", adding that Russia had lost £2bn a year via "trade discrimination" with the US, EU and Canada.

World Europe

European Union

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/may/19/eu.russia>

Timothy Garton Ash in Tiraspol

🐦 @fromTGA

Thu 19 May 2005

Exchange of empires

Who will dare to fill the black holes being left by Russia's long retreat?

Sitting in a cafe on Lenin Street, next to three smartly turned-out female officers in dark green KGB uniforms, I had this wild thought: can the Soviet Union join the European Union?

For the surreal breakaway para-state of Transnistria on the east bank of the river Dniestr looks at first glance like a miniature version of the old Soviet Union. In the heart of the capital, Tiraspol, a giant redstone Lenin stands proudly before the Supreme Soviet. Across 25 October Street, named for the Russian revolution of 1917, is the obligatory tank on a plinth. In the House of Pioneers display boards show gnarled, bemedalled Soviet war veterans explaining to eager youths "How Good It Is Without War!" Not just on Lenin Street but on Soviet Street, Communist Street and Peace Street every third person seems to be in uniform. The arm badges of those female officers, whose elaborate make-up, brightly dyed hair and high-heeled leather shoes nicely set off their pristine uniforms, proclaim that they belong to the ministry of state security (MGB), but informally people still call them KGB. In every government office there is a sullen secretary, a pot plant and a framed portrait of the leader.

It makes me feel almost nostalgic. But look a little more closely and things are not as they seem. In the basement of the House of Pioneers, the kids are playing western computer games: Tomb Raider, Tank Racer. The shops on 25 October Street include Adidas and a fast-food restaurant decorated with giant, blown-up photos of American skyscrapers. Up the road, there is a vast new sports complex built by the biggest local company, which is called Sheriff, a tribute to the wild west frontier marshals of the US. At the Hotel Timoty, the receptionist, Tania, is dressed in a stretchy white tracksuit, emblazoned Dolce e Gabbana. Not the genuine article, of course. She explains to me that the hotel's name - Timoty - in the Russian version, stands for Tlraspol-MOscow-Tlraspol, signalling the heavy involvement of Russian capital.

Even the tank on the plinth tells a new story. It commemorates not the Soviet Union's great patriotic war of 1941-45 but the heroic "war" of 1992, in which the local forces of this heavily Sovietised, largely Russian-speaking strip of land, aided by the Russian 14th army, won their de facto autonomy from the authorities of Moldova, who had adopted the Latin rather than Cyrillic script for their Moldovan/Romanian state language, and were tentatively reorienting the territory west of the river Dniestr towards Romania, Europe and the west. Since then, the entity which in English is most conveniently called Transnistria (ie across the Dniestr, seen from the west) and which in Russian styles itself, literally translated, the On-the-Dniestrian Moldovan Republic, has equipped itself with its own flag, crest (with hammer-and-sickle), anthem, president, parliament, uniformed border guards, security service, police, courts, schools, university, constitution - most of the attributes of statehood, except international recognition.

Its president, Igor Smirnov, who looks like a cross between Dr Faustus and a provincial dentist, runs a repressive, corrupt regime, sustained by virtually free energy supplies from the Russian Gazprom, the presence of a small number of Russian troops, some local industry - including arms factories - and, by most accounts, a good dose of illegal trafficking in arms and people. While a recent offer to undercover Sunday Times reporters to sell them a post-Soviet Alazan missile with a "dirty bomb" warhead may have been a con job, western experts in the area believe that weapons supplies to rogue regimes and potential terrorists do come from, or through, Transnistria.

Now, however, the Smirnov regime is under pressure. To its west, the president of the internationally recognised Moldovan state, though himself a communist, is trying to get closer to the European Union and the United States. On its other three sides is Ukraine, where the orange revolution has produced a more pro-western president with a greater interest in closing this black hole. The EU and the US are again looking at possible negotiated solutions. Smirnov also faces some opposition at home, which is partly supported by the mighty Sheriff oligarchs. Even in Transnistria, there is just the faintest smell of orange.

Sitting in the bare, cold offices of his foundation for the defence of human rights, Alexander Radchenko tells me that Smirnov "has the powers that Stalin had, or Saddam Hussein". He and other parliamentarians want to change the constitution to allow them to impeach the president, strengthen the constitutional court, and so on. He has received threatening phone calls: "You can end up in the Dniestr." Yet on closer questioning it emerges that what Radchenko, a stocky former political commissar in the Red Army, would really like is less a "return to Europe" than a return to the Soviet Union. "Of course!" he exclaims, flashing several gold teeth as he smiles, "in the Soviet Union there was peace, friendship among the people, and welfare. There was no unemployment, no homelessness, no drug addicts, no prostitutes, no people-trafficking." The rot set in, he says, soon after Stalin died. This is orange Transnistrian-style.

What does Transnistria matter to anyone who is not, as I am, a lover of the Tintinesque and a connoisseur of obscure east European conflicts? Perhaps not much - except to the people who live there, to the women who are brutally trafficked from there, and to those who are killed by the weapons coming out of there. Yet it also highlights a historical development - only half-perceived by most of us - which has driven so many of the changes we have witnessed in Europe over the last quarter century, and is still driving change in Europe today.

That development is the decline and fall of the Russian empire. At first, it was possible to believe that this was just the fall of the Soviet empire, not the Russian one. When you reach Georgia, Ukraine and places like Transnistria, that is no longer possible. In the centre of Tiraspol is a giant statue of Field Marshal Alexander Suvorov. It marks the

conquest of this territory and the founding of this city by the great tsarist general, at the end of the 18th century. Here, it's not just the Soviet but the tsarist empire that is crumbling.

We Europeans now have three choices. We can leave places like this as black holes. We can allow the US to become the new imperial power. Or we can decide that the European Union, in a security partnership with the United States, should gradually expand to bring more freedom, respect for human rights and a long-term prospect of prosperity, even to such parts of the former Soviet Union. Provided, of course, the people living there want it to.

Yet the EU is the most reluctant empire in the history of humankind. The enlargement that we have done thus far is already fuelling the no vote in core countries like France. If the EU does not expand to take in more parts of the former Soviet Union, places like Transnistria will remain black holes. If it does, the European Union risks itself going the way of the former Soviet Union. That is the dilemma we see illuminated, as by a Red Army rocket flare, on the left bank of the river Dniestr.

www.freeworldweb.net

No articles published between June and October.

November

News

World

Europe

World news

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/nov/26/russia.poland>

Nicholas Watt *in Warsaw*

Sat 26 Nov 2005

Poland risks Russia's wrath with Soviet nuclear attack map

- Defence chief reveals old Warsaw Pact plans
- UK spared as European cities faced destruction

Poland's new rightwing government yesterday risked a damaging confrontation with Russia when it published a Warsaw Pact map showing detailed plans for Soviet nuclear strikes against western Europe.

Poland threw open the doors of its military archives to show how most of Europe would have been laid to waste in a nuclear conflagration between east and west. Dating from 1979, when presidents Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev were discussing detente, the map showed how Warsaw Pact forces would have responded to an attack by the Nato alliance.

A series of red mushroom clouds over western Europe show that Soviet nuclear weapons strikes would have been launched at Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium if Nato had struck first. Red clouds are drawn over the then German capital, Bonn, and other key German cities such as the financial centre of Frankfurt, Cologne, Stuttgart, Munich and the strategically important northern port of Hamburg. Brussels, the political headquarters of Nato, is also targeted. Blue mushroom clouds, representing the expected Nato nuclear strikes, are drawn over cities in the eastern bloc, including Warsaw and the then Czechoslovakian capital, Prague. France would have escaped attack, possibly because it is not a member of Nato's integrated structure. Britain, which has always been at the heart of Nato, would also have been spared, suggesting Moscow wanted to stop at the Rhine to avoid overstretching its forces. The exercise, entitled Seven Days to the River Rhine, indicated Warsaw Pact forces aimed to reach the Franco-German border within a week of a Nato attack.

Standing next to the fading map in Warsaw yesterday, Radoslaw Sikorski, the Polish defence minister, said: "The objective of the exercise on this map is to take over most of western Europe - all of Germany, Belgium and Denmark."

Mr Sikorski, who made a name for himself working for the rightwing American Enterprise Institute thinktank in Washington, made clear he was prepared for a backlash from Russia, whose president, Vladimir Putin, has lamented the demise of the Soviet Union.

Announcing the release of 1,700 Warsaw Pact papers from Poland's military archive, he said: "This is crucial to educating the country on the way Poland was an unwilling ally of the USSR in the cold war. The map shows a classic Warsaw Pact exercise - it was a 'counter' attack to defend itself by going all the way to the Atlantic."

Mr Sikorski, who was appointed after the Law and Justice party won a surprise victory in the recent elections after pledging to cleanse the country of its communist past, believes the map shows how Moscow was prepared to sacrifice Poland to save the Soviet Union.

Nato's policy of retaining the right to a first nuclear strike - because the Soviet Union had far superior conventional forces - meant Polish troops dug in by the River Vistula would have been wiped out.

"This map is a moving and shattering personal experience," Mr Sikorski said of the exercise, which estimated that 2 million Polish civilians would have been killed. "It shows that the Polish army was being used to participate in an operation that would have resulted in the nuclear annihilation of our country."

With ties between Poland and Russia at one of their lowest ebbs since the break-up of the Warsaw Pact, Mr Sikorski was asked whether he feared a Kremlin backlash. He said: "We think the Soviet regime was very detrimental to Russia - the Russian people suffered the most."

Commander Waldemar Wojcik, the head of Poland's Central Military Academy, said: "This was an exercise based on the assumption of a Nato attack. The doctrine of the day was that the Warsaw Pact countries were peace loving." He added: "I visited the Pentagon in 2001 and was shown maps that were the mirror image of this."

Other papers released covered Operation Danube, the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and details of a massacre of Polish strikers in 1970 at Szczecin which led to the downfall of Wladyslaw Gomułka, the relatively moderate leader.

Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, the new Polish prime minister, insisted Warsaw was not trying to provoke Russia, even though it released the map without consulting Moscow. "The future should be built on the truth about the past. If the truth is damaging to international relations that is a bad thing ... I am sure this will not spoil our relations with Russia."

December

News
World

Europe

World news

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/dec/15/russia.ukraine>

Nick Paton Walsh *in Moscow*

Thu 15 Dec 2005

Russia threatens to cut off Ukraine's gas supply

Russia drastically raised the price for vital winter fuel supplies to neighbouring Ukraine yesterday, hours after threatening to cut off the country's gas if a deal was not reached by January 1.

Gazprom, the Kremlin-controlled gas company worth up to £55bn, said the new starting "market price" was \$220-\$230 (£124-£129) per thousand cubic metres.

Alexander Medvedev, deputy chief of Russia's largest company, said talks about the price had dragged on for so long that it had risen nearly 50%. "Ukraine has wasted time and it is now out of the question to discuss \$160," he told the Russian NTV television station.

Ukraine's western-oriented president, Viktor Yushchenko, tried to play down the conflict, suggesting a solution could be found within weeks. "The main thing is not to allow the Ukrainian or the Russian side to politicise this issue, [resorting to] political speculation," he told Interfax.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2005/dec/18/russia1>

Sun 18 Dec 2005

Russia turns up the gas pressure

As arguments over Ukraine's pipelines to the West heat up, Europe's energy supplies are at stake, writes Oliver Morgan

Russia and Ukraine are wrangling bitterly over how gas is exported from Russia through its southern neighbour via a network of pipelines to destinations beyond the former Soviet Union.

Far from being a remote dispute in a far-away part of the world, it poses a problem for western Europe and the UK. According to the International Energy Agency, 50 per cent of Europe's gas supplies now comes from Russia - of which 85 per cent comes through Ukraine. In France, the 11.2 billion cubic metres (bcm) it gets from Gazprom, the monolithic Russian gas operator, amounts to around a quarter of all gas imports and dwarfs its 1.9bcm domestic production. In Germany, the 32.6bcm it imports accounts for more than a third of its total imports, and is far more than its 22.2bcm domestic resource.

Fatih Birol, chief economist at the International Energy Agency (IEA) says: 'There could be serious implications for western Europe if the problem is not resolved. This highlights the fact that relying on one supplier for a major part of a supply is very very risky.'

Despite the fact that Britain relies less on gas imports than other western European countries it is not isolated from these implications.

In fact, its location at the 'end of the pipe', raises fundamental questions about the future security of our energy supplies. And the timing could hardly be more sensitive. UK gas prices have recently been at historic levels but there are potential shortages. Doubts have been expressed about the true openness of a European gas market filled with state monopolies that is not supplying to the place where the price is highest - the UK.

On top of that, two weeks ago the government launched its energy review, looking to tackle the two key issues facing policymakers over the coming decades. The first is climate change, the second is security of supply. As energy minister Malcolm Wicks pointed out, production in the North Sea has declined so that we are now a net importer of gas. On this matter the review boils down to asking whether we should build new nuclear power stations and boost renewables to avoid the need for imported gas as the major generator of power.

That is where worries over Russia loom large. The government drew attention to the question in its 2003 energy white paper. It made clear how important engaging with Russia and the Caspian region states, as well as with north African and Middle Eastern countries, was to encouraging investment and the availability of supply.

It added that it needed to focus its attention on 'good governance and the development of stable investment and transit regimes'.

More recently, ministers have tried to press home the issue. Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Johnson talked about energy supply and transit at the Permanent Partnership Council with Russia on 3 October, and it was raised again at the EU-Ukraine summit on 1 December. Wicks discussed security of supply in Moscow at the end of October.

But events suggest that vigilance will be needed. Last week, Alexander Medvedev, the man in charge of export at Gazprom, said that the volume of gas it supplies to Ukraine could be cut in the dispute over how much Kiev pays for its supplies and how much it is allowed to take in lieu of payment for pumping the gas through its territory under the terms of a 2003 agreement between the two states. This could affect the volume ultimately passed through to western Europe.

According to industry analyst Wood Mackenzie, Russia is selling gas to members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) at \$50-\$80 (£28-£45) per thousand cubic metres (mcm). Ukraine is at the lower end of this scale. This compares to \$160 per mcm on the border between the former Soviet Union and Europe.

Ukraine is also expected this year to receive 23bcm of Gazprom's output as 'payment' for shipping under the agreement in 2003. This represents some 18 per cent of the total 128bcm Gazprom will transport through the country.

Ukraine receives 30 per cent of its gas direct from Russia and a further 45 per cent from Turkmenistan via Russia. Gazprom wants to increase what Ukraine pays for the gas it uses, replacing the 2003 agreement and demanding cash for all of the supply instead of an output share.

In some ways Russia and Gazprom have a strong hand, according to Hilary McCutcheon, analyst at Wood MacKenzie: 'There is leverage because Ukrainian industry is very reliant on Russian gas.' In addition, there are threats that other interests can make - for example switching oil refining from facilities owned by Russian companies in Ukraine to spare capacity at home.

But Russia needs the money. 'Gazprom wants to increase the amount paid three times,' Birol says, 'But for Russia there are significant problems. About three-quarters of Russian gas production comes from three super-giant gas fields in western Siberia - Medvezhe, Yanburg and Urengoye. These are going through a severe decline in production and need a great deal of investment.'

The IEA estimates that in excess of \$170bn will be needed to develop Russian gas production. 'Clearly Gazprom needs to maximise the revenues it gets from its current resources,' Birol explains.

McCutcheon suggests that the situation is part of ongoing friction between Russia and its neighbours over gas supply, but indicates that the most recent stand-off may simply come down to the fact that Gazprom simply does not wish to miss out on high world gas prices.

'The running down of the big three gas fields is not a new development,' she says. 'Gazprom have seen it coming for quite some time. They have taken some steps such as some additional investment to stave off serious production decline.'

However, she does not believe this is directly linked to the recent stand-off with Ukraine. 'Because prices are much more controlled in Russia and the CIS, the rising European price has not fed through so markedly to the domestic market. So the difference between the two has become more stark. Gazprom wants to maintain its control over the high revenue export market and take advantage of the higher price.'

Whatever Russia's short-term motivations, Birol believes its long term position, indeed credibility as a leading gas supplier to Europe and elsewhere, is affected by arguments such as it is having with Ukraine.

'Many consuming nations are becoming more and more aware of the security of gas supply and are looking at their gas imports very carefully. If such things continue to happen, it will play an important role in countries' plans for future supply.'

In his view, there are two alternatives. 'If they want to stick to gas they can look at other countries to import from, such as Algeria, Egypt and Qatar. If they want to look at other fuels and diversification, they may want to look at renewables and nuclear.'

This all sounds familiar to UK ears. Indeed, the government says that looking at other fuel renewables and nuclear is exactly what it has been doing since the energy white paper. When the recent energy review was announced the government re-emphasised the point that we are now importers of gas.

A DTI spokesman says: 'It's in everybody's interest that current negotiations between the Ukraine and Russia on gas and transit prices are constructive and businesslike. Both are aware of the importance of these negotiations for EU gas supply - 40 per cent of gas destined for Europe transits Ukraine - and we are confident that agreement satisfactory to both sides can be concluded rapidly.'

There are mitigating factors. Gazprom is building a controversial new pipeline under the Baltic Sea to Germany that will increase supply direct to western Europe. Notwithstanding this, ministers here do not want energy policy decisions as fundamental and politically expensive as building new nuclear reactors precipitated by spats between Moscow and Kiev.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2005/dec/18/russia>

Sun 18 Dec 2005

Is Gazprom driven by politics or profit?

The Kremlin controls the company with a quarter of global gas reserves. The question is what it uses that power for, writes Conal Walsh

It has been a busy week for the world's largest gas company. As well as getting into an argument with the Ukrainian government, Gazprom unveiled a high-profile new recruit: Gerhard Schroder. The former German Chancellor joins the board of North European Gas Pipeline, Gazprom's new consortium.

His appointment aroused condemnation in the German press, who objected to their recently deposed leader taking a highly paid job for a firm whose \$5 billion pipeline project he personally championed while in office. But what the move says about Schroder's conduct is probably less important than what it says about Gazprom's growing status.

Owning more than a quarter of global gas reserves, this Kremlin-controlled behemoth is set to become western Europe's leading energy supplier within the next 10 years. Schroder and other appointees will help it to present a friendly and reassuring face to its western partners. But is Gazprom really a liberalising company we can do business with, or a dangerously large and powerful arm of the Russian government?

Even before it began making hirelings of Europe's best-known statesmen, nobody doubted its geo-political importance. Led by chief executive Alexei Miller, Gazprom saw its market capitalisation race past \$100bn this year, a figure that could grow significantly once its shares become more accessible. An idea of the company's sheer size can be gauged from the fact that its most high-profile deal of recent months - the \$13.1bn purchase of Roman Abramovich's oil firm Sibneft - added only 5 per cent to its asset base.

That, incidentally, was just one of a flurry of recent acquisitions and consolidations in Russia's energy sector. Gazprom is reported to have its eye on Slavneft, another oil firm, and is leading what seems to be a state-sponsored drive to bring the country's energy assets back into government ownership. To that apparent end, President Vladimir Putin has also imposed restrictions on foreign ownership of 'strategic' oil and gas fields, and, in effect, renationalised Yukos, the oil company formerly run by jailed tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

Controversial measures such as these raise the fear that Putin plans to make energy supplies a blunt instrument of Kremlin foreign policy. His government has always had de facto control over Gazprom but this year it made sure by spending \$7.5bn to build its stake up to 51 per cent.

But William Browder, chief executive of the Moscow equity fund Hermitage Capital Management, rejects the notion that Putin is 'resovietising' Russia's most important company. Browder, whose fund has a small stake in the gas giant, has long been a critic of Gazprom's management but insists that the company is actually liberalising. Officially, foreign ownership of Gazprom stock has been limited to 4.5 per cent until now, but the indications are that Putin will soon raise the threshold to 49 per cent.

'Historically, Gazprom was forced to subsidise neighbouring countries in exchange for those neighbours being supportive of Russia,' says Browder. 'It was an economics-for-politics swap. Now that Ukraine and Georgia no longer want such close ties with Russia, they are being asked to pay market prices ... That will mean greater profitability.'

Demand for Gazprom shares will surely be high, but whether the company is yet an entirely good investment is debateable. By the standards of the western oil majors, it is badly run. Last year staff costs went up by more than 30 per cent, while net revenues increased by only 24 per cent. Many analysts decry its wide portfolio of non-core operations, which include holdings in banking, media and electricity.

Its market capitalisation per barrel of reserves is one of the lowest in the global industry. It produces 550bn cubic metres of gas a year but is obliged to sell 400bn of these to Russian buyers at low, state-regulated prices, leaving scant funds to develop new fields. Prices will eventually rise as a condition of Russia's membership of the World Trade Organisation, but for now exports to Europe, worth \$30bn a year, are Gazprom's only source of serious profits.

Commercial logic suggests it will want to build constructive partnerships with western customers, but how much its performance improves may depend on how often the Kremlin chooses to interfere in its decision-making.

'Gazprom is a political animal and a major source of Russian government influence abroad,' says Stephen O'Sullivan, an analyst at UFG, the Moscow-based investment bank. But O'Sullivan feels that the company is driven by a business agenda more than a political one.

'Gazprom has some very smart people running its export businesses. It is moving into liquefied natural gas [a form of gas transported by sea rather than pipeline] and looking at exports to China.

'It is gently withdrawing from the domestic market, allowing some of the smaller independent companies to take that business, and focusing on exports. That ought to promote liberalism.'

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/dec/27/russia.ukraine>

Tom Parfitt *in Moscow*

Tue 27 Dec 2005

Ukraine and Russia go to brink over huge gas price rise

- **Kiev faces quadrupling of cost as subsidy withdrawn**
- **Threats from both sides ahead of January deadline**

Russia and Ukraine are on the brink of a political crisis over gas prices that symbolises the widening gulf between the two former Soviet countries.

The state-controlled Russian gas monopoly, Gazprom, is threatening to cut off flows on January 1 if Ukraine does not agree to pay quadrupled prices for the energy that comprises a third of its needs.

Ukraine currently buys Russian gas for its homes and factories at a heavily subsidised \$50 (£29) per 1,000 cubic metres but a disgruntled Moscow wants to raise the cost to \$230, in line with world prices.

Kiev has retaliated by threatening to increase tariffs for gas transit to western Europe and raise the rent paid by the Russian navy to keep its Black Sea fleet in the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol.

The dispute is just one of a number of disagreements between the two countries that have hardened since Ukraine's "orange revolution" wrenched it from Moscow's influence and set it on a course to European integration last winter.

Observers say the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, is flexing his muscles as his country increasingly adopts the role of a "natural resources superpower" that conducts foreign policy through control of energy. Both have promised to do their utmost to halt any disruption of gas supplies to Europe through Ukrainian pipelines.

However, at the weekend Gazprom staged an ostentatious practice run for turning off the taps that provide supplies to Ukraine itself.

In a television interview, the company's deputy chairman, Alexander Medvedev, said it was prepared to go to the international arbitration court in Stockholm if Kiev resorted to siphoning off gas.

"Eighty percent of our exports pass through Ukraine," he said. "Apparently there is some blackmail, or pirate-like behaviour on the part of our Ukrainian colleagues. However we live in the civilised world, not the jungle, so I hope that reason will prevail."

After weeks of on-off talks, negotiations over the price were conducted in Moscow yesterday but no resolution was found. The Kremlin argues the new price is purely economic and its neighbour no longer has a right to demand cheap energy supplies for steelmaking and other industries that compete with Russia's own.

Ukraine's Naftogaz said yesterday that it produced enough gas to continue supplying homes, but factories in the east could be hit hard. Last week President Viktor Yushchenko criticised Gazprom for its "irresponsible approach", calling for a gradual transition to higher prices.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, denied yesterday that raising the fee was a political act. But recent deals with other former Soviet countries such as Belarus have kept prices low, raising suspicions that Ukraine is being punished for its push to join the EU and Nato.

Alexander Lebedev, a Russian MP critical of the Kremlin's hardline stance, said brinkmanship over prices risked angering Russia's western European partners ahead of it taking over the G8 presidency on January 1. "Russia's stance is irrational," he said. "We are not reprimanding the orange leaders - we are only helping them consolidate their support by providing a foreign threat with a gas weapon."

However, most analysts agree Ukraine's Soviet-style economy must reform to compete in European markets without the prop of cheap energy supplies.

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/dec/31/russia.ukraine>

Tom Parfitt in Moscow and **Luke Harding** in Berlin

Sat 31 Dec 2005

Fear of gas shortage after Ukraine rejects huge price rise

- **Russia threatens to cut supply after talks fail**
- **Energy ministers from EU meet to discuss crisis**

Concerns were growing last night that gas supplies to western Europe could be disrupted, after Russia and Ukraine failed to end a dispute over gas prices.

The European Union said yesterday it would hold a meeting of energy ministers next week to discuss the crisis. "The idea is to be ready for all eventualities and to have a common approach," said Amadeu Altafaj Tardio, a spokesman for the European commission.

European officials insisted that fuel supplies to a winter-bound Europe were not likely to be badly affected by the dispute, which followed an announcement by the Russian state controlled gas monopoly Gazprom that it was increasing the price of Siberian gas to Ukraine by 360%. The company has given Kiev until Sunday to comply with the terms.

Ukraine urged Russia to suspend the increase, a demand that Gazprom dismissed as unacceptable. The EU currently relies on Gazprom for 25% of its gas supplies. Most of this is transported via Ukraine. If Russia makes good its threat to cut off Ukraine's supply, it will reduce the amount of gas sent through the pipeline - which also carries Europe's share.

"The commission is still optimistic that a deal can be reached," Mr Tardio said. "We have concerns because some member states are more dependent on Russian gas than others."

Viktor Yushchenko, the president of Ukraine, promised not to impede transit supplies to Europe. But Gazprom warned that Kiev might divert exports destined for Germany, Italy and France.

Earlier this week, Ukraine's prime minister, Yuri Yekhanurov, said Kiev would take 15% of the Russian gas crossing its territory if Moscow cut delivery for Ukrainian domestic use. A Gazprom spokesman, Sergei Kupriyanov, told the Guardian it could not prevent Ukraine siphoning from transit pipelines. "Technically speaking, they could take all the gas," he said.

Germany, the company's biggest client, urged Moscow and Kiev to strike a deal as soon as possible to guarantee uninterrupted delivery.

Several German politicians urged Gerhard Schröder, Germany's former chancellor and soon to become chairman of the supervisory board of Gazprom's pipeline subsidiary, to use his influence with Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, to defuse the row.

If necessary, Gazprom will offset decreased exports to western Europe by pumping more through its pipeline across Belarus, or using underground storage reservoirs, it said yesterday.

Britain does not receive direct supplies from Russia, but a drop in supply to Europe would mean less gas being pumped through the interconnector, the pipeline that links the UK with the continent. Anthony Brenton, the UK ambassador to Moscow, called for a smooth resolution of the conflict.

However, negotiations in Moscow ended with no breakthrough. In Kiev, Mr Yushchenko called for the two countries to extend talks until January 10, but Gazprom rejected the proposal.

Moscow wants to increase the price Kiev pays for gas from \$50 (£29) per 1,000 cubic metres to \$230, which it says is in line with market prices. The move is widely interpreted as punishment for Ukraine seeking rapid integration into the EU and Nato. Russia argues it cannot sustain the lower price.

One Russian MP said that Moscow's refusal to back down risked making it look like an "energy bully". Relations between the two former Soviet countries deteriorated after Ukraine's orange revolution last winter. Kirill Frolov, a Moscow-based analyst, said the Kremlin had no reason to "subsidise a hostile, anti-Russian regime."

Articles from *The New York Times*

January

WEEK IN REVIEW

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/16/weekinreview/you-go-your-way-and-let-us-go-ours.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

JAN 16, 2005

You Go Your Way, and Let Us Go Ours

MOSCOW - What Russia wants from the United States, increasingly, is less and less.

A much-touted "dialogue" on oil and gas that only two years ago was supposed to open the spigot to American consumers has languished instead, as Russia has turned to markets in China, Japan and India.

President Vladimir V. Putin's handling of the prosecution of Yukos Oil, once the country's largest, most-Western-oriented producer, has exposed what can only be considered his indifference to American opinion on matters of transparency and the rule of law.

Even in the war on terror, one area where Mr. Putin and President Bush have found common ground, the scope for cooperation appears to be shrinking, in large part because of concerns about American involvement within what Russia regards as its historical sphere of influence.

Russia, for example, has withdrawn its support for an observation mission on its dangerous southern border with Georgia. The mission, run by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe with American help, has been credited with curbing the movements of Chechen separatists. But in New York last Thursday, Russia's Minister of Defense, Sergei B. Ivanov, said the presence of American forces in Georgia and in Central Asia was "a very sensitive issue for us." Russia has countered with a military buildup of its own in the region.

Not too long ago, Russia seemed to value American respect. Mr. Putin is a proud leader of a proud nation that still considers itself a balance, if not a rival, to the world's only superpower.

But judging by his brusque public remarks recently in response to a Houston bankruptcy court's actions in the Yukos case, the overturning of disputed presidential elections in neighboring Ukraine and other issues, Mr. Putin intends to reconstruct a strong Russia politically, economically and militarily, regardless of what Americans may think of his methods.

Mr. Putin, it seems, does not seek respect from the United States as much as an end to what he views as American hectoring and meddling. Russia has its own interests, and Mr. Putin his own view of how to achieve them -- and that doesn't give the new Bush

administration a great deal of leverage when it wants something from Russia. STEVEN LEE MYERS

February

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/12/world/europe/mounting-discontent-in-russia-spills-into-streets.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

FEB. 12, 2005

Mounting Discontent in Russia Spills Into Streets

MOSCOW, Feb. 11 - A month ago a small crowd of elderly men and women briefly blocked the highway to Moscow's main international airport to protest changes in pension benefits. It seemed insignificant then, but in retrospect it seems to have been the first stirrings of something long considered dead, or at least dormant, in Russia: the public protest.

In Beslan, relatives of those killed in the siege of Middle School No.1 last September blocked the main highway across the North Caucasus for three days in late January to protest the pace of the government's official investigation into the terrorist attack. On the island of Sakhalin in the Far East, ecologists joined local villagers in blocking roads leading to new oil and gas projects to protest their effect on the environment and local tribal cultures.

In the last week alone, people representing liberal parties assembled near the Kremlin in Moscow to denounce the end of direct elections for governor and in St. Petersburg to protest the exclusion of political opponents from the city's official television station. On Thursday, transportation workers took to the streets in those cities, and a dozen others, to rail against the rising cost of gasoline, among other issues.

"There is calm before the storm, and it is the beginning of the storm," said Anatoly Zykov, 55, a bus driver from the Moscow region who joined some 200 others outside the government headquarters known as the White House. "God forbid there should be bloodshed, but everyone is sick and tired."

An axiom here holds that Russians are politically passive, but the protests unfolding in cities across 11 time zones is challenging that, while raising questions about public support for the country's course under President Vladimir V. Putin.

The largest of the demonstrations have included no more than a few thousand protesters. But taken together, they are the largest by far of Mr. Putin's presidency and appear to signal a broadly felt, if ill-defined, discontent.

The public anger has dented Mr. Putin's ratings and rattled his government ministers, who responded slowly and confusedly to the first wave of protests over pensions before retreating in part on changes that the Kremlin had pushed through a pliant Parliament last summer.

Mr. Putin's appointees have attributed the demonstrations to a disgruntled few, incited by agitators, but the protests show little sign of dissipating. A coalition of political, social, environmental and labor organizations has called new rallies across the country for Saturday, including two in Moscow.

"In the first four years of Putin's regime, people had hope," said Roman A. Dobrokhoto, 21, a political science student at Moscow State University and a leader of a new group called Walking Without Putin. "Nowadays, people understand that under authoritarian rule, development is impossible. This government, this system, is not suitable for them."

He called the unrest "the beginning of the liberal revolution," one modeled on Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" late last year, when thousands poured into the streets to protest the former government's attempt to rig the election of President Leonid D. Kuchma's successor.

For now, that seems unlikely in Russia, where Mr. Putin has near absolute control over the political system. But the protests have emboldened and united his political opponents, from Communists to liberals who only a few months ago appeared demoralized and increasingly marginalized. Opposition leaders claim that in the last month 500,000 people have taken to the streets.

"We should expect a new and even bigger wave of protests this spring," said Oleg V. Shein, a member of Parliament representing the nationalist party Motherland. He predicted that coming government changes in housing and health care would bring more to the streets. "People no longer expect any help from the central authorities," he said. "And these people are growing. Five hundred thousand is not that big a number for a country like ours, but it is a start."

The immediate spark for this outpouring of protest was a decision to replace social benefits like free transport and subsidized telephone, electrical and housing payments with monthly cash payments starting at \$7. Mr. Putin's ministers argued the change was needed to rationalize an unwieldy system that weighed down the federal budget and swamped transit and public utilities with nonpaying customers, cutting money available to invest in upgrading decaying infrastructure.

More than 30 million Russians -- including pensioners, veterans and invalids -- received the benefits, however. Facing the prospect of paying for them with cash supplements that they derided as meager, they took to the streets.

The first protests erupted spontaneously in a few cities after the prolonged New Year's holiday break, but soon leaders of the Communist and Motherland parties helped organize more. They also forced a vote of no-confidence in Mr. Putin's government, which is led by Prime Minister Mikhail Y. Fradkov. The vote, on Wednesday, failed, but many pro-Putin lawmakers signaled their fear of a potential voter backlash by not voting. From the start, the benefits protest became a catalyst for other grievances, tapping into a growing discontent with Mr. Putin's policies, not only in the social sphere. In St. Petersburg, students joined in after the defense minister, Sergei B. Ivanov, suggested that the government was considering ending the draft deferment for those in college.

After first ignoring the protests, Mr. Putin criticized his appointees, as well as regional officials, who faced the brunt of the protests and the costs of trying to supplement the reduced benefits, which many did. In some cities, those accused of organizing the protests were arrested, though they were later released.

Mr. Putin's government and the majority party in Parliament, United Russia, tried to stem the discontent by raising spending by \$4 billion to ease the benefits blow. On Wednesday, the Parliament also voted to raise the minimum state pension by more than a third to nearly \$32 a month. Military and security service members -- who also lost their free transport -- received raises as well. And Mr. Ivanov dropped his proposal to end college deferments for the draft. The concessions appeared to ease the protests somewhat, but they also created new ones, like those in Beslan and in Sakhalin, where people vented their own grievances. In Moscow on Thursday, 150 civilian workers gathered outside the Defense Ministry to demand the same level of raises given to those in uniform.

The transit workers took to the streets outside the White House here the same day. Their grievances included not only gasoline prices, but paltry wages, import restrictions that force airlines to use old Russian airliners rather than buy new ones from the West, and the economic disparities that have created fortunes for a handful of politically connected tycoons while the country's majority remains poor.

"I hope there will be a result," said Valery Popov, a road worker who continues working at 67 because he cannot afford to live in Moscow on a pension. "When all the people start protesting, there will be a result. If we all stay at home, there will be none."

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/20/world/europe/bush-seeks-to-begin-a-thaw-in-a-europe-still-cool-to-him.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

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Bush Seeks to Begin a Thaw in a Europe Still Cool to Him

WASHINGTON, Feb. 19 - President Bush leaves for Brussels on Sunday for a four-day campaign to sell himself to Europe as a new man with open arms, but behind his embrace of the triumvirate that opposed him on Iraq -- President Jacques Chirac of France, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia -- lie serious tensions unlikely to be resolved on the trip.

Most significant are the White House rebuff of European requests that the United States take part in talks to persuade Iran to abandon what is thought to be a nuclear weapons program, and American opposition to Europe's plan to lift an embargo on arms sales to China.

Mr. Bush is also expected to raise with Mr. Putin his concerns about Russia's retreat from democracy and its plan to sell weapons to Syria.

European and American officials say that Mr. Bush's postelection visit to Belgium, Germany and Slovakia will not produce the usual communiqués, although they expect

some formal agreement, much of it already in effect, that all 26 countries in NATO will commit to the training of Iraqi security forces.

But over all, the goal is simply to change the ugly atmosphere after the trans-Atlantic quarrel over the American-led invasion of Iraq.

"You've got to start somewhere," said Tom C. Korologos, the American ambassador to Belgium. "It's got to be the beginning of a thaw. It's like a family that got a divorce. You have to kiss before you go to sleep."

Toward that end, much of Mr. Bush's trip will be marked by the kind of stagecraft that the White House is known for and does not leave to chance, like a dinner that Mr. Bush is giving for his old nemesis, Mr. Chirac, at the home of Ambassador Korologos in Brussels.

There is also a round-table discussion scheduled with pre-selected Germans and Americans in Mainz, a format adopted after administration officials decided that a "town hall" meeting with Mr. Bush and German citizens was too politically risky.

The proposed town-hall meeting raised the inevitable issue, said Wolfgang Ischinger, the German ambassador to Washington, of "Do you know what kinds of folks you are going to have at that meeting and what kinds of questions they might ask?" Mr. Ischinger said the Germans told the Americans that the guests could not be screened, as White House officials do at similar events in the United States, and so "don't be mad at us if some nasty question comes up."

White House officials are hopeful that the theater of the trip -- Mr. Bush is to give a major speech in the grand setting of the 19th-century Concert Noble, now a for-rent Brussels concert hall -- will overshadow the substantive differences and create a new tone. "Style can sometimes have a substance all its own," said Ivo H. Daalder, a foreign policy specialist at the Brookings Institution.

Mr. Bush began changing that tone in the first days after his re-election, when Condoleezza Rice, then his national security adviser and now his secretary of state, presented him with a lengthy memorandum telling him that improved relations with Europe had to be his foreign-policy priority in the second term.

Since then, Mr. Bush has made overtures to Europe in his Inaugural Address, his State of the Union address and this past Thursday in a news conference, when he meandered off in a more personal way than he had in the past.

"September the 11th was an interesting phenomenon in terms of our relations," Mr. Bush said when he was asked what he had to offer to Europe beyond warm words. "For some in Europe, it was just a passing terrible moment. And for us, it was a change of -- it caused us to change our foreign policy." Those differences, he said, "at times, frankly, caused us to talk past each other."

"And I recognize that, and I want to make sure the Europeans understand I know that, and that as we move beyond the differences of the past, that we can work together to achieve big objectives."

Mr. Bush will spend the bulk of his trip in Brussels, from Sunday night to Wednesday morning, and he will spend much of Tuesday in meetings at the headquarters of NATO and the European Union.

European officials acknowledged this past week that they were aware that Mr. Bush abhors such formal sessions and that they saw his visit as underscoring the

administration's commitment to European unity. The European Union now has 25 members and an economy that competes with the United States.

"Don't underestimate the importance of this as a gesture," said John Bruton, the European Union's representative in the United States.

In Slovakia, Mr. Bush will meet with Mr. Putin and raise what he has promised will be questions about Mr. Putin's recent crackdown on dissent. But Mr. Bush indicated that he would do so in private, and gently.

In recent months the Russian government has seized a unit of the oil company Yukos and arrested its executives, removed powers from state governors and taken steps to take over independent television.

"I have a good relationship with President Putin," Mr. Bush said in an interview with Slovak State Television at the White House on Friday. "And the reason -- and that's important, because that then will give me a chance to say in private -- ask him why he's been making some of the decisions he's been making."

Mr. Bush added: "I want him to be able to have a chance to say he's done it for this reason or done that, so I can explain to him as best I can, in a friendly way, of course, that Western values are, you know, are based upon transparency and rule of law, the right for the people to express themselves, checks and balances in government."

Mr. Bush also said in an interview with the Itar-Tass news agency on Friday that he would visit Moscow in May for the 60th anniversary of Russia's victory against the Germans in World War II.

Both European and American officials said that they expected little if any change in their differences on Iran, in particular over its nuclear program, and that the United States would remain doubtful of the European approach of offering economic and political incentives to try to get Iran to drop what is suspected to be a program to develop nuclear arms. The Europeans counter that the talks will fail without the participation of the United States.

Similarly, there is little chance for agreement on Europe's plans to lift an arms embargo it imposed on China in 1989 after the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

The Bush administration is concerned that lifting the embargo may help China modernize its military, but the Europeans say they would limit the transfer of certain high technology by adopting a "code of conduct" for exports.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/22/business/worldbusiness/kremlin-interference-seen-as-critical-factor-in.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND and JAD MOUAWAD

FEB. 22, 2005

Kremlin Interference Seen as Critical Factor in Decline of Russia's Oil Output

MOSCOW, Feb. 21 - Almost overnight, the Kremlin has become one of the world's most important energy players. But that has made foreign investors wary as the Russian government has tightened its grip on the oil and gas industry, contributing to a decline in oil production.

The country's oil production began to drop in October and has fallen slightly ever since. Crude oil output in January was 9.28 million barrels a day, down from 9.42 million barrels a day in September, Russian Energy Ministry data show.

Though that was partly due to an expected seasonal winter decline, the collapse of Russia's largest oil producer, Yukos, in response to the government's squeeze on the company also appears to have contributed to the fall. And the political trauma seems to be at the center of fears that Russia might not be able to meet demands for more energy output. "The breakup of Yukos has been the most disruptive event affecting Russian production," said Alex Brideau, a Russia analyst at the consulting firm Eurasia Group in New York. "Now, there's confusion and uncertainty as to what the Kremlin's end game will be."

Sergei Oganessian, the head of the Russian federal energy agency, said earlier this month that he expected Russia's oil production to rise to 9.74 million barrels a day this year, a 5.7 percent increase over last year. But most other forecasts are more conservative.

Oil and gas production has been a major driver of Russia's stunning economic recovery. And at a time when global production is extremely tight and demand remains strong, consuming nations can ill afford weakness from Russia, the world's No. 2 oil producer after Saudi Arabia.

"Russian production has played a very important role, particularly since 1998, and it's become critical" to world markets, said Adrian Lajous, chairman of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies in London and a senior fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Russia's exports "probably won't grow at the rates they were in recent years," he added.

Yukos, with its Western-style headquarters and relatively open management style, could not be more different from state-run Gazprom, a heavily guarded monolith outside Moscow, which recalls an old-style state ministry office.

While Yukos has been the loser in the Kremlin's bid to retake control of the energy industry, Gazprom is the winner. Moscow is pinning its hopes on Gazprom, the country's natural gas monopoly, becoming Russia's version of Exxon Mobil or Aramco. On Monday, Gazprom said its net profit rose 9 percent in the first nine months of 2004, to 137.9 billion rubles, or \$4.9 billion, on sales that rose 14 percent, to 683.3 billion rubles, or \$24.5 billion, compared with the same period a year earlier.

But Gazprom is a high-cost, relatively inefficient monolith, as shown by the 19 percent increase in its operating costs. Already, Gazprom has had to delay plans to lift limits on foreign shareholders, partly because of the legal tangle over the Yukos oil field it looks likely to acquire.

The company controls at least 20 percent of the world's natural gas reserves, but needs billions of dollars in foreign investment to pay for exploration and to develop a system to convert its gas into liquefied natural gas for transport to markets not reachable by pipeline. Foreign investment would also be needed if Gazprom goes ahead with a long-planned merger with Rosneft, the midsize Russian state oil company that bought the Yukos oil field, Yuganskneftegas.

But as the Kremlin's chosen energy juggernaut, Gazprom is juggling two very different obligations: one to shareholders -- growth of profits, investments and raising capital on the open market -- and the other to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

Only a year ago, Russia had a much larger pool of independent oil companies. Today, only three remain -- TNK-BP, a joint venture between a Russian business and BP; Lukoil, Russia's No.2 producer; and Sibneft, which is still caught up in a failed merger with Yukos.

Yulia Woodruff, a Russia analyst with Energy Security Analysis, a consulting firm in Wakefield, Mass., said that the major reshuffling of ownership and assets -- the biggest change since the industry's shady privatization deals of the early 1990's -- would have a negative impact on Russia's oil production.

When Mr. Putin was elected president in 2000, he tried to make big changes at Gazprom, installing Aleksei Miller, a trusted envoy, as chief executive. Mr. Miller pledged to end suspect financial practices and eventually to scrap the strict limits on foreign investment, allowing Western mutual funds and other conservative investors to pour billions of dollars into buying shares.

Mr. Putin keeps close tabs on Gazprom, according to Anders Aslund, a long-time Russia specialist who is a senior associate with the Carnegie Endowment in Washington. "Miller meets with Putin at least three times a week," he said. "Nobody outside of the Kremlin has such access to the president."

Until recently, the Kremlin appeared to be maneuvering Gazprom into position to control about 15 percent of Russia's oil output. But an 11th-hour bankruptcy filing by Yukos in a Texas court threw those plans into disarray. Rosneft ended up buying the Yugansk oil field. If Gazprom should merge with Rosneft or take possession of the oil field alone, that could jeopardize its future financing needs in the capital markets, investors say.

"Gazprom doesn't want to be contaminated with any legal problems," Mr. Williams said, that the buyer could face from Yukos's founder, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, who is now jailed, or his partners or Yukos shareholders.

Stuart Eisenstat, who served as a top economics official in the Carter and Clinton administrations and is now an adviser to the board of Menatep, the investment company for Mr. Khodorkovsky, agreed with that view. If and when the Yugansk field changes hands, he said, "the purchasers can expect a lifetime of lawsuits, including from American shareholders."

Fear of litigation in the West has forced a rare retreat by the Kremlin. Gazprom had been hoping to raise the government's share in the combined company to a 51 percent majority stake, up from 38 percent now. Then, by dropping an archaic two-share system, in which foreigners can only buy more expensive shares while Russians can buy cheaper local shares, foreigners would be allowed to own up to 25 percent.

Even if it does merge with Rosneft, and potentially assumes ownership of Yukos oil assets, Gazprom could amass an eye-popping \$14 billion in debt, compared with its \$60 billion market capitalization.

Although Gazprom has four major prospective projects -- major gas fields in Yamal, Shtokmann, Kovytko and Sakhalin -- each one could demand investments of \$25 billion, Mr. Aslund of Carnegie estimated. A handful of different pipeline projects could demand \$30 billion or more.

WASHINGTON

Source:

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By STEVEN R. WEISMAN

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BUSH IN EUROPE: DIPLOMACY; Bush May Feel Chilly Blast From Russians, Envoy Says

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22 - President Bush's determined effort to raise Russia's crackdown on independent businesses and internal dissent with President Vladimir V. Putin when they meet this week is likely to get a tart response, according to the Russian ambassador to the United States, Yuri Ushakov.

In written answers to questions submitted by The New York Times before Mr. Bush left for Europe on Sunday, Mr. Ushakov said Mr. Putin was likely to respond to Mr. Bush's criticism by raising "our own concerns about the situation in the United States and certain troubling aspects of Washington's policies."

He noted that "parts of public opinion in Russia are not necessarily supportive of some of America's actions in certain regions of the world" and that "there are others who are highly critical of your electoral system."

Mr. Ushakov did not offer specifics, but Bush administration officials suggested that he was referring to such matters as the detention of prisoners at Abu Ghraib in Iraq and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and the 2000 presidential election, in which the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Mr. Bush in a recount dispute, effectively securing his victory.

The ambassador's comments provided a glimpse into the difficulties of relations with Russia, which have been strained by recent actions in Moscow and also apparently by the administration's support for the pro-Western presidential candidate in Ukraine and its decision, signaled in Mr. Bush's inaugural address, to make democratic freedoms more of a centerpiece of American foreign policy.

Starting a little more than a year ago, the Bush administration began to publicly raise its concerns over Russia's internal practices, particularly the seizure of independent businesses and prosecution of business executives, and more recently over Mr. Putin's efforts to cement his control of the political process.

Two weeks ago, when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with the Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, in Ankara, Turkey -- a meeting held to plan the one this week in Slovakia between Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin -- a senior official briefing reporters that evening under ground rules of anonymity said she elevated domestic Russian concerns in importance in her talks. But he gave no details.

This week, after Ambassador Ushakov's written responses were received, another senior administration official said he was "familiar with the whole Russian whine list" of complaints often directed at the United States' domestic policies.

But even after the Rice-Lavrov session, and talks among officials afterward to prepare for the meeting, two top American officials said they could not be certain what Mr. Putin would raise with Mr. Bush. What Mr. Ushakov's comments seemed to show was a Russian determination to acknowledge some difficulties in trying to combat terrorism but to view any effort by Mr. Bush to discuss Russian domestic matters with firm rebuttals, explanations and counterarguments rather than promises to change anything.

"Russia is open to legitimate criticism," Mr. Ushakov said. "We are aware of our shortcomings on the domestic front and the challenges we still face in overcoming the multitude of complex problems we inherited from the recent and not so recent past."

He cited the "terrible tragedy in Beslan," referring to the school hostage siege that led to more than 300 deaths, half of them school children, last September, saying that afterward "it became increasingly obvious that some of our rules of governance need to be adjusted to ensure more security to our people and integrity of the country."

Mr. Ushakov said that Russia also had "to take substantial steps against some unlawful business practices hurting our economy" and that, contrary to American criticism, "all this by no means constitutes a backslide from our commitment to market economy, democracy, civil society and the rule of law."

Finally, the ambassador said, "each country has a unique set of circumstances, different historical and cultural backgrounds" and that "what's good for one country might not work elsewhere."

In Brussels for meetings with European leaders, Mr. Bush said Tuesday that he thought it "very important that President Putin hear not only from me in a private way, which he will, but also hear some of the concerns I heard around the table today."

The Bush administration has been upset in particular by the seizure of the oil giant Yukos, the prosecution of its executives and other actions that seem to suggest a new intolerance of independent business power in Russia. In addition, the United States has objected to Mr. Putin's move to end the popular election of regional governors and to make parliamentary voting based on party slates rather than individuals.

Senators John McCain, a Republican from Arizona, and Joseph I. Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat, have called on the United States to remove Russia from the so-called Group of 8, the leading industrial countries, on the basis of its domestic political record.

Bush administration officials have rejected such a step, however.

OPINION

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/24/opinion/to-russia-with-tough-love.html>

By STROBE TALBOTT

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To Russia, With Tough Love

Correction Appended

St. Petersburg, Russia - GIVEN the diplomatic challenges facing President Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, it's good that they are meeting today in Bratislava, Slovakia. In doing so, they are keeping alive a useful and time-honored practice. After all, the principal occupants of the White House and Kremlin have been sitting down together since the chilliest days of the cold war. But the way things are going in Russia, it may be harder to justify Mr. Bush's next encounter with Mr. Putin at the annual summit meeting of the Group of 8 major industrialized countries at the Gleneagles resort in Perthshire, Scotland, in July.

Members of the group (Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan as well as Russia and the United States) are supposed to share a commitment to multiparty democracy, rule of law, freedom of the press, protection of human and civil rights, and respect for the sovereignty of their neighbors. Mr. Putin's concentration of power, his crackdown on the independent news media, his scorched-earth policy in Chechnya, and his bullying of Georgia and Ukraine have jeopardized Russia's membership in that club.

If some influential Democrats and Republicans in Congress have their way, Russia may well be booted out. Alarmed by Mr. Putin's tendencies, they have threatened Russia with suspension or outright expulsion from the group. But an effort along these lines instigated by the United States would not only backfire, it would be a waste of an opportunity to nudge Russia in the right direction.

It's not that criticism of Mr. Putin is misplaced. Shortly after Mr. Bush's re-election, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain privately warned him of a looming problem with "our friend Vladimir." Mr. Bush agreed. Although the president had previously coddled Mr. Putin, who supported the war on terrorism and avoided causing difficulties for the United States and Britain in Iraq, he has begun, ever so gently, to raise questions in public about developments in Russia.

Mr. Putin inherited his seat at the Group of 8 table from his predecessors Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. Fourteen years ago, the then-Group of 7 invited Mr. Gorbachev to be a guest as a reward for loosening the iron grip of Soviet power.

In the 1990's, after the Soviet Union had collapsed and Mr. Gorbachev had been voted out of office, Mr. Yeltsin claimed that as the democratically elected president of post-Soviet Russia, he was entitled to full membership. In 1998, he got his way. The Group of 7 leaders hoped that by treating Mr. Yeltsin as a peer rather than as an applicant on probation, they would provide an incentive for him and his successors to keep Russia on a reformist course.

While Mr. Putin has cast that strategy into doubt, a move by the United States to evict him from the Group of 8 would only play into the hands of nationalist forces in Russia who believe in their country's uniquely "Eurasian" destiny, which implies an authoritarian domestic order and a foreign policy that combines intimidation of other former Soviet republics and xenophobia toward the world at large. A signal that the West is giving up on Russia would also discourage democrats, who are down but not out.

A better approach would be to take advantage of the summit meetings' calendar. The group is due to gather in St. Petersburg in the summer of 2006. Mr. Putin's desire for an upbeat meeting gives the other seven some leverage. If they close ranks behind Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair and acknowledge that the Group of 8 has a Putin problem, they can use the next 16 months for a campaign of quiet calibrated diplomacy, including under Mr. Blair's leadership at Gleneagles, to confront their colleague with a choice: If Mr. Putin allows adverse trends in Russia to continue, his guests in St. Petersburg will go public with their disappointment. Faced with that prospect, Mr. Putin might be induced to reaffirm principles of good governance that all eight have agreed to at previous summit meetings and other forums but that Russia has ignored, violated or only partly carried out.

In addition to standing at the center of an all-smiles group photograph and signing a happy-talk communiqué, Mr. Putin would be taken more seriously if he agreed to definitions of what the obligations mean as well as timetables and monitoring mechanisms. If the outcome of St. Petersburg is cast in terms of delivering on existing commitments, he cannot legitimately complain that Russia is being subjected to new demands or discriminatory conditions. While Mr. Putin is a harder case than his two predecessors, experience with them showed that behavior modification worked better if they were welcomed to the clubhouse with clear conditions rather than taken to the woodshed.

If Mr. Putin goes along, he will get -- and deserve -- the summit meeting success he craves. More important, the event will spur Russia's evolution as an open society, fully integrated into the international community, and uphold the value and credibility of the Group of 8 in the bargain.

Op-Ed Contributor Strobe Talbott, president of the Brookings Institution and author of "The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy," was deputy secretary of state in the Clinton administration.

Correction: February 26, 2005, Saturday An Op-Ed article on Thursday about Russia and the Group of 8 misstated the circumstances under which Mikhail S. Gorbachev left office as president of the Soviet Union. He resigned in 1991; he was not defeated in an election.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/25/world/europe/bush-and-putin-exhibit-tension-over-democracy.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER and DAVID E. SANGER

FEB 25, 2005

Bush and Putin Exhibit Tension Over Democracy

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia, Feb. 24 - President Bush expressed concern on Thursday night about Russia's commitment to democracy in a sometimes tense and awkward encounter with President Vladimir V. Putin. Mr. Putin, at times visibly uncomfortable, refused to yield.

"Democracies have certain things in common -- a rule of law and protection of minorities and a free press and a viable political opposition," Mr. Bush said after a private meeting that lasted more than an hour, chiding Mr. Putin gently though more directly than ever before. "I was able to share my concerns about Russia's commitment in fulfilling these universal principles."

Mr. Putin tartly responded that he would listen to some of Mr. Bush's ideas but not comment on others and said that debating "whether we have more or less democracy is not the right thing to do."

The Russian president also said that the American Electoral College was in essence a "secret ballot" and pointedly noted, "It is not considered undemocratic, is it?"

The joint news conference after their summit meeting at the medieval Bratislava Castle overlooking the Danube was designed to portray unity on a day when the two sides announced an agreement that could reduce the potential threat of nuclear terrorism by speeding up the much-delayed securing and dismantling of some of Russia's nuclear materials.

But it also offered unusual moments of heat as Mr. Bush continued to press a campaign for democracy and liberty that has received mixed reviews during his four-day European tour. It appeared to have struck one of its more discordant notes with Mr. Putin. The exchanges stood in contrast to the reception for Mr. Bush earlier during his speech to thousands of enthusiastic Slovaks in Bratislava's main Hviezdoslavovo Square, where Mr. Bush appeared to caution Mr. Putin not to meddle, as he did recently in Ukraine, with the democratic advances in a region that Russia considers its sphere of influence.

Beyond the nuclear agreement, the day produced no breakthroughs. Mr. Bush said he and Mr. Putin agreed that Iran and North Korea should not have nuclear weapons. But the two sides remained divided over Iran and Syria. A senior administration official said that Russian plans to sell Syria missiles were "destabilizing" at this point. "We made that point clear," he said.

On Russia's continued sale of equipment to Iran for its nuclear program, there also appeared to be little progress, though a senior administration official said the president was "satisfied" that Mr. Putin had reiterated his pledge not to sell nuclear fuel to Iran without an agreement that the spent fuel would be returned to Russia.

That has been important to the United States because spent fuel can be converted to weapons-grade plutonium. This month, Mr. Putin talked with Iran about expanding their nuclear relationship, a subject the official said did not come up in Thursday's conversation.

Apparently in an effort to display fuller progress, the United States and Russia jointly announced a handful of modest agreements, including an effort to limit the spread of shoulder-fired missiles and some other deals already committed to on trade and energy.

A senior administration official who took part in the nuclear talks said that the goal of the accord was to "accelerate the process" of securing Russian stockpiles. Under the agreement, the official said, most of the excess weapons fuel in Russia would be secured or converted to commercial fuel by about 2008, four years earlier than expected at the current pace of work under a plan that has been in place since after the cold war.

The slowness of the multibillion-dollar program became a heated topic in the presidential campaign, when Senator John Kerry, the Democratic nominee, accused Mr. Bush of moving far too slowly in addressing what may be the biggest single proliferation risk in the world. Administration officials rushed to reach an agreement that would jump-start the efforts, and to show that Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin could cooperate, even as they disagreed on democratization issues.

"It was an important statement," said Matthew Bunn, a Harvard nuclear specialist who worked with Mr. Kerry's campaign last year, "because they put both presidents' names on a document that said this has to be taken seriously. And that is important because Russian security officials have been acting as if protecting a few more secrets from the U.S. is more important than protecting nuclear materials from falling into the hands of Osama bin Laden."

The two also agreed to form new emergency-response procedures if nuclear material was missing or a "dirty bomb" or a nuclear weapon fell into the wrong hands. But they failed to agree on who would be liable for accidents that might occur in the dangerous process of removing, converting and transporting weapons fuel and might not agree on that area until the two men meet in Moscow in May, officials said.

Mr. Bush said that he and Mr. Putin had had a "frank" exchange in their one-on-one meeting, with interpreters the only other people in the room.

He did not say what he meant by "frank," but a senior administration official who briefed reporters on Mr. Bush's meeting with President Jacques Chirac of France earlier in the week said he did not want to describe that session as "frank" because "it usually means a euphemism for bad."

The news conference had been built up during the president's four-day trip across Europe as a face-off between Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin over the course of democracy in Russia, where in recent months Mr. Putin has taken steps to tighten state control over the economy and stifle dissent.

Mr. Putin declared that Russia was committed to "the fundamental principles of democracy." But he archly said that democracy "should not be accompanied by the collapse of the state and the impoverishment of the people."

Mr. Bush said that Russia had undergone an "amazing transformation" in the last 15 years. But he said he had expressed his concerns to Mr. Putin about Russia's democratic health "in a constructive and friendly way."

Some moments later, Mr. Putin responded to Mr. Bush: "I believe that some of his ideas could be taken into account in my work, and I will pay due attention to them, that's for sure. Some other ideas, I will not comment on."

In one of the few moments of humor in the news conference, Mr. Bush started to chuckle, and Mr. Putin winked back.

At moments, Mr. Bush displayed the characteristic jolliness he uses when he is trying to win someone over, and Mr. Putin just as characteristically stood ramrod straight with a grim expression.

The two became the most animated when a Russian journalist asked Mr. Bush why he did not talk about restrictions to press freedom in his own country and "about the fact that some journalists have been fired?"

Mr. Bush responded that "I don't know what journalists you're referring to," and then turned to the White House press corps and said, "Any of you all still have your jobs?"

Mr. Putin, jumping to answer the question, said, "I'm not the minister of propaganda."

Both men also shot back at another Russian reporter who said in his question that "the regimes" in place in Russia and the United States could not be considered fully democratic, especially when compared with the Netherlands.

Mr. Putin responded that "you have cited a curious example -- the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a monarchy, after all."

Mr. Bush responded that "I live in a transparent country" where "decisions made by government are wide open, and people are able to call people -- me -- to account, which many here do on a regular basis."

In one of the easier areas of common interest, the two sides agreed to a deal to limit the spread of the shoulder-fired missiles called Man-Portable Air Defense Systems, or Manpads. Such missiles can be fired by one person, are favored by terrorists and pose a threat to military and commercial aircraft.

The State Department estimates that one million have been produced worldwide, but that a much smaller number, somewhere in the thousands, are in the hands of what the State Department calls "non-state actors."

In his speech to Slovaks, Mr. Bush compared events in Iraq to the overthrow of Communism in the Velvet Revolution in 1989 in Czechoslovakia, which Slovakia broke from in 1993. "And as you watched jubilant Iraqis dancing in the streets last month, holding up ink-stained fingers, you remembered Velvet Days," Mr. Bush said. "For the Iraqi people, this is their 1989, and they will always remember who stood with them in their quest for freedom." Mr. Bush also recalled the 2003 bloodless revolution in Georgia in which the rose was the symbol, and the recent democratic upheaval in Ukraine, where

orange was the color of Viktor A. Yushchenko, the opposition leader who was inaugurated president in January.

He then added a colored revolution of his own, referring to the purple ink-stained fingers that Iraqis held up to show they had voted in the Jan. 30 elections. "In recent times, we have witnessed landmark events in the history of liberty, a Rose Revolution in Georgia, an Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and now, a Purple Revolution in Iraq," Mr. Bush said.

His seeming warning to Mr. Putin came with a statement that this democratic progress was not complete, but inevitable, even in those states that Russia has kept close at its side.

"The democratic revolutions that swept this region over 15 years ago are now reaching Georgia and Ukraine," Mr. Bush said. "In 10 days, Moldova has the opportunity to place its democratic credentials beyond doubt as its people head to the polls. And inevitably, the people of Belarus will someday proudly belong to the country of democracies."

March

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/02/world/europe/investors-of-the-world-heres-the-word-on-putin-inc.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

MARCH 2, 2005

Investors of the World, Here's the Word on Putin Inc.

Correction Appended

MOSCOW, March 1 - In recent weeks, President Vladimir V. Putin's politics have generated most of the worry in the West. He has been cutting welfare benefits for veterans and pensioners, clamping down on free media and meddling in the Ukrainian election. Even President Bush, who badly needs the Kremlin's cooperation in combating terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons and narcotics trafficking, gently chided Mr. Putin about maintaining democratic standards when the two met in Bratislava last week.

But the president's concerns about democratic principles may miss the larger point. The real threat to Russia's future could lie in the economy. For now, its gross domestic product is booming, it boasts a budget surplus and a windfall from record high oil prices. But it is pursuing a model of corrupt, state-managed capitalism, economists and political analysts say, that is inimical to democracy and could condemn its economy to perpetual third world status.

Many here believe the turning point was reached last December, when Russia renationalized one of its largest private oil fields in a deal that Andrei Illarionov, an outspoken Kremlin aide, acidly called "the swindle of the year."

The transaction was an offshoot of the Yukos affair, the Russian government's campaign to dismember what was once Russia's largest private oil company and jail its billionaire founder, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky. Having staggered the company with a questionable \$28 billion tax bill, the Kremlin seized the oil fields and auctioned them for about half their worth.

The winner, a state-owned business named Rosneft, overnight joined the ranks of Russia's top oil companies.

Big oil fields changing hands at a cut-rate price recalls the rigged privatizations of Russia's robber baron era in the 1990's. But instead, it was the Kremlin cutting this deal, a parallel that for some here crystallized thinking on Mr. Putin's course for the country.

"Today, by our own decisions, we have done what is now, regrettably, clear to the outside world -- we opted for the third world," Mr. Illarionov said after the auction. "We used to see street hustlers do this kind of thing," snapped Mr. Illarionov, who until recently was among Mr. Putin's most fervent supporters. "Now officials are doing it."

A few days later, he was relieved of his duties as Russia's Group of 8 representative; he still has an office in the Kremlin.

Exactly what Mr. Illarionov meant by third world is unclear. He would seem to be pointing to the developing world of the 1960's and 70's, with state-directed investment and rampant cronyism, rather than the more free market approach that became popular in the 1980's and 90's.

But the point was made. Instead of embracing free-market capitalism, Russia has veered away: renationalizing oil assets, weakening property rights and signaling to foreign investors that their millions -- and their presence -- are not entirely welcome.

"Illarionov was being colorful," said John Litwack, head of the Moscow office of the World Bank. "But if that is the new model -- to destroy assets, expropriate the company and put the industrialist in jail -- and if it's repeated, that's different than just renationalization. That's an environment more like the third world."

Even a former prime minister, Mikhail Kasyanov, who was dumped by Mr. Putin in 2003 and has talked about challenging him in 2008, told the Interfax news agency last week that the country "has taken the wrong turn, which harms the country's economic and social development."

Economists say it is uncertainty that is most damaging. Building blocks of a free market system -- the courts, the tax agencies and law enforcement -- have been corrupted during Mr. Putin's second term and by the Yukos case in particular, undermining investor confidence.

Russia's tax authorities, used by the Kremlin to undermine Yukos, have gone on a rampage. Vimpelcom, the country's No.3 cellphone company, was served with a tax bill of \$158 million late last year, linked by some Russian media reports to a vendetta by the telecommunications minister (who reportedly has investments in a competing company). Vimpelcom whittled that bill down to \$17 million, but only after the intervention of the Norwegian government, whose state phone company Telenor is an investor.

After a privately run airport here, Domodedovo, showed remarkable profit growth in a recent regulatory filing, its long-term lease was canceled by the government, which then asked to renegotiate at more favorable terms.

Russia's business community now seems to worry that the government will muscle in on any profits, a tactic labeled "tax terrorism," by Yevgeny Yasin, former minister of economics under Boris Yeltsin, and currently the director of Russia's Higher School of Economics.

So if not Western-style, free-market capitalism, exactly what economic model is Russia embracing?

Pre-Yukos, some analysts said, Mr. Putin seemed to be following the path of Chile, Singapore and China -- a strong central government, a credible partnership with the business elite, a pruning of the influence of state-sponsored monopolies and crony capitalism.

Post-Yukos, Russia's path is unknown. Some believe it may end up mimicking 20th-century Mexico, where the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, used its control of the national oil and gas company, Pemex, to maintain power for decades. "Pemex could be the model for Gazprom and Mr. Putin's party, United Russia," said Michael J. Economides, a professor of chemical engineering at the University of Houston and co-author of "The Color of Oil."

Still others say that Russia is finding its own way. "Russia's model is not Asian, not European and not Latin American," said Alasdair Breach, chief strategist at Brunswick UBS investment bank. "It doesn't quite fit any of those categories. Hunting for a model is useful, but to find a direct comparison is impossible."

In any case, the Kremlin is re-evaluating the welcome sign once hung out for foreign investors, partly by taking control of some of the commanding heights.

"Given that the Kremlin has succeeded in concentrating power, the worry is they're enjoying it for its own sake," said Mr. Litwack of the World Bank. "There's no proof you have to be an open democracy or free market to attract investment. But you have to create conditions for investors."

And, many here believe, for democracy.

LETTER FROM EUROPE Correction: March 4, 2005, Friday The Letter From Europe article on Wednesday, about economic threats to Russia's future, misstated the title of John Litwack, an official at the World Bank's Moscow office who commented on the demotion of an outspoken Kremlin aide. Mr. Litwack is the office's chief economist, not its head.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/09/world/europe/russians-kill-chechen-separatist-leader-in-his-hideout.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MARCH 9, 2005

Russians Kill Chechen Separatist Leader in His Hide-Out

MOSCOW, March 8 - Russian special forces killed the leader of Chechnya's separatists, Aslan Maskhadov, on Tuesday in a raid that gave the Kremlin a rare victory in a bloody war that has killed tens of thousands and spawned a wave of terrorist attacks across Russia in recent years.

Mr. Maskhadov, who from hiding led thousands of fighters after Russia's second invasion of Chechnya in 1999, died in a bunker beneath a house in an outwardly peaceful village, Tolstoy-Yurt, only 12 miles from the region's capital, Grozny, according to officials and news accounts.

His death is akin to the capture of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, depriving insurgents of their political and symbolic leader, though with still uncertain effects on those determined to resist Russian forces in Chechnya, including with acts of terror.

Although Mr. Maskhadov, who was 53, nominally commanded Chechnya's fighters, he appeared to have lost influence over Russia's most wanted man, Shamil Basayev, the rebel commander who has claimed responsibility for the worst terrorist attacks, including the siege of a theater in Moscow in 2002 that killed 129 and a school in Beslan last September that killed at least 339, half of them schoolchildren.

President Vladimir V. Putin appeared on television with the director of the Federal Security Service, Nikolai P. Patrushev, who told him that his forces had killed Mr. Maskhadov and arrested four associates. In brief, unemotional remarks, Mr. Putin simply asked Mr. Patrushev to confirm the identification of Mr. Maskhadov's body and to submit a list of those involved in the raid for medals.

"There is still a lot of work to do there," the president said, referring to Chechnya. "We have to build up our forces to protect the people of the republic and citizens of all Russia from the bandits."

Mr. Maskhadov's imminent capture or death has been reported before, but officials showed little doubt that it was Mr. Maskhadov who had died in the raid. NTV showed graphic images of a body that resembled him. The body lay in a pool of blood, bare-chested, arms outstretched. There was what appeared to be a bullet hole beneath his left eye.

One of Mr. Maskhadov's most prominent aides, Akhmed Zakayev, said sources inside Chechnya had confirmed his death. "It is just one more political assassination," Mr. Zakayev said in a telephone interview from London, where he has received political asylum.

He cited the deaths of Chechnya's first post-Soviet president, Dzhokhar Dudayev, who was killed by Russian forces during the first war in 1996, and his successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who died in a car bombing in February 2004 while in exile in the Persian Gulf emirate of Qatar. A court there convicted two Russian secret agents and sentenced them to life in prison, though the men were later released to the Russian authorities.

"The ordinary people of Chechnya are being killed every day because they disagree with the federal authorities," Mr. Zakayev said, "as are the people they have elected."

Mr. Zakayev said the separatist movement's leaders -- now in exile or in hiding -- would follow the region's former constitution and elect an interim leader, as they did after Mr. Dudayev's death.

Dmitri V. Trenin, deputy director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, said Mr. Maskhadov's death might not change events on the ground significantly, given that his leadership had become increasingly symbolic and that Mr. Basayev remained at large. But he called it a "political victory and a moral victory" for the Kremlin.

"I think it's significant for Mr. Putin, first of all," Mr. Trenin said. "He can produce evidence that the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya is yielding results. He needed that, especially after Beslan."

The Russians considered Mr. Maskhadov a terrorist, not a rebel leader, and accused him of masterminding many of the attacks that have struck from the Caucasus in southern Russia to the heart of Moscow itself in recent years, killing hundreds of civilians in a theater, at a rock concert, on the subway and aboard trains and passenger airliners.

After the siege of Middle School No. 1 in Beslan, a small city in North Ossetia, the authorities offered a reward of \$10 million for information leading to his arrest or Mr. Basayev's. It was not immediately clear whether the reward would be paid now that he had been found and killed.

Mr. Maskhadov denied involvement in the worst of the attacks in messages he communicated through his envoys in Europe and the United States or through the Internet.

He denounced the siege in Beslan and vowed in statements to prosecute Mr. Basayev. Earlier this year he was reported to have offered a month-long cease-fire, which ended on Feb. 23. Attacks in Chechnya did seem to slow, but Russian officials denounced the gesture as a stunt, refusing as before to hold any negotiations with him or other separatist leaders.

Officials provided few details on the raid, which was not surprising since it involved officers of the F.S.B., the successor to the K.G.B., who even afterward were shown on television still wearing black masks.

Maj. Gen. Ilya Shabalkin, who announced the death, said in a telephone interview that Mr. Maskhadov had been hiding in a bunker beneath a house in Tolstoy-Yurt, while his four associates were outside.

The general suggested that the agents had intended to arrest Mr. Maskhadov but that he had resisted. "He was hiding in the bunker," he said. "So the bunker had to be blown up. Apparently he was shellshocked but tried to shoot back."

He said no Russian forces had been hurt.

Mr. Maskhadov was born on Sept. 21, 1951, in Kazakhstan, where Stalin had ordered the deportation of most of the Chechen population during World War II, an act that carries heavy symbolism among all Chechens to this day. He served most of his life in the Soviet Army, rising to the rank of colonel and serving in Communist Hungary, and later in Lithuania as the Soviet Union began to fall apart.

After Chechnya, a small, mountainous Muslim region on Russia's southern border, declared its independence in 1991, he resigned his commission and became commander of the armed forces of a country that was unrecognized. He remained military leader during the first Chechen war, from 1994 to 1996, when he commanded a daring assault to retake Grozny from Russian troops.

President Boris N. Yeltsin then negotiated an end to the war, leaving Chechnya with de facto independence. In January 1997, Mr. Maskhadov was elected president, defeating the man whose name is still linked to his, Mr. Basayev. By 1999, with the region roiled by lawlessness, Mr. Basayev mounted an attack on neighboring Dagestan, and Russian forces poured in again, driving the rebellious leaders from Grozny and eventually from most of Chechnya.

It is a measure of how deeply troubled and chaotic the region is that despite the presence of tens of thousands of Russian and pro-Moscow Chechen forces, Mr. Maskhadov was able to hide -- for how long is not clear -- in a village in the center of Chechnya itself.

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/10/world/europe/rebels-death-stirs-debate-on-strategy-for-chechnya.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

MARCH 10, 2005

Rebel's Death Stirs Debate on Strategy for Chechnya

MOSCOW, March 9 - The killing of Aslan Maskhadov, the Chechen rebel leader and president of the republic's underground separatist government, set off a debate in Russia on Wednesday as to whether the death was a step forward or back.

On the surface, the killing was a rare public success in Russia's Chechnya policy, in which capturing or killing prominent rebel leaders and terrorists has been a highly publicized goal. Politicians loyal to the Kremlin hailed it as a demoralizing loss to the separatists that would give Russia's security forces fresh momentum in the war.

"The elimination of a terrorist of international standing only means that there will be much less evil now," said Boris Gryzlov, the speaker of the Duma, Russia's lower house of Parliament, in remarks broadcast on national television.

Human rights organizations, however, said Mr. Maskhadov's death meant the loss of both a willing negotiator and a moderating influence over the separatists, many of whom have turned to terrorism in recent years. Greater violence, they said, may now be in store.

"Maskhadov wanted peace, and he wanted to do something about it," said Valentina D. Melnikova, head of the Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers, an antiwar group that counsels Russian soldiers and veterans. "Now that he is dead the door is open for the Islamic radical leaders and movements."

The separatists themselves spoke in similar terms, announcing a three-day period of mourning but saying negotiations were now out of the question and calling for a jihad to avenge Mr. Maskhadov's death. They ordered the rebel units to continue their previously planned attacks in the spring and summer.

"The invaders and puppets claim to be celebrating victory," said one of several postings on Web sites the rebels often use. "A new period in the history of the Russian-Chechen military confrontation has started."

The divergent predictions of the effects of Mr. Maskhadov's death reflected the longstanding split between the Kremlin and critics of the Chechen war.

Russia's government describes the second war in Chechnya, which began in 1999, as a necessary part of multinational efforts against terrorist groups, and often contends that the Muslim separatists are an offshoot of Al Qaeda's international jihad.

Outside the Kremlin's circle of influence the war has been broadly condemned for the corruption and brutality of Russian forces and the Chechen proxies they support.

Mr. Maskhadov, 53, who in 1997 was legitimately elected president of the so-called Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, the name that separatists have given the tiny republic in the Caucasus, was one of the two most prominent rebel leaders.

The other, Shamil Basayev, heads an Islamic terrorist group and has claimed responsibility for the worst acts of terrorism in post-Soviet Russia, including the seizure in 2002 of a Moscow theater, the downing of two passenger jets and the seizure of a public school in Beslan last fall.

Mr. Basayev's group also deploys suicide bombers, including women, not only in the Caucasus but in Moscow. In recent years Mr. Basayev had become the Kremlin's more visible and vicious foe.

But Mr. Maskhadov presented his Russian adversaries with a political challenge.

A former Red Army colonel, he sometimes spoke against terrorism and made frequent overtures to the Kremlin to negotiate a political settlement to the war. He also quarreled with Mr. Basayev and said he would prosecute him.

Moreover, he maintained a network of supporters in the West, which gave him a mark of legitimacy that none of the other rebel commanders or terrorists could match. Last month, his government in exile convened a meeting in London with the Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers to discuss a possible peace settlement. The meeting attracted the attention of European diplomats, some of whom attended.

Mr. Maskhadov was trapped by Russian commandos on Tuesday in a bunker beneath a house in a Chechen village. Officials said Wednesday that after a standoff he was killed by a grenade. That represented a shift from previous accounts, in which they said he had resisted arrest and was killed after opening fire on Russian commandos.

Because there is no clear alternative to Mr. Maskhadov, his loss, critics of the war said, could lead to a dangerous reorganization of the Chechen fighters.

"There are a lot of moderates in the separatist movement who have no leader," said Tanya Lokshina, a program director at the Moscow Helsinki Group who frequently travels to Chechnya. "Now they have a choice: either to quit or to join with Basayev. And I think most will join Basayev."

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/11/world/europe/chechen-rebels-name-religious-figure-to-replace-slain-leader.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

MARCH 11, 2005

Chechen Rebels Name Religious Figure to Replace Slain Leader

MOSCOW, March 10 - The underground separatist movement in Chechnya said on Thursday that it had appointed a little-known fighter and religious judge as successor to Aslan Maskhadov, the rebel leader who was killed earlier this week.

In other developments on Thursday in the protracted Chechen war, a Russian military helicopter crashed under unclear circumstances near a Chechen village, killing 12 soldiers, and Mr. Maskhadov's relatives and the Russian-backed government engaged in a dispute over what to do with Mr. Maskhadov's body.

But it was the announcement that Abdul Khalim Saidullayev would succeed Mr. Maskhadov that dominated the news, drawing perplexed and sneering reactions from Russian officials and the Kremlin-installed government in Chechnya.

Mr. Saidullayev, an Islamic judge who was said to have once been the host of a religious television program in Grozny, the Chechen capital, had been unknown as a rebel.

Some officials said the appointment indicated that the separatists were short of leaders, or at least of leaders considered palatable enough to show in public. Others said that Mr. Saidullayev would be only a figurehead, and that control of rebels was moving to Shamil Basayev, the architect of the worst terrorist acts in post-Soviet Russia, including the seizure of a school in Beslan.

"Saidullayev will be a tool in the hands of Basayev," said Taus Dzhabrailov, chairman of the Chechen State Council, in an appearance on the NTV television station.

Mr. Saidullayev, believed to be a native Chechen, 35 to 38 years old, released no public statements.

His appointment was announced on two Web sites used by Chechen militants, which said that Mr. Maskhadov had decreed in 2002 that if ever he was captured or killed, Mr. Saidullayev should assume his post.

Mr. Basayev publicly committed himself to Mr. Saidullayev, saying on a Web posting that he swore "to obey him for the glory of God."

His appointment apparently came at a secret meeting of separatist leaders in the Chechen town of Urus-Martan at which Mr. Basayev was said to have turned down the post.

Aslan Doukaev, director of the North Caucasus service of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, said that Mr. Saidullayev had been based in Argun with perhaps a few dozen fighters and was regarded more as a religious figure than a fighter. His wife was reportedly killed recently at a military checkpoint.

The dispute over the disposal of Mr. Maskhadov's body arose after Russian officials said that because he was classified as a terrorist Mr. Maskhadov would be buried in a secret grave outside Chechnya.

But in an open letter released to the news media, Mr. Maskhadov's widow, son and daughter appealed to democratic nations to bring pressure on President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia to release the rebel leader's remains to the family for burial.

Also on Thursday, according to Interfax, a Russian military helicopter crashed in the Urus-Martan district, killing 12 soldiers. One official was quoted as saying the aircraft had struck power lines, but another said it was too early to know the exact cause of the crash.

OPINION

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/16/opinion/the-wrong-chechen.html>

MARCH 16, 2005

The Wrong Chechen

It was no surprise that Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, declared the recent killing of Aslan Maskhadov, who was elected president of Chechnya in 1997 and spent the past several years in hiding, as a major victory in the Chechen war. Russia has badly needed a success since the massacre at the Beslan schoolhouse last September, and the Foreign Ministry was indignant that the outside world did not entirely accept the "liquidation" of an "international terrorist" at face value. The fact is, the Russians killed the one Chechen leader with whom they might have begun a political process. If Mr. Putin really wants to end the war, he needs to find someone better to deal with than the man the Kremlin seems to prefer, Ramzan Kadyrov, the brutal son of the assassinated Russian stooge in Chechnya.

It is true that when Russians pulled out and left Mr. Maskhadov to run Chechnya from 1997 to 1999, he proved largely ineffective, especially at reining in Shamil Basayev, who really is the international terrorist responsible for the slaughter of schoolchildren in Beslan. It's dubious that any negotiations can bring Mr. Basayev under control; he must be hunted down. It's also true that much has to be done to make Chechnya capable of any real self-rule. This is in great part the result of the incredible damage and carnage

done by Russia in its crude attempts to crush Chechen resistance, a campaign that has made it that much harder for the Chechens to develop any useful civic institutions or traditions. The strongest forces in the republic are criminals or extremists.

Chechnya needs time, peace and help to develop those institutions, and effective leaders. Now that Mr. Maskhadov is dead, Mr. Putin must understand that it is in his interest to start that process. Holding open and honest parliamentary elections, with results certified and endorsed by independent observers, would be a good start.

FRONT PAGE

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/18/politics/george-f-kennan-dies-at-101-leading-strategist-of-cold-war.html>

By TIM WEINER and BARBARA CROSSETTE

MARCH 18, 2005

George F. Kennan Dies at 101; Leading Strategist of Cold War

George F. Kennan, the American diplomat who did more than any other envoy of his generation to shape United States policy during the cold war, died on Thursday night in Princeton, N.J. He was 101.

Mr. Kennan was the man to whom the White House and the Pentagon turned when they sought to understand the Soviet Union after World War II. He conceived the cold-war policy of containment, the idea that the United States should stop the global spread of Communism by diplomacy, politics, and covert action -- by any means short of war.

As the State Department's first policy planning chief in the late 1940's, serving Secretary of State George C. Marshall, Mr. Kennan was an intellectual architect of the Marshall Plan, which sent billions of dollars of American aid to nations devastated by World War II. At the same time, he conceived a secret "political warfare" unit that aimed to roll back Communism, not merely contain it. His brainchild became the covert-operations directorate of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Though Mr. Kennan left the foreign service more than half a century ago, he continued to be a leading thinker in international affairs until his death. Since the 1950's he had been associated with the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, where he was most recently a professor emeritus.

By the end of his long, productive life, Mr. Kennan had become a phenomenon in international affairs, with seminars held and books written to debate and analyze his extraordinary influence on American policy during the cold war. He was the author of 17 books, two of them Pulitzer Prize-winners, and countless articles in leading journals.

His writing, from classified cables to memoirs, was the force that made him "the nearest thing to a legend that this country's diplomatic service has ever produced," in the words of the historian Ronald Steel.

"He'll be remembered as a diplomatist and a grand strategist," said John Lewis Gaddis, a leading historian of the cold war, who is preparing a biography of Mr. Kennan. "But he saw himself as a literary figure. He would have loved to have been a poet, a novelist."

Morton H. Halperin, who was chief of policy planning during the Clinton administration, said Mr. Kennan "set a standard that all his successors have sought to follow."

Mr. Halperin said Mr. Kennan understood the need to talk truth to power no matter how unpopular, and made clear his belief that containment was primarily a political and diplomatic policy rather than a military one. "His career since is clear proof that no matter how important the role of the policy planning director, a private citizen can have an even greater impact with the strength of his ideas."

The force of Mr. Kennan's ideas brought him to power in Washington in the brief months after World War II ended and before the cold war began. In February 1946, as the second-ranking diplomat in the American Embassy in Moscow, he dispatched his famous "Long Telegram" to Washington, perhaps the best-known cable in American diplomatic history. It explained to policy makers baffled by Stalin that while Soviet power was "impervious to the logic of reason," it was "highly sensitive to the logic of force."

Widely circulated in Washington, the Long Telegram made Mr. Kennan famous. It evolved into an even better-known work, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," which Mr. Kennan published under the anonymous byline "X" in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the Council on Foreign Relations. "Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigorous application of counterforce," he wrote. That force, Kennan believed, should take the form of diplomacy and covert action, not war.

Mr. Kennan's best-known legacy was this postwar policy of containment, "a strategy that held up awfully well," said Mr. Gaddis.

But Mr. Kennan was deeply dismayed when the policy was associated with the immense build-up in conventional arms and nuclear weapons that characterized the cold war from the 1950's onward. His views were always more complex than the interpretation others gave them, as he argued repeatedly in his writings. He came to deplore the growing belligerence toward Moscow that gripped Washington by the early 1950's, setting the stage for anti-Communist witch hunts that severely dented the American foreign service.

At the height of the Korean War, he temporarily left the State Department for the Institute for Advanced Study. He returned to serve as ambassador to Moscow, arriving there in March 1952.

But it was "a disastrous assignment," Mr. Gaddis said. Mr. Kennan was placed under heavy surveillance by Soviet intelligence, which cut him off from contact with Soviet citizens. Frustrated, Mr. Kennan publicly compared living in Stalin's Moscow to his experience as an internee in Nazi Germany. The Soviets declared him *persona non grata*.

From One Dulles to the Other

Mr. Kennan was then pushed out of the Foreign Service in 1953 by the new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, who took office under the newly elected President Eisenhower. Allen Dulles, the new director of central intelligence, then offered a post to the man his brother had rejected -- knowing, as few others did, of Mr. Kennan's crucial role in the formation of the C.I.A. clandestine service.

Mr. Kennan had argued for "the inauguration of political warfare" against the Soviet Union in a May 1948 memorandum that was classified top secret for almost 50 years. "The time is now fully ripe for the creation of a covert political warfare operations directorate within the government," he wrote. This seed quickly grew into the covert arm of the Central Intelligence Agency. It began as the Office of Policy Coordination, planning and conducting the agency's biggest and most ambitious schemes, and within four years grew into the agency's operations directorate, with thousands of clandestine officers overseas.

A generation later, testifying before a 1975 Senate select committee, he called the political-warfare initiative "the greatest mistake I ever made."

Mr. Kennan also played a formative role in the foundation of Radio Free Europe. Seeking ways to use the skills of émigrés from the Soviet Union's cold-war satellites, he asked a retired ambassador, Joseph C. Grew, to form an anticommunist group called the National Committee for a Free Europe. Backed by the C.I.A., the committee set up Radio Free Europe, which broadcast news and propaganda throughout Eastern Europe. Two prominent dissidents of their times, Lech Walesa in Poland and Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, praised R.F.E. as highly influential.

Mr. Kennan supported the war in Korea, albeit with some uncertainty, but opposed United States involvement anywhere in Indochina long before American troops were sent to Vietnam. He did not include the region in his mental list of areas crucial to American security.

In February 1997, Mr. Kennan wrote on The New York Times's Op-Ed page that the Clinton administration's decision to back an enlargement of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to bring it to the borders of Russia was a terrible mistake. He wrote that "expanding NATO would be the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold war era."

"Such a decision may be expected to inflame the nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian opinion; to have an adverse effect on the development of Russian democracy; to restore the atmosphere of the cold war to East-West relations, and to impel Russian foreign policy in directions decidedly not to our liking," he wrote. His views, shared by a broad range of policy experts, did not prevail.

Mr. Kennan was the last of a generation of diplomatic aristocrats in an old world model - products of the "right" schools, universities and clubs, who took on the enormous challenges of building a new world order and trying to define America's place within it after the defeat of the Nazis and a militaristic Japanese empire.

With history as a guide, these worldly-wise policy makers ultimately decided against punitive policies toward the losers, instead helping the defeated countries rebuild as democracies. But the diplomatic establishment had no precedent to fall back on as they wrestled with Soviet Communism and a Maoist revolution in China.

Though Mr. Kennan is often grouped among the "Wise Men" who shaped Washington after World War II, he did not share their heritage. "He was not part of the elite East Coast establishment," Mr. Gaddis said. "He was never wealthy. He worked his way through college, and he lost all his money in the Depression. He always felt he was an outsider, never an insider."

Mr. Kennan was often a gloomy, sensitive and intensely serious man. Perennially unable to tailor his crisp intellectual views to political necessity in Washington, and lacking the political and bureaucratic skills needed to survive there, Mr. Kennan appeared to those who knew him to be happy to find a long-term home in Princeton, where Albert Einstein and other leading thinkers also honed their ideas.

Ever the Policy Maker

From that perch in 1993, Mr. Kennan recommended, characteristically, that the United States needed an unelected, apolitical "council of state" drawn from the country's best brains to advise all branches of government in long-term policies. He proposed the council in a very personal book, "Around the Cragged Hill" (Norton 1993), which revealed his core social conservatism as he reviewed the evolution of America.

He fretted that the population of the United States was growing too fast and that, environmentally, the country was "exhausting and depleting the very sources of its own abundance." He blamed cars and the suburban sprawl they created for the death of not only a magnificent railway network but also the "great urban centers of the 19th century, with all the glories of economic and cultural life that flowed from their very unity and compactness."

But Mr. Kennan was most preoccupied with society's effects on making foreign policy, an increasingly shrunken intellectual field in an age when American diplomacy itself has been driven to penury by a dominant new breed of post-cold-war America-Firsters. He saw American policy by the end of the 20th century as unfocused, adrift and subject to too many (sometimes conflicting) domestic political pressures, with a host of players who have diminished the role of the secretary of state at a moment in history when the United States stood alone in its world power.

"It is not too much to say that the American people have it in their power, given the requisite will and imagination, to set for the rest of the world a unique example of the way a modern, advanced society could be shaped in order to meet successfully the emerging tests of the modern and future age," he wrote in "Around the Cragged Hill."

Among his other well-known works were "American Diplomacy 1900-1950"; "Russia Leaves the War," winner of the Pulitzer prize for history in 1957 and the Bancroft and Francis Parkman prizes and a National Book Award; and two volumes of memoirs, in 1967 and 1972, the first of which won another National Book Award and another Pulitzer. Mr. Kennan was awarded the Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor, by President George H.W. Bush in 1989.

The Modest Beginnings

George Frost Kennan was born in Milwaukee on Feb. 16, 1904, the son of Kossuth Kent Kennan, a lawyer who was a descendant of Scotch-Irish settlers of 18th-century America and who was named for the Hungarian patriot. His mother, the former Florence James, died two months after his birth.

When he was 8, he was sent to Germany in the care of his stepmother -- his father had remarried -- to learn German in Kassel, because of the purity of the language there. It was the first of numerous languages he would eventually master: Russian, French, Polish, Czech, Portuguese and Norwegian.

Educated at St. John's Northwestern Military Academy in Delafield, Wis., and at Princeton University, where he received his bachelor's degree in 1925, he decided to try for the Foreign Service rather than return to Milwaukee. "It was the first and last sensible decision I was ever deliberately to make about my occupation," he said.

Mr. Kennan served as a vice consul in Geneva and Hamburg in 1927 and was on the verge of resigning to go back to school when he learned that he could be trained as a linguist and get three years of graduate study without leaving the service. He went to Berlin University and chose to study Russian, partly in preparation for the opening of United States-Soviet relations, which occurred in 1933, and partly because another George Kennan, his grandfather's cousin, had devoted himself to studying Russia.

While in Berlin, Mr. Kennan met Annelise Sorensen, a Norwegian, and they were married in 1931. They had four children. He is survived by his wife and their children -- Grace Kennan Warnecke of New York, Joan Kennan of Washington, D.C., Wendy Kennan of Cornwall, England, and Christopher J. Kennan of Pine Plains, N.Y. -- and by eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

In the five and a half years between Mr. Kennan's decision to become a specialist on Soviet affairs and his first assignment to Moscow in 1933, he served in a number of posts on the periphery of the Soviet Union. He was third secretary in the embassy in Riga, Latvia, when he was assigned to accompany William C. Bullitt, the first United States ambassador to the Soviet Union.

During his career, he was assigned to Moscow three more times -- as second secretary in 1935 and 1936, as minister-counselor from 1944 to 1946, first under W. Averell Harriman, then under Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, and finally for a brief term as ambassador in 1952.

When he was appointed to the embassy in Moscow in 1944 as minister-counselor, he described his return after a six-year absence as an unsettling experience because of the hostility and suspicion he found in the official circles of a wartime ally.

"Never," he wrote, "except possibly during my later experience as ambassador to Moscow, did the insistence of the Soviet authorities on the isolation of the diplomatic corps weigh more heavily on me. We were sincerely moved by the sufferings of the Russian people as well as by the heroism and patience they were showing. We wished them nothing but well. It was doubly hard in these circumstances to find ourselves treated as though we were the bearers of some species of the plague."

Mr. Kennan, convinced that it would be folly to hope for extensive Soviet cooperation in the postwar world, was frustrated by the development in Washington of what he saw as an increasingly naïve policy based on notions of Soviet friendship. He wrote analytical essays, but these won little or no attention in the State Department.

It was not until the United States Treasury, stung by Moscow's unwillingness to support the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, asked the State Department for an explanation of its behavior that Mr. Kennan was able to make his points in the "Long Telegram," which arrived in Washington on Feb. 22, 1946. It was so well-received that "my official loneliness came to an end," he wrote later. "My reputation was made. My voice now carried."

Regrettably, in Mr. Kennan's view, the warnings that had fallen on deaf ears for so long found receptive ones partly for the wrong reasons, and he felt that the idea of a Soviet danger became as exaggerated as the belief in Soviet friendship had been.

He held that the Soviet Union should be challenged only when it encroached on certain areas of specific American interest, but he did not accept the view that this could be accomplished only by military alliances or by turning Europe into an armed camp. He felt that Communism needed to be confronted politically when it appeared outside the Soviet sphere.

Publicly, he was sharply critical of émigré propaganda calling for the overthrow of the Soviet system, believing that there was no guarantee that anything more democratic would replace it. In the 1960's and 70's, he concluded that the growing diversity in the Communist world was one of the most significant political developments of the century. But "he missed the ideological appeal of democratic culture in the rest of the world," Mr. Gaddis said, as the slow rot of Soviet Communism undermined the cold war's architectures.

The 'X' Article on Containment

Mr. Kennan had returned to Washington in 1946 as the first deputy for foreign affairs at the new National War College, where he prepared a paper on the nature of Soviet power for James V. Forrestal, then secretary of the Navy. In July 1947, that paper, drawn largely from his Moscow essays, became the "X" article. The article, advocating the containment of Soviet power, was not signed because Mr. Kennan had accepted a new State Department assignment. But the author's identity soon became known.

Mr. Kennan was attacked by the influential columnist Walter Lippmann, who interpreted containment -- as did many others -- in a military sense.

In his memoirs, Mr. Kennan said that some of the language he had used in advocating a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies "was at best ambiguous and lent itself to misinterpretation." He had failed to make it clear, he said, that what he was talking about was not the containment by military means or military threat, but the political containment of a political threat.

As chairman of the planning staff at a time when planning still played a large role in policy-making, Mr. Kennan helped shift the United States to political and diplomatic containment.

He contributed an overall rationale to a series of actions like Greek-Turkish aid, under what became known as the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the creation of the Western military alliance.

Taking an active interest in the occupation of Japan and Germany, he incurred considerable criticism by opposing the Nuremberg war-crimes trials, arguing that the United States should not sit in judgment with the Soviet Union, where millions had been killed by their own government.

He also argued against basing American troops in Japan under long-range agreements, feeling this would antagonize the Soviet Union, which might feel its eastern flank threatened.

In 1950, having left the planning staff to become a counselor to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Mr. Kennan was at odds with the State Department over the American military role in Korea and other issues. He asked for a leave of absence and moved to Princeton at the invitation of his friend J. Robert Oppenheimer, who headed the American development of the atomic bomb at Los Alamos, to join the Institute for Advanced Studies. He and his family divided their time between a home in Princeton and a farm in New Berlin, Pa. Later they added a family home in Norway.

After General of the Army Douglas MacArthur was dismissed by President Truman in 1951, Mr. Kennan was asked by the State Department to sound out Yakov A. Malik, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, about a possible settlement of the Korean War. Secret meetings took place between the two men in June 1951-- Russian was spoken - - and formal talks leading to a cease-fire followed, a sequence that, in Mr. Kennan's view, underlined the value of secret diplomacy conducted by professionals.

Mr. Kennan's entire career had seemed to be preparation for his 1952 appointment as ambassador to Moscow, but his tour ended after five months when he was declared persona non grata -- on Stalin's whim, he thought -- for a chance remark to a reporter in West Berlin who had asked him what life was like in the Soviet Union. He drew a comparison to his imprisonment earlier by the Nazis, adding, "Except that in Moscow we are at liberty to go out and walk the streets under guard." Left in limbo by the State Department on his return to Washington, and with policy disagreements growing between him and Secretary of State Dulles, who viewed containment as too passive, Mr. Kennan retired from the Foreign Service in 1953. This difficult period was made even more painful by McCarthyism. Many of Mr. Kennan's old colleagues and friends -- among them Professor Oppenheimer, John Paton Davies, John Stewart Service and Charles W. Thayer -- came under attack. He testified repeatedly in their defense and wrote and spoke against what he termed the malodorous tide of the times. During a pleasant academic year in 1957-58 as Eastman professor at Oxford, he was invited to deliver the BBC's annual Reith Lectures, radio talks to which all intellectual Britain is attuned.

A Surprising Offer to the Soviets

He attracted great attention by proposing that the time was right to begin negotiating with the Soviet Union for mutual troop withdrawals from Germany. It was an idea acceptable to only a small body of left-wing opinion, as was his further suggestion that the demilitarization be achieved through the guarantee of a neutral, unified Germany. His views came under immediate fire all over Western Europe and in North America.

Called back into government service in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, Mr. Kennan was named ambassador to Yugoslavia and became embroiled in arguments over the proper role of Congress in foreign affairs. He sought unsuccessfully to dissuade Mr. Kennedy from proclaiming Captive Nations Week in 1961 -- as required by a Congressional resolution of 1959 -- on the ground that the United States had no reason to make the resolution, which in effect called for the overthrow of all the governments of Eastern Europe, a part of public policy. The next year Congress voted to bar aid and trade concessions to the Yugoslavs, so Mr. Kennan felt he could no longer serve usefully in Belgrade.

In 1966 Mr. Kennan, who had returned to Princeton in 1963, was called to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Vietnam War, an American involvement he felt should not have been begun and should not be prolonged. In 1967 he took part in a Senate review of American foreign policy.

For Mr. Kennan the Vietnam years were what he later characterized as instructive. His views on what he saw as almost entirely negative Congressional interference in foreign affairs altered as Congress moved to curtail the American role in Southeast Asia, an area where he believed the American interest was not at stake. In an interview at the time of his 72nd birthday, he said that he had been "instructed" by Vietnam, and that he now agreed that Congress should help in determining foreign policy. He added that given that reality, the United States would have to reduce its scope and limit its methods because Congressional control of foreign affairs deprives the Government of day-to-day direction of events "and means that as a nation we will have to pull back a bit -- not become isolationist, but just rule out fancy diplomacy."

Opposed though he was to United States involvement in Southeast Asia, he was critical of the student left in the 60's. In a speech at Swarthmore College in December 1967, he assailed the students' methods of protest and their failure to present a coherent program of reform.

Later in life, Mr. Kennan turned his attention to support of Russian and Soviet studies in the United States, feeling that scholarship was one of America's most productive links with Moscow. "They are impressed by our work," he remarked in an interview. "It keeps Russian intellectuals from thinking we are all a nation of flagpole-sitters."

In 1974 and 1975, while in Washington as a Woodrow Wilson scholar, he helped to establish the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies in the Smithsonian complex. Recalling the ancestor who led him to study Russian, he said, "When my colleagues gave it a name, they had in mind both George Kennans."

WEEK IN REVIEW

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/20/weekinreview/the-man-who-took-the-measure-of-the-communist-threat.html>

By PETER EDIDIN

MARCH 20, 2005

The Man Who Took the Measure of the Communist Threat

GEORGE F. KENNAN, who died Thursday at 101, was "the nearest thing to a legend that this country's diplomatic service has ever produced," the historian Ronald Steel has said. He was the man who proposed "containment," the cornerstone of the cold war, as a way to oppose the Soviet Union.

The idea of containment was worked out by Mr. Kennan in 1946, when he was the chief of mission in the United States Embassy in Moscow. The State Department had asked for help in understanding the Soviet state, to which he responded with an 8,000-word cable, known as the "Long Telegram," which offered a detailed psychological, historical and political interpretation of the Soviet Union.

The telegram is remarkable for Mr. Kennan's clear-eyed, prophetic view of the Soviet state, and for his confidence in American society and its ability to counter the challenge of Communism. In 1946, when most of the world was bewildered and frightened by the rise of the Soviet Union, he felt certain a dictatorship could be defeated by a free society, so long as it kept faith with its own traditions and institutions.

Excerpts follow from the original telegram sent to the State Department, replete with missing and superfluous words, as well as words added in brackets by a reader at the State Department trying to make better sense of the text. PETER EDIDIN

861.00/2 - 2246: Telegram The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kennan) to the Secretary of State SECRET Moscow, Feb. 22, 1946 -- 9 p.m. [Received Feb. 22 -- 3:52 p.m.]

Answer to Dept.'s 284, Feb. 3, involves questions so intricate, so delicate, so strange to our form of thought, and so important to analysis of our international environment that I cannot compress answers into single brief message without yielding to what I feel would be dangerous degree of over-simplification.

I apologize in advance for this burdening of telegraphic channel; but questions involved are of such urgent importance, particularly in view of recent events, that our answers to them, if they deserve attention at all, seem to me to deserve it at once.

The world, as seen by the Soviet leaders:

U.S.S.R. still lives in antagonistic "capitalist encirclement" with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence. As stated by Stalin in 1927 to a delegation of American workers:

"In course of further development of international revolution there will emerge two centers of world significance: a socialist center, drawing to itself the countries which tend toward socialism, and a capitalist center, drawing to itself the countries that incline toward capitalism. Battle between these two centers for command of world economy will decide fate of capitalism and of communism in entire world."

Why, the Soviet leadership is irrational:

At bottom of Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity. Originally, this was insecurity of a peaceful agricultural people trying to live on vast exposed plain in neighborhood of fierce nomadic peoples. To this was added, as Russia came into contact with economically advanced West, fear of more competent, more powerful, more highly organized societies in that area. But this latter type of insecurity was one which afflicted rather Russian rulers than Russian people; for Russian rulers have invariably sensed that their rule was... unable to stand comparison or contact with political systems of Western countries.

It was no coincidence that Marxism... caught hold and blazed for first time in Russia. Only in this land which had never known a friendly neighbor or indeed any tolerant equilibrium of separate powers, either internal or international, could a doctrine thrive which viewed economic conflicts of society as insoluble by peaceful means.

How Soviet policymakers deal with the world, officially:

Wherever it is considered timely and promising, efforts will be made to advance official limits of Soviet power. For the moment, these efforts are restricted to certain neighboring points conceived of here as being of immediate strategic necessity, such as northern Iran, Turkey, possibly Bornholm. However, other points may at any time come into question, if and as concealed Soviet political power is extended to new areas. Thus a "friendly" Persian government might be asked to grant Russia a port on Persian Gulf. Should Spain fall under Communist control, question of Soviet base at Gibraltar Strait might be activated.

With respect to cultural collaboration, lip service will likewise be rendered to desirability of deepening cultural contacts between peoples.... Actual manifestations of Soviet policy in this respect will be restricted to arid channels of closely shepherded official visits and functions, with superabundance of vodka and speeches and dearth of permanent effects.

And unofficially:

On unofficial plane particularly violent efforts will be made to weaken power and influence of Western Powers of [on] colonial backward, or dependent peoples. On this level, no holds will be barred. Mistakes and weaknesses of western colonial administration will be mercilessly exposed and exploited. Liberal opinion in Western countries will be mobilized to weaken colonial policies.

Where individual governments stand in path of Soviet purposes pressure will be brought for their removal from office. This can happen where governments directly oppose Soviet foreign policy aims (Turkey, Iran), where they seal their territories off against Communist penetration (Switzerland, Portugal), or where they compete too strongly, like Labor government in England, for moral domination among elements which it is important for Communists to dominate.

What is to be done?

In summary, we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with U.S. there can be no permanent modus vivendi that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure.

Problem of how to cope with this force in [is] undoubtedly greatest task our diplomacy has ever faced and probably greatest it will ever have to face. But I would like to record my conviction that problem is within our power to solve -- and that without recourse to any general military conflict.

We must see that our public is educated to realities of Russian situation. I cannot over-emphasize importance of this. Press cannot do this alone. It must be done mainly by government, which is necessarily more experienced and better informed on practical problems involved. In this we need not be deterred by [ugliness?] of picture. I am convinced that there would be far less hysterical anti-Sovietism in our country today if realities of this situation were better understood by our people. There is nothing as dangerous or as terrifying as the unknown.

We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of sort of world we would like to see than we have put forward in past. It is not enough to urge people to develop political processes similar to our own. Many foreign peoples, in Europe at least, are tired and frightened by experiences of past, and are less interested in abstract freedom than in security. They are seeking guidance rather than responsibilities. We should be better able than Russians to give them this. And unless we do, Russians certainly will.

The thing to be feared.

Finally we must have courage and self-confidence to cling to our own methods and conceptions of human society. [T]he greatest danger that can befall us in coping with this problem of Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/21/world/europe/russian-exile-from-yukos-assails-putin-as-a-despot.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

MARCH 21, 2005

Russian Exile From Yukos Assails Putin as a Despot

TEL AVIV, March 20 - A longtime business associate of the imprisoned Russian oil tycoon Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky spoke out from self-imposed exile here on Sunday, denying criminal charges by the Russian authorities and saying the accusations against him are a continuation of a Kremlin campaign of intimidation.

"The situation in Russia today I would describe as Stalinism," the associate, Leonid B. Nevzlin, said in a rare interview at his home in Herzliya, Israel's high-tech hub in the Tel Aviv suburbs. He said President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia "enjoys the absolute power of one person, in that he uses the law enforcement system and the lack of free press" to intimidate Russia's business elite and renationalize Yukos, once Russia's largest private oil company.

Yukos has been torn apart in a struggle between the Kremlin and Mr. Khodorkovsky that has shaken Western confidence and helped drive oil prices to record highs. It has also prompted Russia's business elite to re-evaluate the Kremlin's commitment to capitalism, and consider whether the leadership is seeking something akin to state control of the economy's commanding heights. Mr. Putin says he is simply trying to punish a tax cheat and, more broadly, to rein in oligarchs who bought influence with their overnight fortunes after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Yukos's largest oil field was auctioned off last year to pay off extensive back taxes, but two remaining production units continue to pump a total of 600,000 barrels of oil a day - and Mr. Nevzlin is now controlling shareholder in the company after Mr. Khodorkovsky transferred his stake in January. Mr. Nevzlin estimates his net worth in the "hundreds of millions, but not billions" of dollars. "We're trying to learn to live without the pipeline of oil," he said, with a bitter grin, of himself and other shareholders.

Mr. Nevzlin fled to Israel nearly two years ago, amid a Kremlin-backed investigation into the oil company and its top executives. In July 2004, a Moscow court called for his arrest on charges of conspiracy to aid in the killings of a married couple in the 1990's and of trying to kill Olga Kostina, formerly public relations director of Moscow City Hall and a onetime adviser to Yukos. Prosecutors have also accused him of evading taxes and appropriating shares of oil assets that became Yukos during the no-holds-barred era of post-Soviet privatization.

Israel has ignored an outstanding Interpol request from Russian law enforcement officials to extradite Mr. Nevzlin on the charges, which he vehemently denies. He also defends Yukos's former security chief, Aleksei Pichugin, who has been charged with murder and attempted murder in the same cases and has been in detention since his arrest in June 2003.

"There is no evidence and no proof against him or me," he said. "This so-called trial is full of trumped-up charges and falsifications."

Moscow City Court will question Mr. Pichugin on Tuesday. His trial has been closed to the public.

Mr. Nevzlin said the Russian judicial system "is using illegal methods and taking hostages" among former Yukos employees. A British judge on Friday rejected Russian government claims seeking the extradition of a Yukos accountant and a lawyer who had fled to London.

In the interview, in which Mr. Nevzlin spoke Russian, he for the first time publicly made the accusation that an element of anti-Semitism was behind the Kremlin's campaign against him and other Yukos executives, some of whom are also Jewish. He joined a number of prominent Russian billionaires who have either fled to or established dual citizenship in Israel, including Vladimir Gusinsky, now a media tycoon.

"Putin is surrounded by anti-Semites," he said, "from the prosecutors all the way to the F.S.B.," the successor intelligence agency to the K.G.B.

Mr. Putin has campaigned publicly on behalf of a rebuilt Jewish community in Russia, appointed a chief rabbi for the country, and said at a ceremony at Auschwitz this year he was "ashamed" of anti-Semitic acts in Russia.

Mr. Nevzlin said Sunday that he planned to sue in European and American courts on behalf of other shareholders over the seizing of Yukos's assets. "When we start shaping the new board of directors, we will represent interests of all shareholders," he said, hinting that Western pension funds and other foreign investors may sit on the new board. He declined to identify any candidates.

Property rights in Russia "do not exist in the Western sense," he said, adding, "All kinds of rights in Russia are selective."

He said he would also finance political opposition candidates running in 2008 presidential elections, including the chess champion Gary Kasparov and former Prime Minister Mikhail M. Kazyanov.

"There is the possibility of a liberal, democratic structure in Russia," he said. "But it will take tremendous work to create it, and only if the will of the electorate coincides."

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/22/world/europe/rights-group-reports-thousands-of-disappearances-in-chechnya.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MARCH 22, 2005

Rights Group Reports Thousands of Disappearances in Chechnya

MOSCOW, March 21 - A prominent human rights organization said in a report released Monday that kidnappings and extrajudicial detentions had become so rampant in Chechnya that they amounted to crimes against humanity.

Human Rights Watch, based in New York, reported that an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 civilians from the region had disappeared since Russia's second war in Chechnya began in 1999, and it linked a majority of the cases to Russian or Chechen security forces.

Some of those kidnapped or detained in security sweeps have died in custody, and some have been released after being questioned and in some cases tortured. But the fate of most remains unknown, the organization said in its report.

"The human rights violations Russian forces have committed there, reinforced by the climate of impunity the government has created, have not only brought untold suffering to hundreds of thousands of civilians, but also undermined the goal of fighting terrorism," the report said, disputing Russian claims that its arrests and raids have focused on insurgents and terrorists.

Officials in Moscow and in Chechnya have dismissed accusations that they were responsible for disappearances or illegal detentions as exaggerations, and did so again on Monday. In an interview with foreign reporters last week, however, the republic's president, Alu Alkhanov, acknowledged that people continued to disappear.

"Nobody denies the fact that, unfortunately, kidnappings still take place," Mr. Alkhanov said in his heavily fortified compound in the capital, Grozny. "Nobody is making it a secret, but look at the dynamics of the kidnappings and you will see that these figures are several less than before."

Human Rights Watch based its findings on materials gathered by the Russian rights organization Memorial and by two weeks of interviews in Chechnya this year with relatives of the missing. Its report studied 43 cases of disappearances last year and called on the Russian authorities to disclose the fate of those believed to be in official custody.

The most prominent case involved the disappearance in December of eight relatives of Alsan Maskhadov, the separatist leader who was killed by Russian forces in the village of Tolstoy-Yurt two weeks ago. The report cited statements by witnesses that militiamen loyal to Ramzan Kadyrov, the first deputy prime minister who oversees security forces, seized Mr. Maskhadov's relatives. In an interview last week, Mr. Kadyrov denied that his forces were involved, blaming the militant separatist commander, Shamil Basayev. "We are looking for them," he said of Mr. Maskhadov's relatives.

Human Rights Watch called on the United Nations to hold the Russian authorities accountable for violating international law, but given Russia's veto in the Security Council, there seems to be little chance of any legally binding investigation.

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/23/world/europe/even-chechnyas-dream-street-is-a-dead-end.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MARCH 23, 2005

Even Chechnya's Dream Street Is a Dead End

GUDERMES, Russia, March 16 - The loveliest street in Chechnya runs for all of a block here in the battered republic's second largest city.

It is lined with trees, paved and washed. The buildings, new or newly renovated, include a cultural center and two shops. One deals in mobile phones, which only recently began to work in Chechnya. The other sells jewelry, including a necklace set that costs the equivalent of \$19,000, an astonishing price in a place devastated by a decade of war and mired in abject poverty.

Even when winter's chill lingers and the small swimming pool in a park lies dry, people play volleyball in a fenced-in court or stroll along the sidewalks in what passes for safety in Chechnya. Barricades block traffic on one end of the block; a checkpoint controls entry from the other.

Russia, of course, gave the world the Potemkin Village. And the street is a showcase of the Kremlin's campaign to show that life here is improving. It is a showcase for something else, too: the opaque confluence of power and politics that shores up President Vladimir V. Putin's hard line on Chechnya. The street is named after Akhmad Kadyrov, the former rebel in Russia's first war in Chechnya who sided with Moscow in the second, who was elected the republic's president in 2003 and who was assassinated last May. It has been rebuilt by his son, Ramzan, the unelected first deputy prime minister who is considered the most powerful man in Chechnya, reportedly one of the richest and arguably the most feared.

The street pays homage not only to the father, but also to the son. There is a boxing club called Ramzan on one corner and a smaller sports center halfway down the block, also called Ramzan. A hotel, the only one in Chechnya not on a government compound, consists of five buildings and offers 200 rooms to aspiring athletes and other visitors who enjoy the munificence of Ramzan, whose notoriety is such that his given name suffices.

"We have pride in you," says a large poster of the son that hangs on the sports club beside another of the father, and a man whose military, religious and social credentials earned far more respect than the younger Kadyrov yet possesses.

Mr. Kadyrov, 28, describes the street as his contribution to Chechnya's rebirth. Meeting with reporters at the sports center, his headquarters and a sort of Chechen version of John Gotti's Ravenite Social Club in Little Italy, attended by muscular and deferential

men, Mr. Kadyrov laughed off a question that instead called this street, however improbably, "Little Paris."

"In a few years," he said, mystifyingly, "it will be called a Little Hong Kong."

For now, Mr. Kadyrov's reconstruction efforts, like the Kremlin's generally, remain erratic and infected with what even officials admit is rampant corruption. A broken Ferris wheel rises not far away like a specter of a long-lost time of peace.

Mr. Kadyrov's ambitions, however, are as boundless as, apparently, his wealth (which he denies having).

"I have friends who have businesses, and they help me," he explained, though a shopkeeper in the jewelry store, which displays a full-length Ramzan portrait, said that Mr. Kadyrov was the owner.

In January, accompanied by pop stars and socialites, Mr. Kadyrov broke ground on a multimillion-dollar water park on the edge of town -- this in a place where running water is a rarity.

"I want to bring back the smiles to the faces of our children," Mr. Kadyrov said in a conversation in which he also vowed to hunt down and kill separatists who continued to resist. "They must be eliminated where they appear," he said. "They do not understand human language. They only word they understand is the word death."

The younger Kadyrov has given his name to another aspect of Chechnya's intractable conflict: the Kadyrovski, a militia that has been blamed for killings and kidnappings. [In a report released Monday, Human Rights Watch accused Mr. Kadyrov's forces of sowing fear, not security. "In areas under the effective control of Ramzan Kadyrov, the fear-stricken atmosphere is astounding," it said.]

The militia -- reported to have 5,000 to 7,000 fighters -- began as his father's security force and now includes rebels who switched sides. It operates in the shadows of the Federal Security Service, the successor of the K.G.B.

After the elder Kadyrov's assassination, his son assumed his official role as first deputy under the new president, Alu D. Alkhanov. He might have become president himself had the republic's new Constitution not imposed a minimum age of 30.

Mr. Putin, apparently unbothered by the accusations dogging Mr. Kadyrov, awarded him the nation's highest honor in December, making him a Hero of Russia for unspecified acts of "valor and heroism."

Here on Akhmad Kadyrov Street, he is seen as a hero, but a more complicated one than the hagiography of Mr. Putin's commendation.

"Many of his features can be explained by the features of the republic," said Omar Abdulvadudov, director of the sports center. He said Mr. Kadyrov, a former boxer, had created the opportunity for young people to train again.

"He is not always kind," Mr. Abdulvadudov went on, "but not everything that is said about Ramzan is true."

Through the looking glass of Chechnya, what is true remains diffuse. So does hope, even on this street, which so neatly symbolizes the dead end in which Chechnya finds itself.

There is a bit of reconstruction, a few pockets of stability, presided over by a controversial figure who is accused of killing hundreds of his countrymen to preserve a status quo that favors the Kremlin. In return, Mr. Putin is willing not just to overlook the murders, corruption, human rights abuses and general misery, but to lionize Mr. Kadyrov so long as Chechnya remains a loyal part of Russia.

"I would like all of Chechnya to be as nice as this," said Sultan Khadzheyev, a mechanic, as he walked along the street.

He is 25, an age that makes him a target for harassment, or worse. He is often stopped and searched by Russian and Chechen soldiers, he said, when he ventures out of Gudermes to work at his uncle's garage in Argun, a village nearby.

And so he has his doubts about whether this pretty place is a harbinger of better times. "I do not know," he said, when asked if he could imagine the day when all of Chechnya would resemble this street. "I am not God."

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/25/world/europe/contagion-popular-risings-in-former-soviet-zone.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MARCH 25, 2005

Contagion: Popular Risings in Former Soviet Zone

In the first decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, democracy took root in most of its republics in name only. With the exception of the Baltic republics -- Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, now deeply entwined in Europe -- new political systems and new leaders emerged from the post-Soviet chaos promising freedoms but somehow managing to ensure that those freedoms led to the continuation of their power.

But in the last year and a half, popular uprisings have claimed the sclerotic leadership of three former Soviet republics. In Georgia in November 2003, in Ukraine a year later and now in Kyrgyzstan, simmering discontent accomplished what not long ago seemed improbable: the peaceful overthrow of governments that ceased to represent the will of the people.

What is most surprising is how quickly those governments fell when faced by protesters asserting the rights they had been promised when the Soviet yoke was lifted: the right to express themselves, to elect their representatives, to dream of the better life their leaders promised but too often failed to deliver.

For opposition leaders and even for some of those in power in other republics, the events that began in Georgia with the toppling of Eduard A. Shevardnadze and continued with the extraordinary challenge to a fraudulent election in Ukraine last fall have come like a contagion, spreading in fast and unpredictable ways.

Nowhere is the fear and anticipation greater than in the largest and most powerful republic, Russia. There, President Vladimir V. Putin has steadily strengthened state control even as he presents himself as a democrat.

"People are tired everywhere," Aleksandr Rondeli, president of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, said in a telephone interview from Georgia's capital, Tblisi, referring to the popular discontent. The uprisings in Georgia and Ukraine, he added, showed what was possible. "They saw how easy it looked on TV," he said.

President Askar A. Akayev, leader of Kyrgyzstan throughout 13-plus years of post-Soviet independence, fled the capital, Bishkek, after throngs protesting what they called fraudulent parliamentary elections stormed government buildings and his security forces evaporated.

Like Mr. Shevardnadze and President Leonid D. Kuchma of Ukraine, Mr. Akayev appeared to believe that the state's authority could dictate the terms of a nominally democratic process to favor chosen candidates.

Whether the democratic contagion will spread remains to be seen. Belarus and Turkmenistan have become dictatorships to different degrees, squelching political opposition and tightening the screws over most parts of society.

President Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan had his Parliament declare him president for life. President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko of Belarus last fall orchestrated a referendum that would allow him to run for re-election indefinitely.

Andranik M. Migranyan, a professor and political scientist at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, said challenges to power in former Soviet republics depended in large degree on the willingness of the authorities to use force.

Consistently, he said, the leaders who have at least nominally presented themselves as democrats have proved unable to preserve themselves through democratic means.

"You must either be more adamant in using force and destroying the opposition or let others come to power," Mr. Migranyan said in a telephone interview. "The difference between Akayev and Lukashenko is that Akayev is more democratic. And he is the loser."

Russian leaders reacted to events in Georgia and Ukraine with shock and apprehension, even disdain.

President Putin, who himself is accused of tightening control over what is left of a democratic system, openly supported Mr. Kuchma's handpicked successor. He has cultivated ties with the autocratic leaders of the Central Asian states, seemingly indifferent to accusations that their rule amounts to authoritarianism.

Stung by criticism of Russia's role in Ukraine's elections, Mr. Putin and other officials kept a much lower profile as Kyrgyzstan's parliamentary elections unfolded. As the unrest mounted, though, Russian officials began to appeal for order and stability -- meaning the status quo -- while criticizing those who were calling for democracy.

Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov warned yesterday of "the consequences than can evolve from attempts to come to power by illegal means." Not coincidentally, perhaps, rumors have swirled in Russia about Mr. Putin's own political future in the wake of the recent upheavals in the former Soviet neighborhood. Mr. Putin was re-elected to a second and, according to the Constitution, final, term as president last year.

Despite his repeated assertions to the contrary, commentators have speculated that the Kremlin is considering ways he may yet remain in power after 2008.

At the same time, voices of opposition have emerged. Garry Kasparov, the chess champion, resigned from the game to devote himself to ensuring that Mr. Putin does not run again. Mikhail A. Kasyanov, the former prime minister under Mr. Putin, emerged publicly to say he was prepared to support the opposition, which remains in disarray but may yet find its cause.

April

OPINION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/19/opinion/justice-on-trial-in-russia.html>

APRIL 19, 2005

Justice on Trial in Russia

The trial of the former Russian tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky is nearing a verdict. Assuming, as everyone does, that he will be found guilty of fraud and tax evasion and left in prison, let's take stock: Russia has one fewer oligarch. Most of his Yukos company, which used to pump 2 percent of the world's oil, has been gobbled up by companies connected to the state. Russia's image and the standing of President Vladimir Putin have taken a major beating because the trial had the air of politically motivated vengeance and looting. Investor confidence has been shaken. So was it worth it?

Since his arrest 18 months ago, Mr. Khodorkovsky has played the role of a classic victim of Russian authoritarianism, of an honest businessman victimized by a predatory regime. But the story of how the oligarchs came about is somewhat different, and in many ways, Mr. Khodorkovsky was the template for the breed. A member of the Communist Youth League when the Soviet Union began to fall apart, he quickly proved adept at taking advantage of the free-for-all that followed. He became one of the new entrepreneurs selected by Boris Yeltsin in 1995 for an outrageous deal in which businessmen were handed vast control over Russia's natural resources in exchange for financing Mr. Yeltsin's political survival. The beneficiaries became fabulously wealthy, and Mr. Khodorkovsky was arguably the most successful. At the time of his fall, Yukos was among the most respected businesses in Russia, both for its performance and its propriety.

Still, Russians have never made peace with the notion that a handful of men, most in their 30's, were suddenly rendered so rich and powerful. Worse, some, Mr. Khodorkovsky prominent among them, began seeking ways to translate their wealth into political power. Certainly the government has a right and an obligation to restore its authority over an economy that had fallen prey to gangster capitalism and corruption, and especially over strategic resources like oil and gas. Viktor Yushchenko, the reformist new president of Ukraine, has also made it his priority to renationalize some of the Ukrainian holdings from a handful of tycoons who secured them through shady political maneuvers.

But such a process can be useful only if it represents the ascendancy of law over banditry. That is especially critical in a country like Russia, where the rule of law is so little known and so badly understood. We criticized this trial not necessarily because we believe that Mr. Khodorkovsky is innocent, or that oligarchs should be immune from the law, but because it was not a fair trial, and a fair trial would have been so valuable to the development of Russia. Mr. Khodorkovsky might well have gone free because the law is so vague and inconsistent and because, in the end, it was the government that handed him his riches. But the gains for the rule of law would have been great.

There is still time for the judge to redeem the process with a verdict that is perceived to be just. We hope that the new Ukrainian government learns from the Khodorkovsky trial that real justice is the only way to redress injustice.

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/21/world/europe/rice-tells-putin-us-is-no-threat-in-region.html>

By **STEVEN R. WEISMAN**

APRIL 21, 2005

Rice Tells Putin U.S. Is No Threat in Region

VILNIUS, Lithuania, April 20 - Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered reassurances on Wednesday to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and to listeners of a popular Moscow radio station that the United States would not supplant Russia's influence in its neighborhood despite growing American friendship with other countries in the region.

But in a long day of talks and interviews in Russia, before flying here to Lithuania for a NATO meeting, Ms. Rice continued to suggest that Russia needed to do more to foster economic and political freedoms.

Her comments were among the strongest of any American officials about Russia's energy industry, apparently reflecting sharpening concern not only about Russian business practices but also about high oil prices.

Ms. Rice said she had told Mr. Putin that the seizure of the oil conglomerate Yukos and the prosecution of its executives "shook people's confidence" in Russia's transition to democracy and a free economy, and that investors needed reassurance "that there is indeed rule of law" for businesses and investments. Many Russians expect a guilty verdict on tax evasion and fraud charges and perhaps a long prison sentence for Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, the former chairman of Yukos.

Complaints have been rising from American oil companies that they have been barred from taking part fully in oil and natural gas ventures in Russia. Ms. Rice, echoing those complaints, noted that at a time of rising oil prices worldwide, Russia, which rivals Persian Gulf countries in output, could help itself and the world economy by increasing energy supplies.

"It's a sector that could be performing, I think, better," she told reporters on her plane to Vilnius, adding that Russia should put forward "rules that people can understand" that were "applied consistently over time" in a way that did not handicap foreign investors.

The comment appeared to be a reference to Russian decisions to cancel foreign roles in energy exploration and to impose new rules allowing foreign oil companies to take only minority positions in partnerships with Russian investors.

Ms. Rice had a full agenda of other issues, and she said she had made progress on some of them. Among these were the stalled talks on a joint effort to dismantle Russian nuclear weapons so they do not fall into the hands of terrorists. The talks have snagged over American demands that Russia immunize Americans from liability for damages if an accident or disaster grows out of the effort. Ms. Rice said she had come to Moscow with new ideas to move the talks along.

She said she had also discussed Russia's role in the Middle East peace efforts, talks with Iran to get it to dismantle any nuclear weapons projects, Russia's efforts to open its economy to qualify for the World Trade Organization, and counterterrorism programs.

These issues and others are expected to be on the agenda for President Bush's visit to Moscow in May to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Ms. Rice held meetings at the Kremlin and the Foreign Ministry, but she also made a direct appeal to Russians in an interview on Ekho Moskvyy, an independent radio station that frequently broadcasts criticism of the government and that says it reaches two million people across Russia.

In a half-hour interview, she answered questions about the expanding American military presence on Russia's periphery and about the role American support for democracy might have played in the ousting of governments in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

Alexei Venediktov, editor in chief and the host, asked her pointedly if the United States was trying to export democracy the way the Soviet Union sought to export socialist revolution. "There's an important difference here," she said. "You do not actually have to export democracy."

She said democracy rose from within a state, though the United States had supported private organizations and institutions in some countries to move the process along. "We see this as not a zero-sum game but one in which everyone has much to gain," she said.

Ms. Rice bantered occasionally with Mr. Venediktov in Russian, which she has studied, but she apologized for speaking largely in English, saying she felt too intimidated by Russian grammar to feel comfortable speaking Russian for the whole interview.

Here in Lithuania, Ms. Rice kept up her theme that democracy was spreading throughout the old Russian sphere of influence, and fired a shot at what she said was one country in the old Soviet Union that remained authoritarian: "Belarus is really the last true dictatorship in central Europe, and it is time for change to come," she said.

On the plane, Ms. Rice said she had tried to send the message to Mr. Putin not to fear democracy. "I wanted to send a very strong message that the United States does not see developments in the former Soviet states, now independent states, as in any way anti-Russian or meant to diminish Russian influence," she said.

She said the same thing at a meeting with the foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, who countered that he wanted the United States to be a strong democratic country playing a significant role in the world.

But Ms. Rice said she did not feel the Russian side was defensive when the issues were brought up. "They are willing to talk about them," she said.

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/22/world/europe/at-nato-talks-accord-and-discord-for-us-and-russia.html>

By STEVEN R. WEISMAN

APRIL 22, 2005

At NATO Talks, Accord and Discord for U.S. and Russia

VILNIUS, Lithuania, April 21 - NATO moved Thursday toward opening discussions with Ukraine about its becoming a member, while Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met here with opposition leaders who want to oust the Russian-backed government in Belarus next door. At the same time, NATO reached an accord with Russia that foresees expanded military cooperation.

Taken together, the three steps reflected the contradictory state of American-Russian relations right now. The Russians have been very unhappy about the expansion of American influence in countries on their borders, and about American criticism of the state of democracy in Russia itself. Still, the Bush administration has tried to allay fears in Moscow that the United States wants to encircle Russia, and President Bush is planning to carry that message of reassurance when he visits Moscow next month.

Ms. Rice, who had previously declared that Belarus was the last dictatorship in Europe, warned bluntly on Thursday that the country should not conduct a "sham election" next year because its conduct would be "watched by the international community," much as Ukraine's election last year was watched and deemed fraudulent, helping to lead to a revolution.

The opposition leaders with whom Ms. Rice met said later that they would use "mass pressure for change" in the government of President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko in Belarus. But Ms. Rice cautioned that she was not suggesting any particular course of action for them.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov, was here in the capital of Lithuania, itself once a state in the Soviet Union but now a NATO member, to meet with the NATO foreign ministers.

He pronounced himself pleased with the Russia-NATO accord but added a note of displeasure over Ms. Rice's meeting with Belarussian opposition leaders, saying Russia did not support "regime change" there.

Nikolai Cherginets, who heads the Commission on International Affairs and National Security in the upper house of the Belarussian Parliament, had a particularly sharp and personal reaction to Ms. Rice's remarks, according to Interfax, an independent Russian news service. He called her description of Belarus as Europe's last dictatorship "an appeal to overthrow the administration of a sovereign state, and this is a reminder of the cold war."

Mr. Cherginets also said Ms. Rice should not be taken too seriously. "A woman euphoric with power is a dangerous creature," he said, "but we should not overrate her."

In Moscow earlier in the week, Ms. Rice heard complaints from officials and call-in listeners on a radio show that Russians fear that the United States is trying to surround Russia with allies and in some cases military forces. She told reporters that Russians seemed mired in a "19th-century" view of the world.

To counter such concerns, NATO moved Thursday to sign the new military agreement with Russia, which would allow an expansion of joint military exercises on Russian soil, possibly to prepare for future peacekeeping operations.

There have already been a few such joint exercises, focusing on how to deal with emergencies or humanitarian crises. American and NATO officials said the new accord would make it easier to transport foreign troops across Russia, for example to interdict narcotics and arms smuggling from places like Afghanistan.

Ms. Rice flew back to Washington on Thursday night after a three-day trip that included her first visit to Russia as secretary of state. Part of her task was to prepare for Mr. Bush's visit to Moscow next month, alongside other world leaders, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Lithuania plans to boycott the occasion, on the ground that the celebration is of a moment that marked the beginning of Russia's grip on Eastern Europe and of the cold war.

NATO's decision on Ukraine was set in motion after Viktor A. Yushchenko won the presidency last year in the wake of popular demonstrations that overturned a fraudulent election count that had favored the candidate preferred by Russia, Prime Minister Viktor F. Yanukovich. That uprising took place after one that installed a new pro-Western regime in Georgia, and it was followed this year by an uprising in Kyrgyzstan, another former Soviet state.

Mr. Yushchenko pressed the case for joining NATO in Washington in April, when he visited the White House and addressed Congress. Mr. Bush backed the request, but this week American officials said that admitting Ukraine would not be easy or rapid. Ukraine's army used to be one of the largest in Europe, but it has shriveled recently.

"NATO is not just a club," a senior State Department official said. "You've got to be able to contribute." He said that before it could join NATO, Ukraine would need to show that civilian control over the military, as well as democracy, would last, and that its forces were effective and not "top heavy" with generals.

The NATO discussions encompassed other issues, including a decision by the alliance to be ready, if asked by the African Union, to transport additional forces to the Darfur

region of Sudan, where tens of thousands have died in a civil war and many more have been driven from their homes.

But Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the NATO secretary general, said any troop support would involve "planning and logistical support," rather than "boots on the ground."

The United States has tried without success to broker a Darfur peace agreement and get adequate relief to survivors of the victims of what it has called genocide. It has said it is committed to getting more outside forces there. "We all have a responsibility to do what we can to alleviate suffering in Darfur and to create conditions in which humanitarian aid can get in," Ms. Rice said.

In addition, Mr. de Hoop Scheffer said there had been a discussion -- purely hypothetical, he said -- about the possibility of eventually sending NATO forces to other areas, for example as peacekeepers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Ms. Rice pressed for a broader NATO role, or at least a discussion of such a role. "We intend to use NATO more and more effectively as a trans-Atlantic security forum," she said. But the French foreign minister, Michel Barnier, warned against turning NATO into "the world's policeman" and taking on too many tasks outside Europe.

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/26/world/europe/russia-will-pursue-democracy-but-in-its-own-way-putin-says.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

APRIL 26, 2005

Russia Will Pursue Democracy, but in Its Own Way, Putin Says

MOSCOW, April 25 - After facing months of criticism for Russia's crackdown on freedoms and its concentration of presidential power, President Vladimir V. Putin said Monday that encouraging democracy was the main task before the nation and that human rights, freedom and a secure business climate were essential for the health of the state.

In his annual address to Parliament, Mr. Putin offered a vision that at times and on the surface appeared to embrace the language of some of his most prominent critics.

"The main political and ideological task is the development of Russia as a free and democratic state," he said.

He seemed to try to calm the uneasy private sector by saying that "tax agencies have no right to terrorize business," a reference to the effort to collect vast sums in back taxes from companies, which has caused consternation abroad and a flight of capital from the country.

He also referred several times to ideas rooted in the West.

At one point Mr. Putin, a former K.G.B. supervisor, spoke of the right of all citizens to have access to public information. At another he endorsed equal opportunity and market law, saying "everyone's incomes should be determined by one's labor and abilities, skills and efforts."

But democracy and fair competition are ideas whose meanings are malleable in practice, and there were indications that Mr. Putin's definitions might fit his own purposes. As strong as his pro-democracy language might have been -- "to deny ourselves the ability to live according to democratic laws means not to respect ourselves," he said -- the speech was leavened with warnings that Russia would change at Mr. Putin's pace.

"We will move forward considering our own internal circumstances," he said, later adding, "As a sovereign country, Russia can and will independently determine for itself the time frame and the conditions of its movement along that path."

There were hints as well that any move toward openness and democracy would bear the Kremlin's firm stamp and that Mr. Putin would continue the policies that have been the focus of condemnations of late, including cuts to social benefits, the protracted war in Chechnya and consolidation of political power in the executive branch.

For example, he spoke pointedly of "the right to be elected or appointed to a public position." The use of "appointed" seemed to be a defense of his decision to end direct elections of regional governors, transferring to the Kremlin the power to appoint them.

He also mentioned an agreement in 1996 with separatist fighters in Chechnya that gave the breakaway region in the Caucasus a degree of independence. The experiment ended in 1999, when Mr. Putin ordered a renewed Russian military offensive, which continues to this day.

Mr. Putin also said that while foreign investment in Russia was welcome and needed, some strategic industries would remain under state control.

He peppered his speech with pledges to raise wages for soldiers and government employees, abolish an inheritance tax and lure offshore capital back to Russia.

Playing to other durable populist themes, he adopted one posture likely to please his domestic audience: chiding the government. "Our bureaucracy is still to a large extent an isolated and sometimes arrogant caste," he said, undermined by "corruption, irresponsibility and incompetence."

He also said that the collapse of the Soviet system had been the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century," a nod to lingering nostalgia here.

In addition, he alluded to a need for a social safety net, saying the state "should provide assistance to those who cannot work and those with low incomes, disabled people, pensioners, orphans, to make sure that they live worthy lives."

Mr. Putin's approval ratings have been level this year at 65 and 66 percent, according to public opinion surveys by the independent Levada Center, down from ratings typically in the 70's and low 80's during the previous three years.

The immediate reception of his speech was mixed. Members of the government hailed it as significant.

But Irina M. Khakamada, who ran against Mr. Putin in 2004, questioned its sincerity, telling the Interfax news agency that the speech "looked like an export product by its liberal rhetoric and ritual statements addressed to the West."

Markets remained almost unchanged. Investors have been nervous since 2003, when masked agents arrested Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, the founder of the Yukos oil company. A verdict in the criminal fraud and tax evasion case against him is expected on Wednesday. Defendants are virtually always found guilty in Russia.

FRONT PAGE

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/26/world/europe/protest-in-urals-seeks-ouster-of-a-putin-ally.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

APRIL 26, 2005

Protest in Urals Seeks Ouster of a Putin Ally

UFA, Russia - Here on the southwestern edge of the Urals, a popular uprising against a regional government is posing one of the most significant challenges yet to President Vladimir V. Putin's political control, raising the possibility that civic protest may be spreading into Russia from its periphery.

Heartened by the political upheavals in two of Russia's neighbors, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, thousands here have staged a series of demonstrations since February calling for the ouster of the president of the Bashkortostan region, Murtaza G. Rakhimov. An ally of President Putin, he has served as the leader of this largely Muslim region, formally an autonomous republic within Russia, since the collapse of the Soviet Union. He won re-election in 2003 in a contest in which his chief opponent withdrew from campaigning, reportedly at the urging of the Kremlin.

The issues are largely local, but the complaints against Mr. Rakhimov's government evoke those that were raised against the recently ousted leaders in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and are now increasingly heard about Mr. Putin. They include allegations of manipulated elections, increasing state control of business, and corruption.

While Mr. Putin's authority seems to remain solid, events here reflect an emerging sense of grievance and impatience that is increasingly being expressed to one degree or another on the streets across Russia.

"An end will come," Ramil I. Bignov, a businessman and leader of a diverse coalition of Mr. Rakhimov's opponents, said after the latest protest, on April 16. "And it will come soon."

Although Mr. Bignov limited his comments to his hopes for Mr. Rakhimov's political demise, the implications of a successful street campaign against the regional leader would reach Mr. Putin as well, most obviously because Mr. Putin has supported Mr. Rakhimov and because Bashkortostan, like the rebellious Chechen republic, is a part of Russia.

In addition, Mr. Putin has had a hand in shaping the way the dispute here has played out, as a consequence of his decision last year to abolish direct elections of governors and other regional leaders.

"It is evident now that instead of making its life easier with this proposal, the Kremlin created huge problems for itself," said Nikolai Petrov, an analyst at the Moscow Carnegie Center who studies regional politics. "There are now no legal means for the opposition in this or that region to beat the incumbent governor."

So Mr. Rakhimov's critics were left with only two courses of action: go into the streets and appeal to Moscow. They have done both.

In mid-April, with no elections on the horizon after two months of protests, some 200 opponents flew to Moscow to make their case, holding a rally and presenting to Mr. Putin's administration a petition with what they said were 107,000 signatures calling for Mr. Rakhimov's dismissal. Meanwhile, rallies here continued, and another is scheduled for May 1.

Mr. Bignov said the opposition leaders had made their case directly to Mr. Putin's aides, though he declined to say whom in the Kremlin they had met. Mr. Petrov said Mr. Putin was unlikely to agree, for fear that a precedent set here would ignite protests against other unpopular leaders.

Since Mr. Putin abolished regional elections, which he defended as a means to strengthen executive power, protesters in three other southern regions -- Karachayevo-Cherkessia, Ingushetia and North Ossetia -- have unsuccessfully demanded the dismissal of their leaders. So far, though, the protests here have been the most significant and sustained.

"We are facing a new wave of social activism," Mr. Petrov said. "And it is dangerous, because there is a lack of democratic institutions through which this energy can be channeled."

The authorities here in Bashkortostan's capital have responded vigorously, though they have not yet forcibly cracked down. Two hours before the protest on April 16, Mr. Bignov and another opposition leader, Anatoly N. Dubovsky, were summoned by the Federal Security Service and questioned for five and a half hours, until the rally was over, as part of an investigation into charges of extremism.

Mr. Rakhimov's supporters, meanwhile, staged a large counterdemonstration in Lenin Square here, arriving in more than 100 buses and swarming the spot where the opposition had a permit to assemble.

Among them were several dozen young men, many in camouflage, who scuffled with Mr. Rakhimov's critics at least twice. They punched an elderly woman in the face and accosted the leader of the newly created People's Front of Bashkortostan, Ayrat Dilmukhametov, who was then whisked away in a civilian car for several hours of questioning by the security service. [Mr. Dilmukhametov was released that night, Mr. Bignov said later.]

"This is the agony of the regime," Mr. Dilmukhametov said in an interview moments before he was attacked, referring to efforts to disrupt the protest. "They are doing everything to bring these young people here and to organize them against their mothers."

Bashkortostan, an energy-rich region the size of Illinois, is one of Russia's 21 ethnic republics -- of 89 regions overall. Here the ethnic group is the Muslim Bashkirs, who carved out a large degree of autonomy from Moscow when the Soviet Union collapsed.

Mr. Rakhimov, a Bashkir, previously displayed a strong streak of nationalistic independence. His critics say he has grown despotic, ruling the region as his own fief, with much of the region's natural resources controlled by companies run by his son, Ural.

The recent protests erupted after four days of police sweeps last December in the town of Blagoveshchensk, where hundreds of young men were arrested and beaten after a brawl involving local police officers.

Fueling them further was a new federal law this year that replaced social benefits for pensioners -- including free transportation and subsidized prescriptions -- with cash payments, a change that has provoked large protests across Russia.

The opposition now includes many pensioners who complain about a diminishing quality of life even as powerfully connected businessmen in Bashkortstan, led by Mr. Rakhimov's son, have grown rich.

Mr. Rakhimov declined to be interviewed. His spokesman, Rostislav R. Murzagulov, said the president was too busy with the spring planting season to address his critic's complaints. Mr. Murzagulov described the opposition leaders as a disgruntled few who want to seize political power and the region's riches.

He dismissed what is being called the "orange" inspiration, after Ukraine's mass protests against a fraudulent presidential election. "We do not have a revolutionary spirit," he said. "What we have is a small group of people who want to try to manufacture this spirit."

Surrounded by a scrum of Rakhimov opponents beneath the square's hulking statue of Lenin, Mr. Dilmukhametov outlined demands including free and fair elections, a suspension of the new benefits changes and the seizure of the assets of Mr. Rakhimov's son.

He said the opposition would act within the law, but his remarks sounded ominous. "The time of resolutions, requests and appeals has passed," he said, and then alluded to the poet Mayakovsky's exhortation about a pistol commonly used by Bolshevik revolutionaries, the Mauser.

"As the poet wrote, it is time for Comrade Mauser to say, 'Yes.'"

OPINION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/28/opinion/mourning-mother-russia.html>

By DAVID BROOKS

APRIL 28, 2005

Mourning Mother Russia

Vladimir Putin gave a bizarre speech this week in which he described the fall of the Soviet Union as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century" and said that an "epidemic of collapse has spilled over to Russia itself."

The sad thing is he is half right.

Most of us are grateful for the fall of communism, but the phrase "epidemic of collapse" is not a bad description of what Russian society is suffering through right now. You can measure that collapse most broadly in the country's phenomenal population decline. According to U.N. projections, Russia's population will plummet from about 146 million in 2000 to about 104 million in 2050. Russia will go from being the 6th-most-populous country in the world to being the 17th.

That population decline has a number of causes. The first is the crisis in the Russian family and the decline in fertility rates. Between 1981 and 2001, marriage rates in Russia dropped by a third, and divorce rates rose by a third, according to Russian government estimates. As Nicholas Eberstadt of the American Enterprise Institute pointed out recently in one of the last issues of *The Public Interest*, Russia now has three divorces for every four marriages, an astounding rate of family breakups.

As the Soviet regime disintegrated, Russian fertility rates fell through the floor, from 2.19 births per woman in 1986-87 to 1.17 in 1999. Birth rates have now recovered somewhat, but they are not even close to replacement levels. According to Eberstadt, Russia currently has about 160 deaths for every 100 births.

The more shocking reason Russia's population is declining is that people are dying younger. Russians are now much less healthy than their grandparents were in 1960. In the past three decades, Russian mortality rates have risen by 40 percent. Russian life expectancies now approximate those in Bangladesh and are below India's.

The health care system is in shambles. The risk of suffering a violent death is nine times as high for Russian men, compared with men in Israel. There's an explosion of heart attacks and strokes, thanks to smoking, increased vodka consumption and other ruinous lifestyle choices. The H.I.V./AIDS epidemic hasn't even been fully factored into the official statistics. According to Russian statistics, a 20-year-old man in 2000 had only a 46 percent chance of reaching age 65. (American 20-year-olds had about an 80 percent chance.)

What we are seeing, in short, is a country with nuclear weapons that is enduring a slow-motion version of the medieval Black Death. Perhaps we should be thankful that the political and economic situation there isn't worse than it is.

For, indeed, the paradox of Russia is that as life has become miserable in many ways, the economy has grown at an impressive clip. We can look back on this and begin to see a pattern that might be called Post-Totalitarian Stress Syndrome.

When totalitarian regimes take control of a country, they destroy the bonds of civic trust and the normal patterns of social cohesion. They rule by fear, and public life becomes brutish. They pervert private and public morality.

When those totalitarian regimes fall, different parts of society recover at different rates. Some enterprising people take advantage of economic recovery, and the result of their efforts is economic growth.

But private morality, the habits of self-control and the social fabric take a lot longer to recover. So you wind up with nations in which high growth rates and lingering military power mask profound social chaos.

This is what we're seeing in Russia. It's probably what we would be seeing in Iraq even if the insurgency were under control. And most frighteningly, it could be what we will be seeing in China for decades to come.

On the surface, China looks much more impressive than Russia. But this is a country that will be living with the consequences of totalitarianism for some time. Thanks to the one-child policy, there will be hundreds of millions of elderly people without families to support them. Thanks to that same policy, and the cultural predilection for boys, there will be tens of millions of surplus single men floating around with no marital prospects, no civilizing influences, nothing to prevent them from assembling into violent criminal bands.

At some point the power-hungry find a way to exploit social misery. At some point internal social chaos has international consequences. Fasten your seat belts. We could be in for a bumpy ride.

Op-Ed Columnist E-mail: dabrooks@nytimes.com

WORLD

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By GREG MYRE

APRIL 29, 2005

Putin Visits Israel and Tries to Allay Its Security Worries

JERUSALEM, April 28 - On the first visit by a Kremlin leader to Israel, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia on Thursday tried to allay fears that Israel's security was threatened by Russia's nuclear assistance to Iran and missile sales to Syria.

Israel gave Mr. Putin a red-carpet welcome, including separate meetings with President Moshe Katsav and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and a somber visit to Israel's Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem. But Israeli leaders also made it clear that they viewed Russian help for Israel's enemies as a serious danger.

Mr. Putin's trip is a concrete sign of improved ties between Russia and Israel as they work to overcome a complicated and troubled relationship dating back decades. Yet their differences kept surfacing.

After the meeting with Mr. Katsav, Mr. Putin was asked about Russia's plans to sell antiaircraft missiles to Syria.

"The missiles we are providing to Syria are short-range antiaircraft missiles that cannot reach Israeli territory," Mr. Putin said. "To come within their range, you would have to attack Syria." He said he had vetoed the sale of longer-range missiles to Syria, citing Israel's security concerns.

Mr. Katsav, who has a largely ceremonial role and usually steers clear of political disputes, did not hesitate to spell out his concerns at a news conference with Mr. Putin.

"There is a difference of opinion between the Russian president and myself," Mr. Katsav said. "Despite the steps the president has taken to reduce the danger, only in the last few days Syria has transferred additional missiles to Hezbollah," the Lebanese armed faction that Israel and the United States call a terrorist group.

"Israel is forced to still fight terror, and the Russian missiles could reduce our capability," Mr. Katsav added.

In addition, Israel contends that Russian help with building a nuclear power plant could help Iran develop nuclear weapons. Israel regards that prospect as the most serious threat it faces. Iran insists that its nuclear program is strictly for civilian use.

"We are working with Iran for peaceful nuclear purposes," Mr. Putin said. "We certainly object to any Iranian plans for acquiring nuclear weapons."

Iran is required to return spent nuclear fuel to Russia so it cannot be used for making atomic warheads, Mr. Putin noted. "I agree that these steps are not enough and we have to get Iran to agree to nuclear inspections," he added.

Later Mr. Sharon, whose family came from Russia, greeted Mr. Putin warmly with a few words in Russian, and told him, "I want you to know that you are among friends."

The two leaders held lengthy discussions that focused on security issues during a working lunch, and Mr. Putin described Russia as Israel's "strategic ally," a statement from Mr. Sharon's office said.

Mr. Putin, who visited Egypt before Israel, is seeking to raise Russia's profile and stake out a role as a mediator in a region where Moscow's influence has waned considerably since the Soviet breakup. The Soviet Union was a leading supporter of Arab countries during the cold war.

Russia, along with the United States, the United Nations and the European Union, make up the so-called quartet that has co-sponsored the current Middle East peace plan, but the Russian role has been comparatively small.

In Egypt on Wednesday, Mr. Putin proposed an international conference on the Middle East in Russia this fall. But the United States and Israel responded coolly, saying Israel and the Palestinians need to make much more progress first.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, said that the proposal had been misunderstood and that the intention was to hold a gathering of experts, not leaders from the countries involved.

No Soviet or Russian leader had ever visited Israel before, though Boris N. Yeltsin toured Israel in January 2000, just days after he resigned as Russia's president.

The Soviet Union quickly recognized Israel after it was established in 1948, but relations soured during the cold war. Moscow severed ties after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, in which Israel defeated Soviet-equipped Arab armies. Full diplomatic ties were not restored for more than two decades, though relations improved significantly after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Roughly a million Israeli citizens -- more than 15 percent of the population -- have come from the former Soviet Union in the last two decades, but Mr. Putin's visit did not inspire an outpouring of warmth among immigrants. Roman Bronfman, a leftist member of Israel's Parliament who came from Ukraine in 1980, said of the immigrants, "I think there are ambivalent feelings."

Many immigrants have become more critical of Russia with Mr. Putin's government in charge, Mr. Bronfman said, but he added that Mr. Putin's visit and his expressions of concern for Israel's security had probably improved his standing among immigrants.

Several Russian business tycoons who are wanted on criminal charges in Russia have taken refuge in Israel. Israeli officials have indicated that they do not intend to extradite the men, who are Jewish and received citizenship here. They include former partners of Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, founder of the Yukos oil company, who is awaiting a verdict in his trial on tax evasion and fraud charges in Russia. Mr. Lavrov said the issue had not been raised.

The Palestinians on Thursday endorsed Mr. Putin's call for an international conference on the Middle East. Mr. Putin is to meet Friday with the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

In a separate development, Mr. Abbas warned Wednesday in a speech to Palestinian police officers that he would use "an iron fist" against any Palestinians who violate the truce with Israel that was declared in February. The remarks were reported on Thursday by WAFA, the official Palestinian press agency.

The remarks were seen as the toughest that Mr. Abbas has directed toward Palestinian militants since his election as the Palestinian Authority president in January. "There is a national consensus regarding the calm, and whoever leaves this consensus will be struck by an iron fist," he said.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/30/world/middleeast/putin-urges-israel-to-let-palestinian-security-forces-use.html>

By STEVEN ERLANGER

APRIL 29, 2005

Putin Urges Israel to Let Palestinian Security Forces Use Weapons

RAMALLAH, West Bank, April 29 - President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia urged Israel on Friday to allow Palestinian security forces the weaponry required to fight terrorism as he completed a three-day visit to the Middle East intended to revive Russia's fading influence in the region.

Mr. Putin met with the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, for two hours to discuss peace talks and renewed Russian economic and security aid to the Palestinians, Moscow's former clients.

In particular, Russia will provide Mr. Abbas with two transport helicopters to replace those of his predecessor, Yasir Arafat. Israel had destroyed them to limit Mr. Arafat's movements after the Israeli Army returned to the West Bank in the spring of 2002 to try to put a stop to Palestinian attacks, some organized by the security services. Israel also put severe restrictions on weapons allowed to the Palestinian police.

Mr. Putin wanted to provide the Palestinians 50 armored vehicles, a proposal reportedly supported by a senior American military official in the region, Lt. Gen. William Ward. But Israel objected, according to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, telling the Americans and Mr. Putin that armored cars could come later, after the Palestinians took more action against militants and reformed the security forces.

In a joint news conference with Mr. Abbas, Mr. Putin said pointedly: "If we expect Chairman Abbas to fight terrorism effectively, he can't do it with slingshots and stones. We must understand this."

It was a Russian president's first visit to the Palestinian Authority, and he was welcomed with a red carpet and an honor guard and band that played a shaky version of the Russian national anthem. Mr. Putin, like most international visitors, had a wreath laid on the tomb of Mr. Arafat, where Mr. Putin stood silently, then bowed his head.

Mr. Putin has been mindful of symbols throughout his visit, making gestures to the Israelis, including an unannounced midnight visit to the Western Wall and the obligatory trip to mourn at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial. While reassuring the Israelis about Russia's concern for their security -- including promising careful monitoring of arms and technology sales to Syria and Iran -- he has also sought to be an advocate for Mr. Abbas and more rapid progress to peace.

He also wanted to show that Moscow is back in the regional game as a serious player, even as American criticism of his rule has increased and some in Congress have called for Russia to be dropped from the Group of 8 major industrialized powers.

Russia is one of the four co-sponsors of the peace plan known as the road map, along with the United States, the European Union and the United Nations, known collectively as the Quartet. But Mr. Putin's efforts to play host to an international peace conference this fall, announced on his first stop in Cairo, were quickly killed by Washington and Israel. Either Mr. Putin failed to consult beforehand, said one NATO country's ambassador, or he simply wanted to make a gesture of solidarity with the Palestinians.

Israeli and American officials responded that the planned Israeli pullout from Gaza this summer was the first priority. They said any international conference, as called for in a later stage of the peace plan, must be preceded by Palestinian compliance with the first stage: moves to combat militants. The Israelis, in the first stage, have promised to stop all new settlement activity, but insist that they are in a "pre-road map" stage until the Palestinians complete their requirements.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, later said Mr. Putin was really proposing a high-level meeting of the Quartet, but even that was judged premature by the Americans. In Washington, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told NBC News, "We will have a Quartet meeting at the level of foreign ministers in Moscow on May 8th or 9th during the events there" to commemorate the end of World War II. "The Russians can be a part of this process in that way," she added.

Mr. Abbas, who studied in Moscow and made an early visit there as president, welcomed Mr. Putin's support for an international conference, saying, "The conditions are ripe."

The Palestinian leader says that without a "political horizon" toward Palestinian independence, so that Palestinians are sure that the Gaza withdrawal is not the end of Israel's withdrawal from occupied territory, new violence could break out. He wants the start of talks on a comprehensive peace treaty now, and not later, as the peace plan indicates, and his position is getting more support from European leaders, as well as Arab ones.

Mr. Putin also promised Mr. Abbas help to build Gaza's battered infrastructure, and again defended Russia's nuclear cooperation with Iran while saying that Russia opposes an Iranian nuclear weapon.

"We intend to continue in all our programs with Iran because we believe such programs have peaceful ends," Mr. Putin said. He added: "Nuclear weapons proliferation is dangerous in general, and in such an explosive region as the Middle East it is very dangerous. From a military standpoint it is illogical, and from a humanitarian standpoint it is unacceptable."

May

WASHINGTON

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/02/world/europe/keeping-that-special-glow-safe-at-home.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

MAY 2, 2005

Keeping That Special Glow Safe at Home

MOSCOW, May 1 - The man carrying the hidden radioactive material passed among airline passengers at Sheremetyevo Airport here on an afternoon this year. His briefcase, holding the contraband, was indistinguishable from anyone else's carry-on bag.

Then, as he approached the check-in counter, lights flashed and an alarm sounded. A mounted video camera captured the man's image. Uniformed guards seized the briefcase and took it to a lead-lined booth where it could be inspected without harming other passengers.

So passed a drill of a quietly expanding nuclear security initiative in the former Soviet Union. The man, a Russian customs employee, had tripped a silent sentinel -- an electronic radiation detector that had been installed by the Russian government, underwritten in part by the United States.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the United States and Russia have been accelerating the installation of automated radiation detectors at Russian shipping ports, border crossings and airports, hoping to deter or detect the movement of radioactive material through Russia, a land where law and order is a deeply inconsistent affair.

Officials in the two nations hope the program, called Second Line of Defense, will complement security measures at former Soviet nuclear storage sites by providing a means to detect material that is already loose, or that in the future makes it to the wrong side of the fences.

Its principal tools are banks of sensors now visible at airports and borders in Russia, typically installed beside luggage inspection points. The program augments efforts at cooperative detection programs by the United States and former Soviet states. The United States has spent about \$35 million on the program in Russia since 1998.

Some details of the program are not publicly known, including the locations of all the sensors and the schedule for installing more, because the program managers do not want to give smugglers a map. (Russian and American officials agreed to discuss the Sheremetyevo sensors because their existence is thought to be widely known.)

But information already made public provides insight into the ambitions and limits of efforts to safeguard the public from nuclear and radioactive stockpiles left from the cold war.

Nonproliferation specialists in and out of government say that although much of the former Soviet Union's nuclear and radioactive material has been consolidated into upgraded storage sites since the union dissolved in 1991, worrisome security gaps remain. Moreover, Russia has quarreled with the United States over access to its most secret facilities.

Specialists also say that no matter the level of security and cooperation at storage sites now, uncertainty remains about the historical accuracy of Soviet nuclear inventories. That means that how much material disappeared before security was improved is anyone's guess.

The dangers have been clear since at least 1994, when a smuggler with plutonium for sale passed through this airport and flew on a passenger jet with the nuclear material to Munich, where he was arrested.

Paul M. Longworth, deputy director of the National Nuclear Safety Administration, a semiautonomous agency in the Department of Energy, said that given those security concerns, the sensors were part of "defense in depth," a strategy of trying to create layers of security between nuclear material on foreign soil and the United States.

"It's better to have your defense somewhere other than on the one-yard line," Mr. Longworth said in a telephone interview from Washington.

To this end, the United States has helped underwrite the installation of the sensors at about 60 Russian ports, airports or border crossings; 15 more sites are planned by Sept. 30. The program has expanded beyond Russia. Sensors were installed in Greece before the Olympics last year, and a project has begun in Lithuania. Negotiations have begun to place sensors in Kazakhstan, said Tracy Mustin, the program's director in Washington. Ukraine recently agreed to join the program.

Nikolai E. Kravchenko, chief of Russia's Service for Customs Control of Nuclear Materials and Radioactive Sources, said the sensors installed frequently picked up radioactive material, and recorded 14,000 "hits" last year.

Of those, about 200 involved cases of possible smuggling, including people who apparently had material but did not realize it. In some cases people carried money that had become irradiated, military equipment collectors carried aviation dials and other lightly radioactive souvenirs, and women wore radioactive jewelry.

Mr. Kravchenko said culpability or ignorance had been harder to determine in many cases, as when truck drivers were caught at borders with radioactive material among scrap. Almost invariably, he said, drivers claim not to know dangerous material is in their loads.

Since 1995, no weapons-grade material has been discovered, Mr. Kravchenko said. He said, however, that nuclear fuel pellets and raw uranium had been intercepted. There have also been hints of organized smuggling.

Vladislav Bozhko, who supervises the program at Sheremetyevo, said that in 2002 all the sensors at one terminal were set off in sequence, as if someone had made a dry run. "We think they were just testing how well it worked, looking for a gap in the defensive line," he said. No one was caught.

The officials say the sensors are extremely sensitive, picking up faint traces of radioactivity. (The claim withstood an unintentional check. This correspondent's wife, recently returning to Russia after undergoing medical scans in the United States, set off

two sensors when entering the country. Remnants of isotopes in her bloodstream set off the alarm.)

Still, nonproliferation specialists warn that for all of their abilities, the sensors and the Second Line of Defense program have limits.

"A layered defense is really smart and important," said Laura Holgate, a regional vice president of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a Washington-based nongovernmental organization that works on nonproliferation. "But the best and most efficient use of resources is to make sure the material stays put, and that it is ultimately destroyed."

"No matter how effective any other layers are," Ms. Holgate said, "none of these has any pretense of being as hermetically sealed as a site barrier."

Mr. Kravchenko said Russia hoped in time to install the sensors at every Russian border point, although it did not yet have a financing plan. For now, busy border crossings, or those near stored nuclear material, have received the sensors rather than those in remote or lightly trafficked areas.

Similar plans are being developed in the United States, where the Customs and Border Protection has been installing more stationary sensors -- known as radiation portal monitors -- at shipping ports and land border crossings, and intends to expand their use to cover almost all entry points to the country, said Barry Morrissey, a spokesman for the agency.

The National Nuclear Security Administration said it would continue to help Russia, but would conduct cost-benefit analyses for proposed additions to decide whether the United States should help pay. "The goal of 100 percent is something we do support, if they can get there," Mr. Longworth said. "But it does not mean that the U.S. taxpayers will pay for it."

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/04/world/europe/still-the-tyrant-stalin-refuses-to-be-wished-away.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MAY 4, 2005

Still the Tyrant, Stalin Refuses to Be Wished Away

MOSCOW, May 3 - That old nostalgia for Stalin is surfacing again. It always does around the May holidays. This delights a few die-hard Stalinists here but dismays many more people.

The ambiguity is represented neatly in the person of Zurab Tsereteli, the closest thing Russia has to an official artist. With the 60th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany approaching, he cast a monumental bronze statue of Stalin, along with Churchill and Roosevelt, at their 1945 summit conference in Yalta. A monument to Stalin

alone seemed a bit much, he acknowledged. But for most other people so, too, is the one Mr. Tsereteli created, depicting Stalin uncritically, in historical context.

The authorities in Yalta -- now a part of Ukraine, a place that suffered greatly under Stalin -- declined Mr. Tsereteli's gift. So did Moscow after a public furor that erupted when a city lawmaker suggested installing the statue in the city's Victory Park.

The statue is now headed to Volgograd, the city better known by its wartime name, Stalingrad, but even there officials took pains to emphasize that it was not a tribute to Stalin per se, but rather to the leaders of the Allied effort to defeat fascism.

The fuss over the statue underscores Russia's problem when it comes to celebrating its past: the past involves some uncomfortable truths the country and its leaders would rather not dwell on.

Part of the reluctance, no doubt, reflects President Vladimir V. Putin himself, a former colonel of the K.G.B. who is unapologetic about his own background in a security apparatus that at its worst terrorized Soviet citizens. Perhaps a larger factor, echoed across the country, is a desire to restore to Russia a sense of historic pride and greatness after the collapse of the Soviet Union and an early round of soul-searching about Soviet crimes that followed Russia's independence.

Even Stalin's newest sculptor -- whose grandfather was arrested and executed in the Great Terror in 1937 -- sounds conflicted. "We should not look at what happened in the past," he said at a news conference last week in which he compared Stalin to other complicated historical figures, like Napoleon. "We should take only the facts and look to the future."

Mr. Putin is hoping to strike the same balance.

Mr. Putin has invited some 50 heads of state, including President Bush, to attend a military parade on May 9, the day Stalin's Soviet Union chose to commemorate the end of what is known here as the Great Patriotic War, on Red Square for what he called a celebration of "the joy of victory and reconciliation."

The once unimaginable scene of a Kremlin leader standing beside an American president and the leaders of Germany, Japan and Italy at what used to be the annual demonstration of Soviet military might (large panels will deftly cover Lenin's Tomb) certainly suggests a fundamental geopolitical reconciliation.

But the government's grandiose plans -- which include dozens of ceremonies, concerts and other events -- have also turned into a source of rancor, reviving unsettled grievances at home and abroad and showing that Russia remains conflicted about its Soviet past.

The presidents of Lithuania and Estonia -- nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940 and reoccupied after the Soviets ousted the Nazis in 1944 -- pointedly refused Mr. Putin's invitation. They cited Victory Day as a day that honored resumption of what would turn into 46 years of occupation, prompting diplomatic and political sniping that has continued with increasing nastiness.

The Baltic leaders, along with President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland, have used the 60th anniversary to renew calls for Russia -- as the inheritor of much of the Soviet Union's legacy -- to account for the darker aspects of its past. Most notorious of all is the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the nonaggression treaty that the Soviet Union signed with Nazi Germany in 1939, leading to the Soviet occupation of part of Poland that year and the Baltic states a year later.

After Hitler's armies invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the pact vanished from official history, and even now it rarely makes an appearance. In the Soviet-like posters that have appeared across the country in honor of the 60th anniversary of Victory Day, the war lasted only from 1941 to 1945.

A renunciation of Molotov-Ribbentrop -- or of the Soviet Union's domination of Eastern Europe after the war -- appears to be highly unlikely.

Mr. Putin hardly defends Stalin but for him, as for many others here, any second-guessing of the Soviet victory in the war amounts to an effort to rewrite history -- to, as he put it, "diminish the part played by the Soviet Union and the Soviet Red Army in the victory over Nazism."

The Soviet Union, to be sure, suffered enormously in the war. Officially, 27 million soldiers and citizens died. The victory is, arguably, its greatest achievement, which is why May 9 remains a revered holiday, one that touches almost every family.

An exhibition of contemporary art at the Krokin Gallery in Moscow includes unvarnished works exploring the war's costs and honoring the ordinary soldiers who suffered most. One includes an enlarged crumpled photograph of the artist Aleksandr Ponomarev's grandfather, who died in Stalingrad. The image is inscribed with Stalin's notorious order, "Not one step back."

"History has no subjunctive mood," the exhibition's curator, Aleksandr V. Petrovichev, said. "They are not singing the song of Stalin's praise. They are dealing with the topics of the time. Yes, there was Stalin. Yes, there were those events. It is reality."

Still, for some here, the new Russia's historical memory remains stubbornly selective, embracing the positive and ignoring the negative.

Yuri N. Afanasyev, a historian and honorary president of the Russian State Humanities University, laments what he calls a restoration of official, incomplete and dishonest history.

"An attempt is being made to vindicate the official history of Russia," Mr. Afanasyev, honorary president of the Russian State Humanities University, said during a conference in Moscow last month. "This is the same history of Stalin's time -- falsified, biased, ideologized."

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/04/world/europe/russian-accused-of-stealing-millions-lawyers-say.html>

By DAVID STOUT

MAY 4, 2005

Russian Accused of Stealing Millions, Lawyers Say

WASHINGTON, May 3 - Federal authorities are accusing Russia's former atomic energy chief of stealing up to \$9 million from the Department of Energy that was supposed to be used to help Russians improve their nuclear safety, his lawyers said Tuesday.

The atomic scientist, Yevgeny O. Adamov, 65, will soon face an indictment in Pittsburgh charging him with multiple counts of fraud and money-laundering, felonies that could lead to many years in prison if he is convicted, his lawyers said.

Prosecutors accuse Mr. Adamov, 65, of diverting the money into bank accounts in Delaware and Pennsylvania, according to his chief lawyer, Lanny A. Breuer of Washington, who called the charges "baseless." Mr. Adamov is being charged by the United States attorney's office in Pittsburgh because he is part owner of a consulting firm there, Mr. Breuer said.

An assistant United States attorney in Pittsburgh, Bruce Teitelbaum, said he could neither confirm nor deny that an investigation of Mr. Adamov was under way.

The charges against Mr. Adamov are coming to light as President Bush prepares for a trip to Eastern Europe and Russia to meet Baltic leaders and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

Mr. Breuer said his client, who lives in Moscow, was arrested Monday in Bern, Switzerland, after traveling there to confer with the Swiss authorities who had frozen some of his daughter's bank accounts. Mr. Adamov was jailed and is awaiting extradition to Pittsburgh, Mr. Breuer said.

Since the end of the cold war, the United States Energy Department has worked with Russian officials to recover nuclear material from old warheads and to make Russian reactors safer.

The worst nuclear accident in history occurred on April 26, 1986, when the Chernobyl reactor in Ukraine blew up, killing more than 30 workers and spewing radiation that some experts believe will kill many more people as years go by. Documents declassified after the collapse of the Soviet Union revealed problems with the construction of the reactor and complaints of shoddy equipment.

Mr. Adamov supervised the cleanup at Chernobyl, Mr. Breuer said. Before becoming Russia's atomic energy chief, Mr. Adamov headed a Moscow institute that developed the Chernobyl-style reactor, a type widely considered by Western specialists to be outmoded and dangerous.

Mr. Adamov has had an unsteady relationship with the West. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the institute he headed started aggressively to seek Western government aid and commercial contracts. But American government officials complained that his institute was selling nuclear technology to Iran.

Despite the Chernobyl accident, Mr. Adamov remained a strong supporter of the reactor model used there and nuclear power in general, and he became atomic energy minister under President Boris N. Yeltsin in 1998. In December 2000, he criticized the government of Ukraine for closing the Chernobyl plant and insisted it was safe.

President Putin ousted Mr. Adamov early in 2001 in a shake-up of his year-old government. The ouster coincided with an investigation by an anticorruption unit of the Russian Parliament in which Mr. Adamov was accused of benefiting from business dealings while serving as minister.

Mr. Adamov insisted the accusations were in retaliation for his refusal to be corrupted. "Many times I was offered million-dollar bribes," he said in a 2002 interview with The Moscow Times, an English-language daily. "But I always refused."

At the time, the United States government was investigating the relationship between Mr. Adamov's Pittsburgh-based consulting firm and a company that buys bomb-grade uranium taken from old Russian warheads, reprocesses it and sells it to American nuclear power plants.

WASHINGTON

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/05/politics/bush-letter-to-baltics-upsets-russians-on-eve-of-his-trip-to.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 5, 2005

Bush Letter to Baltics Upsets Russians on Eve of His Trip to Moscow

WASHINGTON, May 4 - On the eve of President Bush's trip to Moscow to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Nazi Germany's defeat, another skirmish broke out Wednesday between the United States and Russia over a letter Mr. Bush sent to the presidents of the Baltics calling the end of World War II the beginning of the unlawful Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Russian officials, who were already upset that Mr. Bush chose to bookend his trip to Moscow on Sunday and Monday with visits to the former Soviet republics of Latvia and Georgia, angrily responded that Mr. Bush was rewriting history.

"It's a distortion of facts, it's a complete distortion of the historic picture," said a senior official at the Russian Embassy in Washington who asked not be identified because he did not have authorization from Moscow.

Moscow's position has been that the Baltics were allies.

The White House said Mr. Bush's letter was in accordance with history. "The letter speaks for itself," said Frederick Jones, the spokesman for the National Security Council.

Mr. Bush's letter, posted Wednesday on the Web site of President Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia, said that "during this trip, I will mark the sacrifice of America and many other nations in defeating Nazism" and that in Western Europe, "the end of World War II meant liberation."

But in Central and Eastern Europe, it said, "the war also marked the Soviet occupation and annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the imposition of Communism."

Mr. Bush told the Latvian leader that he understood the "difficulty of your decision" on whether to attend the celebration. The presidents of Lithuania and Estonia, nations occupied by Soviet troops in 1940 and reoccupied after the Soviets defeated the Nazis in 1944, refused the invitation of President Vladimir V. Putin to attend the May 9 commemoration.

Mr. Bush will meet with the three Baltic presidents on Saturday in Riga, Latvia, before he heads to the Netherlands and then Moscow.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/06/washington/world/russia-objects-to-bush-itinerary-rice-replies.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 6, 2005

Russia Objects to Bush Itinerary; Rice Replies

WASHINGTON, May 5 - Shortly after the White House announced that President Bush would expand his trip to Moscow on Monday with stops to promote democracy in the former Soviet republics of Latvia and Georgia, the Russian foreign minister took the unusual step of sending a letter of protest to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Americans who have seen the letter describe it as an audacious objection by Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov to the itinerary of the president of the United States. Ms. Rice promptly shot back, in effect, that Mr. Bush could visit whatever countries he wished.

"Rice doesn't scare worth a damn," said a senior Bush administration official who insisted on anonymity because he did not want to be identified as taunting Moscow.

But the letter, the talk of Russia experts here, sets the tone for a difficult presidential trip that has to balance attending a celebration in Red Square of the 60th anniversary of Nazi Germany's defeat without endorsing the subsequent Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. As one administration official put it, "If Bush gets out of this, he'll be Houdini."

The quarreling has only intensified as Mr. Bush's scheduled departure on Friday morning has neared and as administration officials have acknowledged that the president's stops in Latvia and Georgia were deliberately planned to send a message that he does not condone Russian repression, either in the aftermath of World War II or now.

For their part, the Russians are angry at what they see as the expansion of American influence on countries on their border.

Mr. Bush tried to strike a balance in interviews with news organizations from the region at the White House on Thursday, when he first told a group of newspaper reporters that "a respectful relationship with a leader of a great country like Russia is important to maintain."

But later he told the Lithuanian state television network that he had reminded President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia when they last met in February that the leaders of the Baltic countries -- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania -- "don't view the end of World War II as a great moment of celebration," because of their annexation by the Soviet Union, and that "hopefully" he would cooperate with them, because it was "in Russia's interests to have free countries and democracies on her border."

On Wednesday the president of a Moscow research organization, Vyacheslav A. Nikonov, told the Interfax news agency that Mr. Bush's side trips to Latvia and Georgia were "a kind of slap in Russia's face." Mr. Nikonov, of the Politika Foundation, added that Mr. Bush's visits there would be comparable to Mr. Putin's visiting Washington between stops in Havana and North Korea.

"Look, it's a tricky world out there," said Stephen J. Hadley, the national security adviser, when asked in a briefing on Wednesday if Mr. Bush was going on a "diplomatically tricky" trip that could offend Mr. Putin and also the Baltic leaders, two of whom are boycotting Mr. Putin's invitation to the celebration in Red Square on Monday.

Mr. Hadley added that Mr. Bush was going "with a vision and a set of principles" that would "provide the framework by which various issues of the day can be resolved."

Despite such optimistic words, administration officials make no secret of their frustrations with Russia and especially Mr. Putin, whose relationship with Mr. Bush has deteriorated since their first meeting in June 2001, when Mr. Bush said he had looked the Russian leader in the eye and gotten a sense of his soul.

"Whatever euphoria might have been there has long since dissipated, and it's now a businesslike relationship," said Coit Blacker, the director of the Institute for International Studies at Stanford University, a former Russia specialist for the Clinton administration's National Security Council and a friend of Ms. Rice.

Although Mr. Hadley said Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin had a "rapport" and brushed off a suggestion that the relationship was strained, other administration officials trace problems back to the fall of 2003, when Mr. Putin jailed the founder of Russia's biggest oil company and Ms. Rice, a Russia specialist who was then the national security adviser, told Mr. Bush that she had concerns about the Russian leader he called his friend.

The main substance of Mr. Bush's five-day trip, which includes a brief overnight stop to speak at an American World War II cemetery in the Netherlands, will occur in a meeting between Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin at the Russian presidential dacha outside Moscow.

Administration officials said that Mr. Bush was likely to press Mr. Putin again about what Washington considers Russian retreats on the road to democracy, but that he was not expected to do so publicly -- as he did during an awkward news conference with Mr. Putin in February in Slovakia that the White House does not want to repeat.

Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin are likely to discuss the status of European efforts to persuade Iran to dismantle its any nuclear weapons program it has, as well as Mr. Putin's recent trip to the Middle East, which included the first visit of a top Kremlin leader to Israel.

While Mr. Bush is in the Russian capital on Sunday and Monday, Ms. Rice will lead a meeting in Moscow of representatives from the United States, Europe, the United Nations and Russia -- the so-called quartet working for Middle East peace -- to discuss the plans for Israel to withdraw this summer from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank.

Administration officials are counting on Mr. Putin to support their efforts in the Middle East, Iran and North Korea, but say they are going into this tense trip with open eyes.

Stephen R. Sestanovich, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who was a Russia specialist in the Clinton administration, said some of the same issues plagued Mr. Clinton when he went to Moscow a decade ago for the 50th anniversary of the Nazis' defeat. But contrasting Mr. Putin with his predecessor, Boris N. Yeltsin, Mr. Sestanovich termed Mr. Bush's trip even more difficult.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/07/world/europe/with-bush-coming-georgia-spruces-up.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

MAY 7, 2005

With Bush Coming, Georgia Spruces Up

TBILISI, Georgia, May 5 - These days work crews are rushing to resurface Rustaveli Avenue, the main boulevard here in the capital of Georgia. Scaffolding cloaks facades at the former Lenin Square, where buildings are getting fresh coats of paint. Welders are working nights to assemble a grandstand.

A burst of civic polishing is under way in the last hours before President Bush visits this verdant, mountainous nation of four million, where the arrival of an American president is being hailed as a welcome chance both to impress a powerful suitor and to claim a spot on the West's map.

Mr. Bush's overnight visit will begin Monday, 18 months after a bloodless coup displaced President Eduard A. Shevardnadze, an event many Georgians now regard as an inspiration for subsequent popular uprisings that swept away corrupt post-Soviet governments in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

No American president has ever visited Georgia, and Mikhail Saakashvili, the country's irrepressibly energetic president, said the expected warm words from Mr. Bush would validate a continuing transformation.

"This is a confirmation that Georgia is a front-runner, a leader in democracy," Mr. Saakashvili said in an address to the nation on Tuesday night.

A year and half after the coup, known here as the Rose Revolution, rapid change remains a part of Georgian life.

Mr. Saakashvili, a lawyer who studied at Columbia University, has installed a team of English-speaking and mostly young ministers, attacked the country's endemic corruption, instituted standardized testing in public schools, increased tax collection, sought American assistance to modernize Georgia's 16,000-member military, accelerated the sale of state assets and brought one rebellious region, Ajaria, under federal control.

His foreign policy includes striving for membership in NATO and the European Union and proselytizing nations still under the chill of autocratic post-Soviet leaders on the virtues of democracy. He has also sent troops to Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, and in an interview with two Western journalists this week, he said he was committed to keeping a reinforced battalion in Iraq as long as the war there lasts.

Prodded along by its new administration, Georgia has realized some impressive gains - the national budget, for instance, has swiftly climbed to \$1.9 billion from \$350 million.

But Mr. Saakashvili's tenure has not been smooth, and his style of leadership has attracted critics.

The Council of Europe has warned that too much of Georgia's political power is concentrated in its president and that the nation risks drifting to one-party rule. Human Rights Watch, a New York-based organization, has documented the use of torture and condemned a plea-bargaining system that had allowed defendants in criminal cases to pay the government to avoid trial.

The leaders of two separatist enclaves within Georgia's borders -- Abkhazia and South Ossetia -- have treated Mr. Saakashvili as an impulsive neophyte and say his drive for national reunification has risked rekindling latent civil wars.

One of his most strident critics, Shalva Natelashvili, chairman of the Georgian Labor Party, has labeled the president a despot who claims to be a Western man. "We think Saakashvili is a disgrace," he said.

Moreover, the asphyxiation in February of Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania has led to conspiracy theories that are at once dark, distracting and bizarre. The United States has examined Mr. Zhvania's death and called it accidental, the result of fumes leaking from an improperly installed gas heater.

Even the president's painting spree has had its costs. Mark Mullen, an American citizen and chairman of the Georgia office of Transparency International, an independent anticorruption organization, said that after he bought a building near Tblisi's center a week ago, eight or 10 Georgian officials stopped by to issue veiled threats, warning that unless he wanted a full review of all of the property's paperwork, he must have his building painted before Mr. Bush arrived.

Mr. Mullen was irked enough that he wrote a letter to Mr. Bush asking his favorite color. He has had no reply.

Still, Mr. Saakashvili has thus far weathered his term with relative ease, and he and his ministers have adopted a position of accepting but playing down much of the criticism.

For example, Mr. Saakashvili and Foreign Minister Salome Zourabichvili said in interviews that there had been cases of police abuse, but they also said that retraining the Soviet-era force was changing the law enforcement culture. Human rights, they insist, are a government priority. "I think it is a well-taken criticism," Ms. Zourabichvili said.

Mr. Saakashvili added that he knew of no new cases of torture in the last six months, and that the pay-to-plead system had been discontinued.

But on one point all sides agree: As Mr. Bush's arrival draws near, no amount of new paint can hide Georgia's extraordinary woes.

The two breakaway regions receive baldly defiant Russian support. Poverty and unemployment remain pervasive, and allegations of corruption still swirl.

Georgia's infrastructure is beyond tired. Though the route Mr. Bush will travel is being repaved, the country's roads are legendarily bad. Electricity blackouts are common, especially in winter.

Only 15 of the country's 80 T-55 tanks are working, according to Irakli Okruashvili, the 31-year-old defense minister. Every sector needs investment, but widespread foreign investment has yet to come.

"The new challenge is how to improve the economy," said Gela Bezhuashvili, Mr. Saakashvili's national security adviser.

Mr. Saakashvili said Mr. Bush's visit would be useful because it would give him fresh standing from which to push for more changes to improve the business climate and institutionalize the public's role in political life.

First, he said, Georgia will open its borders, dropping a visa requirement for citizens of the United States, Canada, the European Union, Israel and Japan. Next, Georgia will eliminate 90 percent of the licenses and permits required for businesses, which he said would unclog bureaucracy and reduce opportunities for corruption.

He also said he planned to amend the Constitution to bring direct elections to local government in 2006. Many local leaders are now appointed, a system that has prevented democracy from maturing outside the capital. The system is also too centralized to be effective, Mr. Saakashvili said.

"I have to select 80 heads of local administrations," he said. "And I don't know 99 percent of these people."

He has also pledged to restore round-the-clock electricity by next year, and to connect all main cities to passable roads, and every public school to the Internet.

As the crews rush to dress up the dilapidated capital, all signs are that Mr. Bush will be welcome. Georgians are grateful for more than \$1.3 billion in American aid to Tbilisi since the dismantling of the Soviet Union, and they recognize that a succession of American presidents have stood up for Georgia against meddling from the Kremlin.

Relations with Russia, and distrust of the Kremlin, are among Georgia's most indelible worries. In one sign of how uneasy the relationship is, Mr. Saakashvili noted that although he had repeatedly tried to have a conversation with Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, the two men had not spoken since last summer. Even the Labor Party, which plans to demonstrate against Mr. Saakashvili during Mr. Bush's stay, says it will cheer for support from the United States.

Mr. Natelashvili, the party's leader, used a bit of overstatement to explain how Mr. Bush's visit could appear through the lens of a tiny nation that abuts Russia and worries that Russian ambitions of empire have not waned. "We have been waiting for a visit from an American president," he said, "for 200 years."

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/07/world/europe/bush-celebrating-allies-victory-chafes-old-wounds.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 7, 2005

Bush, Celebrating Allies' Victory, Chafes Old Wounds

RIGA, Latvia, May 6 - President Bush stepped into the middle of an escalating feud between Russia and the Baltic nations on Friday night as he arrived here in the capital of Latvia at the start of a five-day trip to Europe.

Mr. Bush disembarked from Air Force One at the airport shortly after 10 p.m. and went immediately to his hotel on the Daugava River across from the city's Old Town. He scheduled a news conference for Saturday with the leaders of the three Baltic nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and planned to deliver a speech on democracy as well. Mr. Bush is scheduled to meet President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia outside Moscow on Sunday night.

Mr. Bush's trip, to observe the 60th anniversary of the Allies' victory over Nazi Germany in World War II with more than 50 other leaders in Red Square on Monday, has sparked an angry exhumation of wartime politics in the region.

The now independent Baltic nations see the anniversary as the resumption of their unlawful annexation by the Soviet Union, and on Friday Latvia stepped up demands that Russia apologize for decades of occupation.

"Once would be enough," said President Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia at a news conference at Riga Castle on Friday.

The Russians have furiously responded that the three Baltic countries were allies and that the Russian military was invited to march in.

"One cannot use the term 'occupation' to describe those historical events," Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the Russian envoy to the European Union, said at a news conference in Moscow on Thursday. "At that time, the troop deployment took place on an agreed basis and with the clearly expressed agreement of the existing authorities in the Baltic republics."

Ms. Vike-Freiberga, asked in an interview with ABC News on Friday if the Russians were lying about the wartime history in the Baltics, responded, "Through their teeth."

President Bush added fuel to the fire on Friday night. In an interview with the Lithuanian state television network that the White House released shortly before Air Force One landed in Riga, Mr. Bush said that he had spoken to Mr. Putin about the Baltics at their last meeting in February. Mr. Bush also complained at the time about what he considered Mr. Putin's retreat from democracy.

"I said, 'do you understand, friend, that you've got problems in the Baltics'?" Mr. Bush recounted, adding that he told Mr. Putin that "the remembrances of the time of Communism are unpleasant remembrances and you need to work with these young democracies." Mr. Bush added, "I don't know if I made any progress with him or not, but I have made my position clear."

Daniel Fried, assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, went further with reporters on Air Force One, saying that the only "true narrative" of World War II is "ours" and that what the Russians "don't like to remember is what they were doing from 1939 to 1941."

The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a nonaggression pact in August 1939, just weeks before Germany's invasion of Poland precipitated World War II. Soviet troops joined German forces in occupying Poland, and the following year the Soviet Union also entered Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and incorporated them into the Soviet Union as republics. After the Soviet Union joined the war on the side of the Allies in 1941, German forces overran the three Baltic countries and occupied them, with local support, until Soviet troops recaptured them toward the end of the war.

The White House first publicly inserted itself into the quarrel when Mr. Bush sent a letter ahead of his trip to the Baltic leaders that noted that he was coming to celebrate the defeat of Hitler, but that the end of World War II "also marked the Soviet occupation and annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the imposition of Communism."

The letter provoked the angry response from the Russians on Thursday, which in turn prompted the retort from the Latvian president on Friday.

For his part, Mr. Putin said in an interview with German television made public by the Kremlin on Friday that Russia did not need to continually apologize for the "tragedy" inflicted on the Baltic nations.

In a May 4 interview with the CBS program "60 Minutes," to be broadcast on Sunday, Mr. Putin also reiterated complaints that America should not be lecturing him about rollbacks on democracy when "four years ago your presidential election was decided by the court."

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/08/world/europe/bush-tells-putin-not-to-interfere-with-democracy-in-former.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 8, 2005

Bush Tells Putin Not to Interfere With Democracy in Former Soviet Republics

MAASTRICHT, the Netherlands, May 7 - President Bush used the 60th anniversary of Nazi Germany's defeat to warn President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia on Saturday that "no good purpose is served by stirring up fears and exploiting old rivalries" in the former Soviet republics on his borders.

"All the nations that border Russia will benefit from the spread of democratic values, and so will Russia itself," Mr. Bush said in a speech in Riga, Latvia, in the Small Guild House, a neo-gothic meeting hall in the capital's Old City. "Stable, prosperous democracies are good neighbors, trading in freedom and posing no threat to anyone."

The president pointedly said, "The United States has free and peaceful nations to the north and south of us" and "we do not consider ourselves to be encircled."

Mr. Bush then flew to the Netherlands for a brief overnight stay before a meeting and dinner with Mr. Putin at the Russian presidential dacha outside Moscow on Sunday, which is taking on the appearance of a showdown as Mr. Bush has spoken repeatedly of the pain that Baltic nations like Latvia endured under the Soviet occupation after World War II. Mr. Bush is in Europe to mark the anniversary of Hitler's defeat; he will join Mr. Putin for celebrations in Red Square on Monday.

In his speech on Saturday, Mr. Bush seemed certain to irritate Mr. Putin further when he warned him as he had in February about retreating on democracy. "All free and successful countries have some common characteristics -- freedom of worship, freedom of the press, economic liberty, the rule of law and the limitation of power through checks and balances," Mr. Bush said.

In the last year the United States has grown concerned over Mr. Putin's prosecution of business leaders, his increasing control over the press and his involvement in the affairs of Georgia and other neighbors.

Mr. Putin has not reacted positively to such criticism from Mr. Bush in the past, and this week he told the CBS News program "60 Minutes" that Mr. Bush had little business lecturing him about democracy when the 2000 presidential election in the United States was decided by the Supreme Court.

In a joint news conference with Baltic leaders in Riga earlier on Saturday, Mr. Bush put more pressure on Mr. Putin by calling for "free and open and fair" elections in Belarus, the last dictatorship in Europe, whose president, Aleksandr G. Lukashenko, is backed by Mr. Putin. Mr. Bush also did not dispute the premise of a question from a reporter implying that the United States was behind revolutionary change in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

"The idea of countries helping others become free, I hope that would be viewed as not revolutionary, but rational foreign policy, as decent foreign policy, as humane foreign policy," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush, who is on the second day of a five-day trip to Latvia, the Netherlands, Russia and Georgia, is trying to ensure that his attendance at the celebration on Monday does not endorse the Soviet repression and rise of totalitarianism that followed.

So he leveled his harshest criticism against Russia for acts after World War II, and seemed to lean as much toward a denunciation of postwar Soviet acts as celebratory words for the Nazi defeat.

"As we mark a victory of six decades ago, we are mindful of a paradox," he said. "For much of Germany, defeat led to freedom. For much of Eastern and Central Europe, victory brought the iron rule of another empire. V-E Day marked the end of fascism, but not the end of oppression."

The Russians have been angered by Mr. Bush's trip to Latvia and his scheduled visit to Georgia on Monday and Tuesday, and have accused the United States of meddling in the affairs of their former republics, now independent nations with contentious relationships with Moscow.

Mr. Bush on Saturday seemed likely to anger the Russians even more, because he repeatedly used the word "occupation" to describe the Russian acts in the Baltics -- Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia -- after World War II. The Russians have furiously responded that they were invited in.

The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a nonaggression pact in August 1939, just weeks before Germany's invasion of Poland precipitated World War II. Soviet troops joined German forces in occupying Poland, and the next year the Soviet Union also entered Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and incorporated them into the Soviet Union as republics. After the Soviet Union joined the war on the side of the Allies in 1941, German forces overran the three Baltic countries and occupied them, with local support, until Soviet troops retook them near the end of the war.

Mr. Bush added at the news conference, "My hope is that we're now able to move beyond that phase of history into a phase that is embracing democracy and free societies."

But in his speech, Mr. Bush acknowledged that the United States and Britain shared some blame for the annexation of the Baltics, noting that the 1945 Yalta agreement, in which Europe was carved up by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, was in an "unjust tradition" of earlier treaties like the Munich and Molotov-Ribbentrop pacts. He added that "once again, when powerful governments negotiated, the freedom of small nations was somehow expendable" and that the "captivity of millions in Central and Eastern Europe will be remembered as one of the greatest wrongs of history."

Mr. Bush sought to tie democratic change in Eastern Europe to the changes he seeks in the Middle East. "Freedom is the only reliable path to peace," he said. "If the Middle East continues to simmer in anger and hopelessness, caught in a cycle of repression and radicalism, it will produce terrorism of even greater audacity and destructive power." He added that "we will not repeat the mistakes of other generations appeasing or excusing tyranny, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of stability."

Mr. Bush also had stern words for his hosts, the Latvians, telling them they had to respect the rights of the country's ethnic Russian minority, which has objected bitterly to laws requiring the use of the Latvian language in most activities and discrimination in general.

BUSINESS

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/08/business/yourmoney/that-russian-bargain-basement-may-be-overrun.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

MAY 8, 2005

That Russian Bargain Basement May Be Overrun

MOSCOW - INVESTORS in Russia have generally done quite well this year, despite a broad sell-off in many emerging markets elsewhere around the world.

But those investors shouldn't celebrate yet. A major reason that Russian stocks and bonds have performed so well lately is that they did so badly last year, when rising interest rates and fears of Kremlin intervention in the economy prompted many international investors to sell their holdings. Now, Russia looks relatively cheap, and some foreigners have stepped back in from the sidelines. Local players have helped drive the market recovery, too.

Still, many equity investors, including Arjun Divecha, manager of the GMO Emerging Markets fund from Grantham, Mayo, Van Otterloo, remain decidedly cautious about Russia. Mr. Divecha says he has concerns about the country, "not because of the political climate," but because of stock valuations, macroeconomic problems and stock and earnings momentum.

Stock valuations have been buoyed by Russia's oil riches, he said, but "won't be so anymore if oil prices go down." And while the economy has boomed since Vladimir V. Putin became president in 2000, growing 7.1 percent in 2004 alone, Mr. Divecha said that such growth rates would not be likely to last very long in any country. "Expectations are built in, as they are in Russia, that the economy will grow at least 7 percent a year," he warned. "They are likely to disappoint."

Perhaps most ominously, momentum in stock prices has been undercut by the Kremlin-supported campaign against Yukos, the oil company, and its founder, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky. The government seized and then sold Yukos's largest oil field late last year, rocking investor confidence and calling into question the solidity of property rights. Mr. Khodorkovsky has been jailed since October 2003, facing accusations of tax evasion, fraud and embezzlement. A verdict in his criminal case is due on May 16.

Despite those problems, Russia has been relatively immune from the declines that have hit other emerging markets. Spurred by interest-rate increases in the United States and a sell-off in the American bond market, global investors dumped what they saw as riskier assets -- and many emerging markets were hit hard.

But because the Russian stock market has already had a sell-off, its current market valuations are relatively attractive, some investors say. After hitting a record high of more

than 780 in April 2004, Russia's benchmark RTS index slid more than 22 percent and ended the year barely higher, up 0.3 percent, at 605.66. This year, Russia has been playing catch-up. The RTS is up 9.2 percent, versus a gain of 1.1 percent for the MSCI Emerging Markets index.

Russia's equity market remains "extremely cheap on a cash-flow basis," noted James Fenkner, principal at Red Star Asset Management, a hedge fund investing in Russia.

Christopher Weafer, chief strategist at Alfa Bank, concurred with that view, saying: "Earnings are starting to turn, but the reason Russia is cheap is risk. Shifting politics can easily change economic dynamics."

Investors now make more distinctions among emerging markets, said Rudolph Riad-Younes, who runs the Julius Baer International Equity fund. "More people are willing to accept many emerging markets are different than they were 10 or 20 years ago -- especially with valuations very stretched in the developed world."

Russia's macroeconomic position has improved markedly since its debt default in 1998. Amid high oil prices, the federal budget has a net surplus of 687 billion rubles -- almost \$24.7 billion -- equivalent to more than 4 percent of gross domestic product. As of April 22, Russia's foreign-exchange reserves were \$141.3 billion. The world's second-largest oil producer, after Saudi Arabia, Russia may repay its estimated \$100 billion in foreign debt by 2007, Andrei N. Illarionov, an aide to Mr. Putin, said last month.

That has created a golden backdrop for careful fixed-income investors, said Mohamed El-Erian, a former director of the International Monetary Fund and a portfolio manager overseeing international emerging-market debt at Pimco.

Mr. El-Erian invests in Russian sovereign debt like the 30-year bond but avoids corporate bonds in the country. "There are two Russias when you look at the bond market," he said. "Sovereigns have done well, and will continue to do well," returning 10 percent, on average, in the last 12 months. "That's pretty good," he added, "given that almost everything else has sold off."

Mr. El-Erian said he did not hold any Russian corporate bonds. "The rule of law is not applied uniformly, and large companies are often built up around an 'oligarch,' or other business personality," he said.

Minority shareholders' rights are fragile, he said. "The minute you go from sovereign to corporate," he explained, "you assume a lot more risk which is not priced in."

The Yukos affair has seriously strained ties between Russia's business elite and the Kremlin, which has portrayed Yukos as a corporate tax cheat. Once Russia's largest private oil company, Yukos is now half its former size and pumps about 600,000 barrels a day, its largest field having been renationalized. It is still paying off a \$28 billion back tax bill levied by the government, which has reserved the right to use such tactics against other companies.

"Many other companies have also apparently experienced increased harassment, often from the tax administration under the guise of exposing and collecting unpaid taxes from previous years," the World Bank said in a report written in March and released in April.

The government recently levied an unexpected claim for \$1 billion in back taxes against BP's joint venture in Russia, TNK-BP.

"No one wants a repeat of the Yukos case," Igor I. Shuvalov, an aide to Mr. Putin, told an American Chamber of Commerce conference here in March. "We are aware that it tarnishes the country's image. But the same measures will be applied to all taxpayers in the future."

Mr. Putin has tried to smooth worries that the state will intervene at will in the economy - promising a three-year statute of limitations on investigations of controversial 1990's privatizations. Foreign direct investment is improving, although it is still low. It shot up to a record \$9.4 billion in 2004 from \$6.8 billion in 2003 -- but that is just two-thirds the foreign direct investment in the Czech Republic.

One possible stimulus for the markets involves Gazprom, the natural gas company. United States investors cannot hold its local shares directly; they have been limited to more expensive American depository receipts. But German Gref, the economic development and trade minister, has said the scrapping of limits on foreigners owning Gazprom shares "will happen this year."

Gazprom's tiny weighting in the MSCI Emerging Markets index could rise significantly once that limit has ended. That poses a quandary for investors like Julie Pfeffer, portfolio manager at DuPont Capital Management. She said the potential for Gazprom to become a major component in the index would probably require her to buy Gazprom -- albeit reluctantly.

"I've always been very unhappy with management there, and if you look at the money they're making -- and wasting -- on expenses and capital expense write-offs, I can't in good conscience buy it," she said. "I've been happy up until now that it's been a minor component of the index. If it gets a good weight I'll have to buy some, and I don't want any."

OPINION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/10/opinion/how-russia-lost-world-war-ii.html>

By VICTOR EROFEYEV

MAY 10, 2005

How Russia Lost World War II

MOSCOW - MY parents named me Victor in honor of the Soviet Union's victory over Hitler, and I am proud of my name. I see no reason to cast doubt on the historical significance of that victory; for years the Russian people, who lost millions of soldiers in the war, have united around the celebration of Victory Day. Yet, as we mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, we are seeing not so much a celebration as a major disagreement between millions of people, and even between nations.

This city, having summoned distinguished foreign guests for the occasion, chose to celebrate victory in genuine military-camp style, full of gun-carrying army and police patrols more fearful of terrorist attacks than ever before. And who exactly is to blame for these painful paradoxes? President Vladimir Putin himself effectively answered that question in his recent declaration that the collapse of the Soviet Union was "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century."

Today's Kremlin has neatly split the history of the Soviet Union into two, like splitting a block of birch wood with an axe. It has cast aside the country's communist experiment as an unworkable utopia and begun glorifying Soviet Russia's imperial pretensions. In other words, what has happened is pretty much the opposite of what Khrushchev did in the 1950's when he sacrificed Stalin's dictatorship in the name of Lenin. Now the Kremlin is sacrificing Lenin in the name of Generalissimus Stalin.

Schism is a terrible word in Russia, where Christians were once divided into the "old believers" and the followers of the reformed Orthodox Church. Now a battle over the interpretation of Russian history is provoking a schism throughout society.

Half of the population -- elderly people, the poor, those not very well educated and resentful of perestroika -- see the creeping rehabilitation of Stalin as a return to true values. They are ready to erect monuments to Stalin the Victor around the country. They are not disconcerted by his political crimes, for which they sometimes produce justifications that are beyond all comprehension. There is no more logic in all this than there would be in Jews suddenly deciding to erect a monument to Hitler.

However, the other half of today's Russia, made richer by the experiment of perestroika, knows more about Stalin's crimes than it did even 15 years ago. Enlightened Russia affirms that we won the victory despite Stalin. It hates him for his terror, his failure to prepare for war, his use of soldiers as cannon fodder, and for much more besides. Enlightened Russia sees Stalinist totalitarianism and Hitler's regime as two sides of the same coin.

But the Kremlin is pandering rashly and none too intelligently to the unenlightened, socially backward half of Russia, refusing to understand that this bloc has no future. In short, the schism has led Russia into an ideological civil war.

By adopting the ideas of the Soviet Union as its heritage, Mr. Putin's Russia is entering into intellectual conflict with her western neighbors. The Kremlin is once again emphasizing its historical justification for the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact -- which gave Germany permission to invade Poland in exchange for Soviet dominion over Finland and much of the Baltics -- and denying that Baltic states were occupied; it is also again trying to gloss over the massacre of Polish troops at the Katyn Forest in 1940 (after a period of public confessions from Yeltsin) and the rapes of hundreds of thousands of women by soldiers in the territory liberated by the Red Army.

The Kremlin does not seem to understand that it no longer has any Warsaw Pact satellites that will applaud its every move. Rather, Russia's neighbors now resent the way the Soviet Union treated them, and are new members of NATO who like not feeling afraid of the Kremlin any more. They are justifiably furious at being offered old versions of history in the Kremlin's new packaging.

Political quarrels lead to scandalous rows. I regret that some Polish politicians want to name a square in Warsaw after the slain Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev. My position is closer to that of the Poles who believe that while the Soviet Union reduced Poland to subjection, it also saved it from the national extinction that Hitler intended.

But if Russia stubbornly persists in taking everything that was once politically useful to the Stalinist superpower as its own priorities, I am afraid that she will lose the ability to distinguish her victories from her defeats. Russia has never been as ideologically isolated in Europe as she was on this Victory Day.

Op-Ed Contributor Victor Erofeyev is the author of "Russian Beauty." This article was translated by Andrew Bromfield from the Russian.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/11/world/europe/bush-encourages-georgia-with-a-warning-to-russia.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 11, 2005

Bush Encourages Georgia With a Warning to Russia

TBILISI, Georgia, May 10 - President Bush told tens of thousands of cheering Georgians packed into the city's Freedom Square on Tuesday that the United States would stand with Georgia, a former Soviet republic, as it built its young democracy, and then pointedly he warned President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia that the sovereignty of Georgia "must be respected by all nations."

On the last stop of a five-day trip that also included visits to Russia, Latvia and the Netherlands, Mr. Bush sought to tie the democratic movements in Georgia and other former Soviet republics to his vision for democracy in the Middle East and around the world. He spoke from the square where Georgians gathered in November 2003 for the "Rose Revolution," when Mikheil Saakashvili carried roses as he stormed into Parliament and displaced President Eduard A. Shevardnadze in a bloodless coup.

"We are living in historic times when freedom is advancing, from the Black Sea to the Caspian, and to the Persian Gulf and beyond," Mr. Bush said. "As you watch free people gathering in squares like this across the world, waving their nations' flags and demanding their God-given rights, you can take pride in this fact: they have been inspired by your example and they take hope in your success."

The White House, which has often scheduled the last stops on Mr. Bush's European trips in the former Communist countries where the president remains highly popular, had planned the Tbilisi speech to serve as a final feel-good picture before Mr. Bush headed west across Europe and the Atlantic for home.

The Georgians did not disappoint. On a hot spring day, the boisterous, largely youthful crowd -- said to be one of the largest ever to gather in Georgia -- seemed unaware or did not care that the Bush administration steadfastly backed Mr. Shevardnadze in 2003, refusing to meet with the pro-democracy forces until after the former Soviet foreign minister had fled. Mr. Saakashvili, a 37-year-old lawyer who studied at Columbia and was the main benefactor of Mr. Bush's visit, estimated that as many as 150,000 people had come to see Mr. Bush, the first American president to visit his country.

Behind the president was Tbilisi's City Hall, its windows draped with American and Georgian flags. To Mr. Bush's right, carefully positioned for the television cameras, was an enormous White House-created backdrop emblazoned with the words "Celebrating Freedom and Democracy." Throughout the square were banners and pictures of roses. Mr. Bush spoke from an outdoor stage that appeared to be protected by bulletproof glass.

Mr. Bush's warning to Mr. Putin, his host only 24 hours before at the 60th anniversary celebration of the defeat of Germany, was focused on two separatist enclaves within Georgia's borders, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, that are aligned with Moscow. Earlier in the day, at a joint news conference with Mr. Saakashvili in the Parliament building, Mr. Bush embraced the Georgian president's plan for the enclaves to become autonomous and self-governing, but not independent. He noted with approval that Mr. Saakashvili wanted the country "to remain intact."

Mr. Bush's words were immediately criticized by the president of Abkhazia, Sergei Bagapsh, who told the Interfax news agency that "the Abkhaz people have already opted for an independent state at a referendum, and this choice should be respected."

Mr. Bush took a careful stance on the even more delicate issue of the two Russian military bases on Georgian soil that the Georgians want removed. The two countries are negotiating, but Mr. Saakashvili boycotted the 60th anniversary celebration in Red Square to protest a lack of progress. Mr. Bush said at the news conference that he had spoken to Mr. Putin about the matter.

"He reminded me that there is an agreement in place -- a 1999 agreement," Mr. Bush said. "He said that the Russians want to work with the government to fulfill their obligations in terms of that agreement. I think that's a commitment that's important for the people of Georgia to hear. It shows there's grounds to work to get this issue resolved."

The day's big event in Freedom Square was marred by technical problems in a country that has struggled to bring its infrastructure and utilities up to 21st-century standards. A speech that Mr. Saakashvili delivered before Mr. Bush spoke went largely unheard because the public address system failed and was not fixed until the end of his remarks.

The loudspeakers failed again when the Georgian national anthem was played, and for a moment the crowd stood in silence. But then some people began to sing it out loud, and the rest of the crowd joined in.

In his remarks, Mr. Bush warned Georgians that for all their recent success, elections were only the beginning. "While peaceful revolutions can bring down repressive regimes, the real changes and the real challenge is to build up free institutions in their place," Mr. Bush said. "This is difficult work, and you are undertaking it with dignity and determination."

Mr. Saakashvili has been praised for attacking the country's long-term corruption, modernizing the military, increasing tax collection and instituting standardized testing in schools, but his country has also been criticized by Human Rights Watch for the use of torture and a plea-bargaining system that allows defendants in criminal cases to pay the government to avoid a trial.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/11/world/europe/russia-and-europeans-sign-pact-but-tensions-persist.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

MAY 11, 2005

Russia and Europeans Sign Pact, but Tensions Persist

MOSCOW, May 10 - Russia and the European Union signed a long-stalled agreement on Tuesday to forge closer economic, political and social ties, but President Vladimir V. Putin showed that deep tensions with some of the union's newest members remained when he offered pointed condemnations of their policies.

Appearing after a summit meeting with European Union leaders here, Mr. Putin praised the agreement as a step toward the creation of a European continent "with no dividing lines." But he then angrily criticized the Baltic nations -- former Soviet republics that joined the European Union last year -- for clinging to historic grievances over Soviet domination.

He cuttingly said he hoped that Latvia and Estonia would not make "idiotic" territorial demands preventing the signing of formal border treaties, demands that officials of both countries denied having made.

"Today in Europe in the 21st century, when one country is making territorial claims against another and at the same time wants to ratify border treaties, this is complete nonsense -- soft-boiled boots," he said in remarks shown on state television, using a Russian idiom for an absurdity.

His remarks, like his previous flashes of temper when discussing sensitive topics, soured the otherwise cordial atmosphere that officials on both sides had predicted for the meeting, which came a day after Mr. Putin played host to dozens of world leaders commemorating the 60th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany.

The agreement signed Tuesday, more symbolic than substantive, came after months of tensions between Russia and the European Union that culminated with the political upheaval last fall in Ukraine that overturned the fraudulent election of a pro-Russian candidate whom Mr. Putin had endorsed openly.

European leaders played an important role in negotiations that ultimately cleared the way for the election of Ukraine's new president, Viktor A. Yushchenko. Negotiations over closer ties, first proposed two years ago, quickly stalled.

In the agreement, the two sides pledge to cooperate in removing barriers to trade, jointly fighting terrorism, proliferation of weapons and organized crime, and adopting uniform educational standards. But the two sides failed to agree on easing visa requirements, an important Russian demand, and on requiring Moscow to accept the return of Russian illegal immigrants detained in European nations.

President Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, who currently occupies the European Union's rotating presidency, said that the union and Russia remained committed to closer relations, but that divisions still had to be overcome. "Russia and the European Union are not yet on their honeymoon," he said, "but it is true love."

Mr. Putin's remarks suggested that the new lovers still had some quarrels to work through. Russia has previously initialed border treaties with Latvia and Estonia but has yet to sign or ratify them, a delicate issue for the European Union. Latvian and Estonian officials said in interviews afterward that blame for the delay in signing the treaties rested in Moscow.

"The statements of the Russian president clearly demonstrate there are fundamental differences between Russia's perceptions and that of other countries" about Latvian independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a spokesman for Latvia's Foreign Ministry, Atis Lotz, said in a telephone interview.

Mr. Putin scolded an Estonian television journalist who had asked why Russia refused to renounce the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the nonaggression treaty signed by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany in 1939, leading to the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania -- a question raised repeatedly before the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II.

He responded that the Soviet Union's Congress of People's Deputies did so in 1989, making a new Russian denunciation unnecessary. He then dismissed historical claims that Soviet forces reoccupied the Baltic nations after the war, since by then they were already part of the Soviet Union.

"Maybe I did not study very well in university because I drank too much beer in Soviet times," he said, "but something still remains in my head, because our history teachers were good."

OPINION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/11/opinion/wowing-them-in-tbilisi.html>

MAY 11, 2005

Wowing Them in Tbilisi

It was heartwarming to see President Bush welcomed warmly in Riga, Latvia, and drawing huge crowds in Tbilisi, Georgia, but his trip through the former Soviet Union hit a home run on public relations while striking out on substance. The one overriding American concern when it comes to Russia is nuclear security and nonproliferation, and on that front, it appears nothing was accomplished.

Strong United States support for two of the most democratic former Soviet republics is appropriate and welcome, although it cannot disguise the precipitous decline in American relations with many of the larger countries of Western Europe. But it is Russia, not Latvia or Georgia, that still has more than 10,000 armed nuclear warheads and vast insecure stockpiles of nuclear bomb fuel. And it is also Russia whose willingness to cajole and pressure Iran could help dissuade that country from taking the few remaining steps needed for it to become a nuclear weapons state.

The Moscow stop brought no significant new announcements on either nuclear front, just elaborately orchestrated theatrics that were apparently meant to show that despite Mr. Bush's anti-Moscow finger-pointing from beyond Russia's borders, his strong personal bond with Mr. Putin remains intact. In fact, the worrisomely authoritarian Mr. Putin seemed to come off rather better than the incontestably democratic Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill -- in a lunge at historical revisionism, Mr. Bush glibly took those great World War II leaders to task for acceding to Stalin's power grabs in Eastern Europe that they were militarily powerless to halt.

Previous meetings between Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin have yielded agreements on sharp cuts in long-range nuclear-armed missiles and bombers. The last time they met, in February, they announced an agreement to combat nuclear terrorism by accelerating joint programs meant to secure poorly safeguarded Russian bomb fuel. What is needed now is final resolution of a dispute over liability that threatens to hold up those vital nuclear security programs, along with joint moves to take thousands of nuclear warheads off hair-trigger alert (Russia's are increasingly vulnerable to a catastrophic accidental launching as its early warning system continues to erode). The two nations should also proceed to overdue reductions in tactical nuclear warheads, which are more easily stolen or bartered than missile-mounted long-range warheads.

Measurable progress on these fronts would have been helpful to the struggling Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference now under way in New York, where nonnuclear nations are increasingly challenging the reluctance of the major nuclear powers to reduce their weapons inventories. Any presidential trip that skirted that issue has to be judged a failure. Still, Mr. Bush is returning home with lots of politically priceless footage from Riga and Tbilisi.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/15/weekinreview/1945s-legacy-a-terror-defeated-another-arrives.html>

By ROGER COHEN

MAY 15, 2005

1945's Legacy: A Terror Defeated, Another Arrives

THE Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Aleksandr Yakovenko, had an interesting suggestion the other day. "The job of historians is to tell the truth," he ventured. If only it were that simple.

Mr. Yakovenko made this cute observation as he waded into the historical minefield that President Bush was also navigating last week. At the core of the explosive issues confronted by the president in the Baltic states and Moscow lies this vexed question: Can a meaningful distinction be made, in moral terms, between Communist totalitarian terror and Nazism?

Vaira Vike-Freiberga, the president of Latvia, gave her own answer in a statement before Mr. Bush's arrival in her country. The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 was no liberation for the Baltic states, she suggested, because "it meant slavery, it meant occupation, it meant subjugation and it meant Stalinist terror."

Unlike the leaders of Lithuania and Estonia, who snubbed the event, Ms. Vike-Freiberga attended last Monday's ceremonies in Red Square commemorating the 60th anniversary of the defeat of the Nazis. The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, surprised nobody by choosing to avoid any expression of contrition for postwar Soviet rule of the Baltic states. The Latvian president, commenting that a Russian apology "would have been nice," called the proceedings "surreal."

So it goes. History is indeed making a surreal comeback -- in Beijing and Seoul (where Japan is the target), and in Riga and Moscow. It is reasonable to ask why.

The answer is that unraveling the tangled legacy of the cold war is time-consuming. That struggle had its imperatives, dictated by the ideological confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The manipulation of memory and truth created a web of obfuscation stretching from Santiago to Stalingrad.

For 44 years, history on the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain bore no relation to "truth"; it was an exercise in glorifying Communism. In the West, truth could also be a casualty. The 15 years since the Berlin Wall fell have gone some way toward casting light on cold war shadows, but have not dispelled them.

The disputes of the past two weeks illustrate the lingering difficulties. Russia, outraged that the result of its Great Patriotic War, fought at a terrible cost, could be viewed as "slavery and subjugation" by its neighbors, asked whether those neighbors would have been around at all if the Red Army had not helped defeat Hitler. "When people today discuss whether we occupied anybody's country or not, I want to ask them: what would

have happened to you had we not broken the back of fascism?" the Russian defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, declared. "Would your people be among the living now?"

Fair question -- but not one that removes Moscow's responsibility for mass deportations from the Baltic states after 1945. Mr. Putin also weighed in, suggesting that the indignation from Riga to Vilnius was aimed in part at disguising a history of collaboration with the Nazis.

Behind this historical poker -- I'll see your "terror" and raise you a "collaboration" -- lies the fact that years of debate have not resolved how the terrible twins of the 20th century, Communism and Nazism, should be viewed on a scale of evil.

Perhaps it does not matter: the tens of millions of victims of the two ideologies will not return and the European collective suicide that handed America the world cannot be undone. Perhaps, also, any view depends on geography: from the standpoint of the Baltic states or Ukraine, the scourge of Communism is much more palpable than it is on the Left Bank of the Seine.

Still, something is disturbing about the Russian stonewalling since Mr. Bush suggested this month that while 1945 brought liberation to Western Europe, it brought a "painful history" to other parts of the continent.

After all, there can now be little debate that the exercise of Communism, whatever the idealism of its origins, killed upward of 80 million people in the Soviet Union, China, Cambodia, Eastern Europe, North Korea and Vietnam.

Nor can there be any doubt that terror, concentration camps and wholesale liquidations in the name of class struggle (against "kulaks" or "reactionaries") formed an intrinsic part of the system brought to an apogee of terror by Stalin.

Indeed, in terms of sheer numbers, Communism's claim to have been more murderous than Nazism is persuasive: it lasted longer and its reach was greater.

But because its crimes were more scattered and less visible to the West, because Communism exercised such an enduring fascination on intellectuals, and because it was indeed the Red Army that helped crush the Third Reich, the terror of which Ms. Vike-Freiberga spoke has always appeared less vivid and less uniform in Paris or London or New York than Hitler's genocide.

It is also true that the killing from Ukraine to China in the name of class struggle never became Hitler's industrialized mass murder and did not aim at the physical elimination of a whole people -- an idea and method that have held the Western imagination with a particular force. The aim of the Nazis was extermination of the Jews, whereas Stalin's liquidations were the byproduct rather than the core of his ideology.

These distinctions are real. But it remains striking that Nazism was judged at Nuremberg, whereas the crimes of Communism have never come before an international tribunal. The resulting gray areas provide space for Russia to dig in, proclaim its great achievements, and dismiss the pain its victory inflicted.

The international community did agree four years ago to hold one tribunal that would address a Communist crime: the 1.5 million Cambodians sacrificed to the social engineering of Pol Pot. But this killing was part of the dirty business of the cold war, implicating many actors, and so the will has never been found to hold the trial.

Even now, as the past week shows, the dirty laundry of Communism has not yet been hung out in the sun. The search for truth remains a work in progress.

Roger Cohen, who writes the Globalist column for The International Herald Tribune, is author of "Soldiers and Slaves: American P.O.W.'s Trapped by the Nazis' Final Gamble" (Knopf).

U. S.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/16/politics/60-years-later-debating-yalta-all-over-again.html>

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

MAY 16, 2005

60 Years Later, Debating Yalta All Over Again

WASHINGTON - When President Bush declared on May 7 in Latvia that the 1945 Yalta agreement led to "one of the greatest wrongs of history," he reignited an ideological debate from the era of Joseph McCarthy. For more than a week now, the left and the right have been arguing over the president's words and rearguing the deal made by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill in an old czarist resort near the Crimean city of Yalta in the closing days of World War II.

Mr. Bush has criticized Yalta at least six other times publicly, usually in Eastern Europe, but never so harshly. In the dust kicked up by the quarreling, the central questions for White House watchers are these: How did the unexpected attack on Yalta get in the president's speech? What drove his thinking? Did the White House expect the fallout?

First, the history and the debate.

Yalta effectively recognized Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, and set the stage for what later became known as the cold war. In the view of many conservatives, the dying Roosevelt did nothing less at Yalta than sell out Eastern Europe to Soviet control for the next 50 years. In the view of liberals, including major historians, Roosevelt ceded Poland and parts of Eastern Europe to Stalin because the Red Army controlled the territory anyway, and Yalta changed no realities on the ground. Yalta also called for free elections in Poland, which Stalin later ignored.

Mr. Bush not only sided with the conservatives in his speech in the Latvian capital, Riga, but he also took a harder-line view against Yalta than any other American president, including Ronald Reagan. By far Mr. Bush's most hotly contested formulation was his assertion that Yalta followed in the "unjust tradition" of the secret nonaggression deal between the Nazis and the Soviets known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and the British appeasement of Hitler in the Munich pact.

"Which is a bit much," said John Lewis Gaddis of Yale, a leading historian of the cold war. "Munich and the Nazi-Soviet pact caused things to happen. Yalta didn't change anything. If the Yalta conference had never taken place, the division of Europe into two great spheres of influence would still have happened."

Robert Dallek, a Boston University historian and an expert on Roosevelt's foreign policy, agreed. "Republicans have been beating on this issue since the end of the Roosevelt presidency, and they have been consistently off the mark," he said. "This idea that Roosevelt and Churchill gave away Eastern Europe to the Soviets is nonsense."

David M. Kennedy, a Stanford historian, put it this way: "This was a stick to beat the Democrats up with in the McCarthy era."

Conservatives are equally adamant. In his syndicated column last Wednesday, Patrick J. Buchanan said that Mr. Bush told "the awful truth" about who really triumphed in World War II east of the Elbe -- "it was Stalin, the most odious tyrant of the century" -- and that the pact that Roosevelt and Churchill co-signed at Yalta was a "monstrous lie."

On the same day, Anne Applebaum, a columnist for The Washington Post, wrote that "a small crew of liberal historians and Rooseveltians have leaped to argue that the president was wrong." In fact, she said, Yalta and other wartime deals "went beyond mere recognition of Soviet occupation and conferred legality and international acceptance on new borders and political structures."

At the White House, Mr. Bush's speech was written by Michael Gerson, the assistant to the president for policy and strategic planning and the former chief speechwriter who still has a big hand in Mr. Bush's major addresses. The language in Mr. Gerson's Latvia speech that Yalta, in an "attempt to sacrifice freedom for the sake of stability" left a continent "divided and unstable," built on steadily intensifying language over the previous four years.

In June 2001 in Warsaw, Mr. Bush said, "Yalta did not ratify a natural divide, it divided a living civilization." In November 2002 in Lithuania, he declared that there would be "no more Munichs, no more Yaltas." In May 2003 in Krakow, he said, "Europe must finally overturn the bitter legacy of Yalta." This February in Brussels, Mr. Bush said, "The so-called stability of Yalta was a constant source of injustice and fear."

An administration official said on Friday that in the discussions about Mr. Bush's address -- the president typically gives his speechwriters big-picture thematic direction and then has a heavy hand in the editing -- the goal was to make the point that "countries need to look at their pasts." In this case, the White House wan

ted to make the point that President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, Mr. Bush's host the following day, should apologize for the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which led to the Soviet annexation of Latvia and the other Baltic states.

So Mr. Bush's assertion of American failure at Yalta was viewed at the White House as a model for what Mr. Putin should -- but did not -- do. It was also a poke in the eye to the Russians, salve to Mr. Bush's Baltic hosts and an effort to contrast what Mr. Bush promotes as his uncompromising vision for democracy in the Middle East with what he sees as the expedience of the past.

The administration official, who requested anonymity because he said he wanted to let the president's words speak for themselves, said the White House had not anticipated last week's fallout, nor had anyone there discussed what he called the "nasty and stupid" Yalta politics of the McCarthy era.

"The point was, it was a lousy agreement," the official said.

BUSINESS

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/18/business/worldbusiness/russia-has-a-new-plan-to-win-control-of-gazprom.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

MAY 18, 2005

Russia Has a New Plan to Win Control of Gazprom

MOSCOW, May 17 - The Russian government outlined on Tuesday how it will gain control of Gazprom, the country's natural gas monopoly. Instead of merging Gazprom with the state-owned oil company Rosneft, as it initially planned, the Kremlin will use a more complicated deal structure.

The government abandoned its merger plans because of fallout from its dismantling of the private oil giant Yukos and the legal assault on the founder of Yukos, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky.

The Kremlin opted instead to raise cash and buy shares of Gazprom outright to increase the state's stake to a majority in an effort to avoid lawsuits that could dog the company for years.

It is unclear whether the Russian government has completely abandoned its plan to create a national energy company -- a megacorporation to be overseen by the Kremlin. The new deal will still raise the state's ownership in Gazprom to a controlling one, albeit in a different and more complicated way.

Gazprom and the Economic Development Ministry of Russia both said that Gazprom would forgo the merger with Rosneft and instead create a special holding company to raise money in the capital markets.

The new holding company will own 100 percent of Rosneft as its main asset. The holding company is expected to sell debt in financial markets and use that money to buy Gazprom treasury shares for cash.

The holding company will then sell a percentage of Rosneft through an initial public offering and use the money to pay down debt. Finally, the holding company, fully owned by the state, will hold 10.7 percent of Gazprom as well as the remaining piece of Rosneft, according to the ministry's statement.

"In this way, the state will become the direct owner of a controlling stake in Gazprom and a controlling stake in Rosneft," the ministry said on its Web site on Tuesday.

The deal paves the way for getting rid of limits on foreign ownership in Gazprom, possibly as soon as the company's next annual general meeting on June 24, according to an e-mailed statement from Gazprom. The deal has the potential to repair damage to the Russian investment climate resulting from the attack on Yukos, investors said.

"What this news does is confirm that there is a mechanism in place for the government to raise its ownership in Gazprom," said William F. Browder, a Gazprom shareholder in

the Hermitage Fund, a hedge fund dedicated to Russia. The timing remains unclear, but "this is huge news for Gazprom shareholders. Now there's some certainty. It will be done and it will be done for cash."

Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, has long sought to reassure foreign investors that a two-tier system of Gazprom share ownership, known as the "ring-fence," which created cheaper shares for Russians and more expensive American depository receipts for foreign investors, would be scrapped once the merger was completed.

At current market prices, the Kremlin needs to raise about \$6.6 billion to buy 10.7 percent of Gazprom, which would raise the government's stake to 50 percent, from its current 39.3 percent holding. Foreign investors currently can buy only the American depository receipts and collectively may not own more than 20 percent of the company.

Gazprom, in its bond offering prospectus issued on Sunday, had hinted the Rosneft merger was off. It said the government was considering "different options" for raising the state's equity interest in Gazprom.

Among the government's options were "the use of available funds to purchase for cash Gazprom shareholders currently held by subsidiaries, the alternative preferred by Gazprom," according to a copy of the bond prospectus. "We believe that our merger with, or acquisition of, Rosneft, or any other company the shares of which are owned by the Russian Federation, is unlikely."

Rosneft last year won Yukos's largest oil field, Yuganskneftegas, which the government seized as payment for part of Yukos's \$28 billion in back taxes. Yukos, once Russia's largest private oil company, was at one time worth \$40 billion in market capitalization. Its market value is now roughly \$2 billion and it has repeatedly threatened that it will file for bankruptcy protection.

Analysts said Rosneft potentially faced lengthy lawsuits from Yukos shareholders and from creditors. Instead, the Kremlin is going for a simpler method than merging Gazprom and Rosneft.

"Gazprom needed a solution, and buying Rosneft wasn't it," said Steven Dashevsky, an oil analyst at Aton Capital here. "The only thing the government cares about is getting its ownership up to a 51 percent stake, and they don't care how they do it. Paying cash is more transparent and less risky, and it's a move investors should cheer."

Mr. Khodorkovsky is being sentenced this week on criminal charges.

BUSINESS

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/25/business/international-business-in-moscow-us-strives-for-greater-share-of.html>

By ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

MAY 25, 2005

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS; In Moscow, U.S. Strives for Greater Share of Oil Exports

MOSCOW, May 24 - Samuel W. Bodman, United States energy secretary, met with Kremlin officials Tuesday to relay the concerns of American energy companies about Russia's investment climate, and added that Russian oil exports to the United States should be "10 times" what they are currently.

In an effort to revive flagging energy cooperation between the two countries, Mr. Bodman met with his counterpart, Russia's minister of industry and energy, Viktor B. Khristenko, and the economic development and trade minister, German O. Gref, regarding critical issues.

Among them were a long-delayed oil pipeline to Murmansk, in Russia's far North; potential joint projects in liquefied natural gas; and ways to improve the investment environment, perceived as hostile since the Russian government partly renationalized its largest private oil company, Yukos.

"My observations ran from the need to improvements in transparency, the sanctity of contracts and judicial independence," Mr. Bodman said at a news briefing at the American Embassy here, "all matters that have caused concern in the private sector."

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the United States has sought alternative sources of energy to replace supplies from the Middle East, and Russia's crude production in recent years had grown as fast as 10 percent a year.

But the attack on Yukos, once Russia's largest private oil company, has crimped its record production growth, and prompted worries about the safety of property rights.

"Russia's oil exports to the U.S. total about 230,000 to 240,000 barrels a day," Mr. Bodman said. "It should be 10 times that or more, given the reserves that are here."

Asked whether he raised the Yukos affair specifically with the Kremlin officials, Mr. Bodman answered: "Not that I remember. I guess I did allude to the fact that it was one of the reasons that there was uncertainty. I think I probably did in some of the conversations and I didn't in others."

Meanwhile, big United States energy companies have been largely sidelined from direct investments in Russia's oil and gas sector.

Last year, Exxon Mobil abruptly lost its license to the Sakhalin-3 concession, a huge project in Russia's Far East that it has been developing for roughly a decade.

Exxon Mobil's chief, Lee. R. Raymond, said in December that the company was re-evaluating whether it would invest more money in Russia until there was clarity on the investment climate.

In January, the Kremlin said it would re-auction the oil-rich block on the remote eastern island of Sakhalin, though Exxon Mobil said the deal had been exclusive.

Mr. Bodman acknowledged that the United States was competing globally with China and India for energy investments.

Russia's plans for a pipeline to Murmansk, destined to ship oil to America's Eastern Seaboard, are now suspended, and a pipeline to Asian customers ending in Nakhodka in Russia's Far East is on the drawing board.

"To the extent it is viewed as being best for Russia to build every pipeline to China, then that's what they should do," Mr. Bodman said. "I respectfully suggest that there are better ways."

June

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/01/world/europe/russia-tycoon-given-9-years-on-tax-charge.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS and ERIN E. ARVEDLUND

JUNE 1, 2005

Russia Tycoon Given 9 Years on Tax Charge

MOSCOW, May 31 - A Russian court convicted Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, the embattled tycoon and founder of the Yukos oil company, on criminal charges Tuesday and sentenced him to nine years in prison, bringing to an end the most closely watched trial in Russia since the Soviet Union collapsed.

The verdict and the sentence carried the feel of conclusions long ago foregone. The Kremlin has portrayed the oil magnate and his company as self-interested tax cheats with little respect for either the law or the state.

But his supporters said any number of Russia's "oligarchs" could have been charged with the same crimes, which they said were routine business practices here in the 1990's. They characterized the trial as the selective prosecution of a rival and a statement of Kremlin power meant to frighten independent businessmen, dissuade political opponents, regain control of strategic assets and squelch public dissent.

Western governments have followed the proceedings as an indicator of whether Russia is stepping off a path toward democracy and a fair business climate as it continues to emerge from decades of Soviet rule. Speaking from Washington, President Bush expressed concern about the case just hours after the sentences were handed down.

"Here, you're innocent until proven guilty, and it appeared to us, at least people in my administration, that it looked like he had been judged guilty prior to having a fair trial," Mr. Bush said in an appearance at the Rose Garden. "We're watching the ongoing case."

Mr. Khodorkovsky, 41, had been the wealthiest man in Russia until he publicly challenged President Vladimir V. Putin, in part by supporting opposition political parties. Using Yukos as a platform, he had also pushed for more oil sales to the West and private pipelines to China.

He was arrested by masked men at gunpoint late in 2003. After an 11-month trial, he and his longtime business associate, Platon A. Lebedev, were found guilty by a panel of judges on six of seven charges, including fraud, embezzlement and corporate and personal tax evasion. There was no jury. The reading of the verdict lasted 12 days.

Mr. Khodorkovsky, who has already spent 19 months in pretrial confinement, will be eligible for release in 2012. Mr. Lebedev was given the same sentence. Prosecutors had asked for maximum sentences of 10 years.

The court also ordered the two men to pay just over 17 billion rubles, or about \$613 million, in taxes and fines. A third defendant, Andrei Krainov, was convicted and given a suspended sentence of five and a half years.

The conclusion of the verdicts were read just before 1 p.m. in a small crowded courtroom. After the judges handed down the sentences the chief judge, Irina Kolesnikova, asked if the two men understood, according to pooled reports of the journalists allowed into the room.

Mr. Lebedev's tone was biting. "Any normal person would not understand a word you have just said," he said.

Mr. Khodorkovsky was pale and expressionless. His wife, seated near the gray metal cage in which he has appeared for much of the past year, quietly sobbed, dabbed her eyes and was comforted by his father and mother.

As word of the verdicts rippled outside the court, pro-Yukos protesters, kept several blocks away from the court entrance by a contingent of guards, began chanting, "Not guilty!" and "Shame!"

Another group of demonstrators, this one pro-government, was almost silent. In interviews, several did not seem to know why they were there. They refused to say who had arranged the protest but said they had been bused in, suggesting they were stand-ins.

Various regarded in Russia as a victim of Kremlin vindictiveness and a ruthless and unsavory insider who amassed his almost uncountable fortune on insider deals, Mr. Khodorkovsky had come to represent contradictory visions of Russia's future.

For the business and political elite looking toward a more Western capitalist economy, he was a visionary entrepreneur who transformed Soviet-era oil assets into Yukos, a profitable and efficient crude producer that at one point was Russia's largest private oil company.

At its height, Yukos employed more than 100,000 people and pumped more oil than Libya. And as his company's market share grew, Mr. Khodorkovsky emerged as a player on the world's energy stage, meeting with Western politicians and giving millions of dollars to philanthropic causes here.

But for Russians, many of whom survive on salaries of \$250 a month, Mr. Khodorkovsky was a polarizing figure, embodying the worst transgressions of post-Soviet privatization. Like many other Russian billionaires of today, he became wealthy practically overnight in the 1990's by winning prize state assets for pennies on the dollar, often through rigged auctions.

He also had a streak of boldness, which appears to have been his undoing. Mr. Putin, a former head of the Russian domestic intelligence agency that succeeded the K.G.B., met in 2000 with Russia's wealthiest billionaires and warned them away from politics in exchange for amnesty in their murky business deals. Mr. Khodorkovsky largely ignored the advice.

His trial at first focused on the 1994 privatization of an obscure fertilizer plant, Apatit, although government prosecutors and judges on Tuesday decided not to rule on that particular deal, citing an expired 10-year statute of limitations.

The sentences end for the moment the rout of Mr. Khodorkovsky, several of his associates, and the Yukos oil company, which lost its core asset in an auction last year that was widely criticized as Kremlin-rigged.

Just after the verdict, prosecutors issued a statement saying more charges against Mr. Khodorkovsky are expected. They did not offer any details. The defense lawyers for both men said they would appeal within 10 days, the limit under Russian law.

There was public silence from the Kremlin in the hours after the verdicts were read.

Metal barriers, police officers with batons and troops with automatic rifles ringed the courthouse. Cellphones outside the courthouse were jammed.

Mr. Khodorkovsky's defense lawyers and supporters have said since his arrest that the case against him was largely driven by political motivations and Kremlin pique, a post-Soviet update of the Communist Party's infamous show trials.

A battle to shape the public's perception of the verdict began immediately after the sentences were made public. Yukos released a statement declaring the cases "a gross travesty of justice produced by a judicial system that has not only been content to be maneuvered to destroy Mikhail Khodorkovsky, but also is intent on bringing down Yukos."

Representative Tom Lantos of California, the ranking Democratic member of the House International Relations Committee, appeared outside the court. "This political trial, tried before a kangaroo court, has come to a shameful conclusion," he said. "The conclusion of this trial was predetermined politically."

Mr. Lantos said he would reintroduce a motion to exclude Russia from the Group of 8 industrial nations, a proposal the White House has previously opposed.

The denunciations by Yukos and Mr. Lantos were joined by voices throughout Russia's small opposition, but were also met by unequivocal statements of support for the verdicts from men in Mr. Putin's circle.

Sergei Mironov, the speaker of the upper house of Parliament, a body seen as largely obedient to Mr. Putin, said the verdicts were exactly as expected.

"I would not have understood it if the court had acquitted Khodorkovsky," Mr. Mironov told the Interfax news agency. "Then I would have become doubtful about the prosecutor general's office."

Mr. Khodorkovsky, in a statement read outside the courthouse by Anton Drel, one of his lawyers, said he vowed to continue to speak out from prison and would underwrite foundations supporting poetry, philosophy and prisoners in Russia.

Now possibly the world's wealthiest convict -- the Russian edition of Forbes magazine estimated his net worth this year at \$2 billion, well below the \$15 billion of the previous year -- he also made clear his feelings about the case.

"I know that my conviction was decided in the Kremlin," his statement said. "Some in the president's entourage insisted that only an acquittal would inspire society's trust in the authorities. Others believed I should be put in prison for a long time to deprive me of any capacity to fight for freedom."

"To the first group, I would say thank you. And I would like to inform the others that they have not won. I will fight for freedom."

His mother, Marina, then spoke. "We lost our son the day Putin came to power," she said. "We know who these people are, these K.G.B. people. How could our country elect such a person from this organization?"

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/17/world/europe/prosecutor-says-chechen-rebel-had-editor-killed.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

JUNE 17, 2005

Prosecutor Says Chechen Rebel Had Editor Killed

MOSCOW, June 16 - Russia's prosecutor general declared Thursday that a Chechen rebel leader had ordered the killing of a prominent American journalist in Moscow last year, an attack that highlighted the perils facing journalists in Russia.

The prosecutor said the Chechen, Khozh-Akhmed Nukhayev, paid assassins to kill the journalist, Paul Klebnikov, who was editor of the Russian edition of Forbes magazine. Mr. Nukhayev, the subject of a critical book by Mr. Klebnikov, is also wanted by Russia on charges of terrorism stemming from the war in Chechnya but remains at large.

With Thursday's statement, the prosecutor effectively declared the case closed, even though there have been no trials and some relatives and associates have expressed doubts about the evidence. The authorities have previously announced arrests -- and identified suspects in the killing -- only to reverse themselves.

"We're encouraged by progress -- that's the normal reaction," Mr. Klebnikov's brother, Michael, said in a telephone interview from New York, where he lives. "But we're also waiting to see the evidence."

Mr. Klebnikov was shot four times as he left the Forbes office one night last July. His was the 11th killing of a journalist in Russia in five years, and to date no one has been convicted in the cases. The authorities had previously announced arrests in the Klebnikov case of two Chechens, Musa Vakhayev and Kazbek Dukuzov, who remain in custody. On Thursday, the prosecutor's office released a statement on its Web site accusing them of carrying out the killing, along with Mr. Dukuzov's brother, Magomed, and another man, Magomed Edilsultanov, on Mr. Nukhayev's orders. The two Magomedes are also at large. The statement did not detail the evidence that led investigators to accuse Mr. Nukhayev, a former mafia boss and rebel leader suspected of financing the Chechen resistance. A spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office declined to elaborate.

Mr. Klebnikov, who wrote extensively about crime and corruption in Russia in the chaotic years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, interviewed Mr. Nukhayev extensively in Baku, Azerbaijan. The result was a book published here in 2003, "A Conversation with a Barbarian," in which Mr. Nukhayev expounded his views on Chechen society and Islam.

The prosecutors' statement cited the book as the motive, saying Mr. Klebnikov "wrote negatively of Nukhayev and criticized his statements." But Oleg Panfilov, the director of the Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations, doubts that claim. Mr. Klebnikov's crusading reporting was believed to have disquieted many in Russia, making the list of those with motives a long one.

"The Chechen trace was one of the leading versions literally in the first hours after his death," Mr. Panfilov said in a telephone interview. "I immediately had doubts because all crimes are always blamed on Chechens, and I think what happened today is a continuation of what happened when Paul was killed."

July

ARTS
Books

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/01/books/arts/books-of-the-times-in-russia-a-free-market-less-freedom.html>

By WILLIAM GRIMES

JULY 1, 2005

BOOKS OF THE TIMES; In Russia, a Free Market, Less Freedom

Kremlin Rising Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution By Peter Baker and Susan Glasser Illustrated. 453 pages. A Lisa Drew Book/Scribner. \$27.50.

To President Bush, in fond moments, he is Pootie-Poot. To Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, the authors of "Kremlin Rising," Vladimir V. Putin, Russia's president, is "a K.G.B. colonel in a modern suit," a reactionary in his instincts and coldly realistic in his assessment of what the Russian people want and will tolerate. Since taking office at the end of 1999, the authors write, he has, in the name of "managed democracy," returned supreme power to the Kremlin, smothered regional autonomy, marginalized the democratic opposition, turned television into a propaganda tool and defanged the billionaire oligarchs who run Russia's largest companies. In March 2004, he won re-election with just over 71 percent of the vote.

Mr. Baker and Ms. Glasser, who are married, served as Moscow bureau chiefs for The Washington Post from the beginning of 2001 to late 2004. "Kremlin Rising," a wide-ranging, comprehensive look at Russia and its leader, follows in the tradition of journalistic debriefings like "The Russians," by Hedrick Smith; "Russia: The People and the Power," by Robert G. Kaiser; and "Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire," by David Remnick.

Well written, well reported and well organized, the book consists of free-standing chapters that touch on the most important events and trends in contemporary Russia, from the war in Chechnya to the spread of AIDS and the dire state of the Russian judicial system. Connecting these disparate themes is the fishy-eyed, single-minded man at the top, a thoroughgoing mediocrity, as depicted by the authors, with a vision for Russia that happens to match the moment.

After the chaos of the Yeltsin years, Mr. Putin represents less democracy, more stability and pride in the motherland, whose role as a world power he is intent on recovering, through economic and political rather than military means. It's a package that Russians find attractive.

"Putin is probably not a liberal or a democrat, but he is more liberal and more democratic than 70 percent of the population," Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, the owner of the Yukos oil company and one of Mr. Putin's prime targets among the oligarchs, commented. (Mr. Khodorkovsky was recently sentenced to nine years in prison for fraud, embezzlement and tax evasion.)

Mr. Putin inherited, literally and figuratively, a sick nation. In the provinces, where the bright lights of Moscow do not reach, lies a vast land mired in illness, poverty and hopelessness. Because of a low birth rate and some of the world's highest incidences of heart disease and other illnesses, Russia's population dropped by 4.5 million in the first dozen years after the fall of the Soviet Union, a number unseen since the Stalinist purges and the famines of the 1930's. The health system is broken. One in five Russian hospitals has no running water.

The authors, on a visit to Irkutsk in Siberia, spent time with a former heroin addict infected with AIDS and found that a region with perhaps a hundred known cases at the beginning of 1999 registered more than 17,000 cases five years later. Russia, which had virtually no AIDS problem under Communism, now faces the possibility that by 2010, 250,000 to 650,000 people will die from the disease each year. The government, according to the authors, has ignored the problem; it has even turned down offers of international aid.

Everywhere, it seems, Russia faces a steep uphill climb. The military is a shambles. Corruption is endemic, from the traffic police who openly solicit bribes to the members of the Duma, or parliament, whose votes sell to the highest bidder. Mr. Baker and Ms. Glasser include a vivid account of Moscow's first trial by jury since the days of the czars. It may take a while before such alien concepts as the presumption of innocence and equal rights for the defendant gain a foothold.

When a lawyer for Igor Bortnikov, accused of strangling a man and stealing his car, questions the police investigation, the judge snaps, "To doubt the investigation is illegal." Another defense lawyer, when told by the authors that juries in the United States must reach a unanimous verdict, can hardly believe his ears. That means, he says, "You only have to buy one!"

When the picture looks bleak, there's always Tatyana Shalimova. Ms. Shalimova, 34, lives in Moscow, travels to London and Paris and drinks French cognac. Employed by a foundation dedicated to judicial reform, she rents, as the book begins, a tiny apartment and earns \$1,500 a month, more than 20 times the salary of her brother, still living among the pigs and cabbages in her rural hometown. The city around her sparkles, polished by new money and buoyed by the tentative optimism of a new middle class.

In 2002, the authors report, 18 new malls opened in Moscow, their supermarkets and restaurants and shops aimed at everyday city dwellers, not the high-rolling, leather-jacketed mafia types of yesterday. When Mr. Putin took office, the city had 2 million square feet of mall space. This year, the figure reached 21 million square feet. When Ikea opened a store in the suburbs, many predicted disaster. Russians spent their money on cars and travel, not furniture. But soon home furnishings ranked No.1 on the list of Russian spending priorities, ahead of cars, vacations and even education.

Russia may have the leader it deserves. People are more nervous about speaking freely these days, but they look to the future with a little more confidence. The trade-off seems acceptable. Aleksandr Markus, a former physicist who runs a small chain of underwear shops, weathered the turbulent Yeltsin years and now sees light at the end of the tunnel.

"For 10 years, it was very hard to plan anything," he told the authors. "We had such a struggle. But now I would like to make some forecasts."

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/03/world/europe/after-centuries-of-enmity-relations-between-poland-and-russia.html>

By RICHARD BERNSTEIN

JULY 3, 2005

After Centuries of Enmity, Relations Between Poland and Russia Are as Bad as Ever

WARSAW - The Poles say, not without a certain pride, that they are the only ones ever to occupy the Kremlin. That was in the early 17th century, almost 200 years before Napoleon and 300 before Hitler failed in their attempts to do so.

In Moscow not long ago, the national day celebration was switched from Nov. 7, commemorating the Bolshevik Revolution, to Nov. 4, when the Russians rid the Kremlin of the hated Poles.

Clearly, the present bad state of relations between Russia and Poland has plenty of historical precedents. Still, relations between the nations are as bad as they have been since the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989.

An exchange during a recent visit to Warsaw by Gleb Pawlowski, an adviser to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, reported by the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wryborcza*, indicated the nastiness of the mood in both countries.

"Poles talk about Russians the way anti-Semites talk about Jews," Mr. Pawlowski said.

Poland's foreign minister, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, replied, "You are looking for an enemy and you find it in Poland."

The good news is that neither side is threatening the other with invasion or occupation, so the history of wars and partitions seems unlikely to repeat itself. But every day it seems something nasty or angry is said by politicians or commentators on one side or the other of the Polish-Russian divide, and the nastiness echoes loudly of the remaining insecurities and suspicions of Eastern Europe after the cold war.

"It's not a result of Polish policy but of the internal processes of Russia," Jacek Cichocki, the director of the Polish Center for Eastern Studies, a research group attached to the Foreign Ministry, said explaining, very much from the Polish perspective, the poor state of relations.

Analysts seem to agree that the immediate cause of tension was the lead role played by Poland in the Ukrainian conflict of late last year, when President Aleksander Kwasniewski clearly sided against the Soviet-supported presidential candidate and with the Orange Revolution of Viktor A. Yushchenko.

As the Poles see it -- and the Poles contend that, for obvious reasons, they have a special understanding of Russia -- Ukraine's reorientation toward the European Union and the West is a major, even historic additional increment in Russia's steady loss of influence in its own region, a loss of influence that began with the success of Solidarity in Poland in 1989.

But Polish-Russian relations, which were good through most of the 1990's, soured well before the Orange Revolution.

"The problem started much earlier last year," Mr. Cichocki said. "The first reason was the very nervous reaction of Moscow to the E.U. enlargement," which took place officially last May, and brought eight former Soviet bloc members, including three former Soviet republics -- Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia -- into the embrace of the democratic West.

The European Union's enlargement was followed by several arguments relating to history. In May, Mr. Kwasniewski was invited to Moscow for the 60th anniversary celebration of the end of World War II, but he was given what the Poles regarded as intentionally conspicuous second-class treatment.

Mr. Putin not only relegated Mr. Kwasniewski to a back row among the visiting dignitaries, he also did not acknowledge Poland as a wartime ally, much less apologize for the Soviet Union's anti-Polish pact with the Nazis of 1939, or mention what Mr. Kwasniewski called a half-century of "Stalinist repression" of Poland. All of these omissions were duly noted in Poland.

When, around that time, Poles boycotted a much-heralded tour of Poland by the Bolshoi Ballet -- causing near empty theaters and the cancellation of the tour midway -- one Russian newspaper, *Gazeta*, attributed the incident to the "proverbial arrogance" of the Poles.

The Polish suspicion of Russia, fueled by the memory of those 50 years, is powerful and appears in many guises. A continuing corruption investigation by the Polish Parliament into accusations of misbehavior in the privatization of Poland's largest oil company, Orlen, centers on the possibility that former K.G.B. agents plotted with Polish accomplices to get control of the company. That, many commentators have said, would have threatened Polish national security.

And then, last year, Poland was outraged over an official Russian commission into the massacre of thousands of Poles at Katyn in Ukraine by Stalinist troops in 1940. For years, the Soviets maintained that the Nazis committed that crime. The commission decided that the massacre was not a crime against humanity or a war crime but an ordinary criminal act. The Poles were outraged anew when the Russians then refused to open their archives to a Polish commission of inquiry.

"The war of words revealed that for Poland at least its relations with its giant eastern neighbor remain raw and still fall far short of the happy and settled state of affairs it has forged with its other former great adversary, Germany," *Poland Monthly*, an English-language magazine, commented.

[In late June the friction was freshened when President Putin invited Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany and President Jacques Chirac of France to celebrate the 750th anniversary of the founding of Kaliningrad on Sunday, but not the leaders of the two nations the tiny Russian enclave is sandwiched between, Poland and Lithuania. Mr. Kwasniewski, who rarely loses his diplomatic cool, vented his anger over the celebrations' arrangement during an interview on Monday on Polish television, criticizing not only the decision not to invite the two leaders, but also Berlin's support for a new Russian gas pipeline under the Baltic Sea that will bypass Lithuania and Poland.]

The Russians have long contended that their suffering in World War II -- some 27 million Soviet citizens died -- dwarfed that of all other countries. The same goes for their suffering under Stalin; at least 20 million died in his purges and camps. Given their own losses, the Russians do not feel an urgent need to acknowledge the lesser losses of others.

Vremya Novostei, a liberal Russian newspaper, complained in a recent article that questions of historical atrocities had long been governed by a "reciprocal silence." Now that the Baltic States and Poland have been making an issue of their grievances, the newspaper continued, the pact has been broken, but "Russia is still supposed to remain silent."

Polish analysts attribute what they regard as Russia's bad behavior, especially over Ukraine, to its failure to carve out a post-cold-war identity for itself. That means it retains many aspects of Russian imperialism, the wish to dominate its neighbors, like Ukraine, and certainly never to tarnish its image by admitting past crimes. At the same time, while the Russians are tempted to recognize the European Union and its expansion east as an economic opportunity, they see it as a danger, especially to Russian prestige, and Russia's prestige is related to its ability to hold the fragmenting Russian Federation itself together.

"The emotion connected with the E.U.'s enlargement is bigger than their pragmatic thinking," Mr. Cichocki said, predicting that it would be a long time before Russia stopped seeing a vibrant and democratic Poland as a threat.

BUSINESS

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/08/business/worldbusiness/eastern-europe-considers-more-trade-with-russia.html>

By JUDY DEMPSEY

JULY 8, 2005

Eastern Europe Considers More Trade With Russia

BERLIN, July 7 - When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, so did trade between Russia and the Eastern European countries it had so long controlled. Only in the last couple of years have East European companies begun to cast off many of the suspicions and rediscover the huge market to their east.

Still, the trade remains a shadow of what it was two decades ago, though it could grow significantly.

"For the past two to three years, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic improved their activities on the Russian market," said Zsuzsa Ludvig, research fellow at the Institute for World Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. The four countries are often known as the Visegrad grouping, named for a Hungarian castle on the Danube where they created a regional network in the early 1990's to promote trade and economic integration.

"Figures indicate a considerable trade growth in both directions," Ms. Ludvig said. "It might be a first sign of a possible trade recovery between Russia and these countries."

Russia, with its huge energy resources, is still the dominant partner, with a high trade surplus of 10 billion euros. Still, East European exports to Russia over the past few years were above the average of the European Union's other 15 countries.

Even if businesses see opportunities in Russia, the political elites in many of these countries -- particularly the region's biggest country, Poland -- are wary of Russia. They point to the unclear property rights and the unfavorable investment climate in the wake of the imprisonment of the chairman of Russia's energy giant, Yukos.

In addition, economists warn that the growth in trade has to be seen in the overall context of an unbalanced relationship between Russia and Eastern Europe.

"If there is any upswing, it is coming from a very low base," said Vasily Astrov, research economist at the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies. "At the moment, trade between Russia and Eastern Europe is very distorted. It is too asymmetrical. Eastern Europe completely depends on Russia for its energy supplies."

Russia's economy is being primarily driven by the record high world market prices for oil and gas, the nation's main export commodities. Russia supplies more than 35 percent of Europe's energy needs and most of Eastern Europe's. The region was an integral part of the former Soviet Union's energy distribution and pipeline network, giving Eastern Europe little or no chance to diversify its energy resources.

In 2003, more than 35 percent of Russia's exports and nearly 40 percent of its imports were with the 15 countries in the European Union. By contrast, Mr. Astrov said, exports to Russia represented just 3 percent of the European Union's total exports in the late 1990's and only 5 percent of the European Union's imports in 2003.

In the early 1990's, Russian and Eastern European experts say, there were economic and political reasons the former Communist countries turned their backs on Russia.

"It was clear that when the Soviet Union collapsed, all trade collapsed," said Peter Schulze, professor of comparative government at Göttingen University.

Until 1989, all trade between Russia and Eastern Europe was organized by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, commonly known as Comecon. Much of the trade in the Soviet bloc was carried out in barter or countertrade, with Eastern Europe paying for its oil and gas deliveries from Russia with pharmaceutical goods from Hungary, machine tools from the former Czechoslovakia and East Germany, some food products from the Baltic nations and textiles from Poland.

"But apart from the collapse of Comecon, and later the ruble crisis of 1998 in which Russia's currency collapsed, something else occurred," said Professor Schulze.

"There was a flight reflex," he said. "All the Eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union countries that broke away from Russia wanted to run away from their former Communist powers in the East."

Indeed, when the new political elites that emerged in Eastern Europe after 1989 made joining the European Union and the NATO military alliance their top priorities, they put much of their energies into transforming their economies.

They had the challenge of changing from a command-led highly centralized structure to a market economy, and they adapted all the legislation and trade to European Union norms so that their economies could eventually become competitive with European Union markets.

"These countries took the view that it was not in their interests to trade with Russia because it would mean trading in the wrong types of goods," said Volkhart Vincentz, economics professor at the Ost-Europa Institute in Munich.

Still, said Pekka Sutela, head of the Institutes for Economies in Transition at the Bank of Finland, it was not in Eastern Europe's best interests to give up the old contacts in Russia. "Until now, what surprises me most about Eastern Europe is that people did not seem to have the simple capitalist instinct and logic of doing business with Russia," Mr. Sutela said.

Ms. Ludvig from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences argued that the Eastern European countries did not have any economic strategy toward Russia. She contended that there was an ingrained suspicion of Russia, particularly in Poland, where Russian companies have bought up energy retailing and distribution outlets. Those purchases have locked the region into dependence on Russia for its energy needs.

These concerns may slowly be changing, in part, because the East European countries are now in the European Union and feel more secure and confident.

"A gradual rebuilding of trade links is taking place and it is evidently been driven by economic growth in Russia," said Professor Marek Dabrowski from the Center for Social and Economic Research in Warsaw.

Because of high world energy prices, Russia has been experiencing annual growth rates of more than 5.6 percent, which means there is a growing desire for consumer and other goods from Eastern Europe. "On the export side, the East Europeans are becoming more diversified in what they sell to Russia," Mr. Dabrowski. "We are talking about food and consumer goods."

If the Russian economy continues to expand, it could give Eastern European companies a major lift. "In purely economic terms, Poland is beginning to reassess its trade with Russia," said Mr. Schulze from Göttingen University. "It is slowly happening in Hungary as well and in the Czech Republic."

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/16/world/europe/illsecured-soviet-arms-depots-tempting-rebels-and-terrorists.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

JULY 16, 2005

Ill-Secured Soviet Arms Depots Tempting Rebels and Terrorists

Correction Appended

ICHNYA, Ukraine - The ammunition is stacked in mounds in a clearing, exposed to rain and sun. The crates that hold it are rotting. After more than a decade in the elements, many have ruptured, exposing high-explosive rockets and mortar fins.

This is the overstuffed ammunition depot behind the security fences at Military Unit A1479, a small base in the Ukrainian forest under military guard. At least 5,700 tons of ammunition, grenades and explosive powder have come to rest here, according to an unclassified NATO inventory. Almost all of it is unwanted. Much of it has expired, and some is considered too unreliable or too unsafe to use.

The scenes at Unit A1479 provide a glimpse of a dangerous legacy of the militarized Soviet state, one that has emerged as a risk to post-Soviet states and to nations far away, endangering local environments and communities and providing a reservoir of lethal materials for terrorists and armed groups.

[Though recent history has shown how fluid and dangerous the arms can be, there has been no indication or allegation that munitions from Ukraine were used in the bombings last week in London.] Huge depots of conventional weapons and ammunition remain in much of the former Soviet borderlands, many of them vulnerable to the elements, inadequately secured or watched over by security agencies with histories of corruption and suspicious arms sales. Largely unaddressed while Western nations and post-Soviet states have worked to secure and dispose of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the conventional stockpiles pose problems as yet unsolved.

Nowhere are these problems known to be more pronounced than in Ukraine. NATO and the Ukrainian military estimate that the Soviet military left 2.5 million tons of conventional munitions here as it withdrew soldiers and arms from Europe, as well as more than 7 million rifles, pistols, mortars and machine guns. The imbalance is deeply disproportionate; the Ukrainian military now numbers roughly 300,000.

The surplus weapons and ammunition, some dating to World War I and stored in at least 184 military posts around the country, is packed in bunkers, locked in salt mines and sitting in the open air.

Shipments of the more modern matériel have left Ukraine in suspicious arms deals and reappeared in conflicts in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Western governments worry that some stocks, including explosives and portable antiaircraft missiles that can down civilian aircraft, may end up with terrorist groups.

In one deal alone, extensively documented by the United Nations and human rights organizations, the Ukrainian state arms export agency transferred 68 tons of munitions in 1999 to Burkina Faso, in West Africa. From there, they were shipped to Liberia, ending up in the hands of the Revolutionary United Front, which sacked Sierra Leone.

The delivery included 3,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 50 machine guns, 25 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 5 antiaircraft missiles, 5 guided antitank missiles and ammunition.

[Ukraine has not been alone in such circuitous deals. Amnesty International released a report on July 5 that 400 tons of surplus ammunition was shipped from Albania and Serbia to Rwanda in 2002 and 2003, and then channeled to armed groups in Congo.]

Allegations of illegal arms dealing have also surrounded Trans-Dneister, the breakaway region of Moldova that according to estimates provided by Russia to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has 42,000 small arms and 20,000 tons of munitions, including aircraft bombs, rockets and 39,000 landmines.

Belarus, Georgia and the Central Asian states were similarly left with unwanted depots, although their stocks are believed to be much smaller than Ukraine's because they did not become depositories for munitions being withdrawn from Eastern Europe.

Russia, where depot explosions are reported each year, is thought to have the largest stockpiles of all, but it has been less forthcoming about them than Ukraine. One concentration is in the small Russian enclave in Kaliningrad, between Poland and Lithuania, said Aaron Karp, a consultant at the Small Arms Survey, a private research organization in Geneva. "The usual assumption is that Kaliningrad is explosive," he said.

Such stockpiles endanger global security not only because they may arm rebel groups, but also because military munitions can readily be disassembled and their explosives used to make powerful bombs. This risk is among the prospective worries in Ukraine.

"Based on the record of the Ukrainian military over the last several years, in diverse settings, there is a certain probability that it might sell explosives to terrorists," said Andreas Heinemann-Gruder, a senior researcher at the Bonn International Center for Conversion, a private organization working on demilitarization and military conversion that has studied the Ukrainian stockpiles. "Sectors of the Ukrainian military have cooperated with whoever offered them money, and there have been no moral considerations."

The dangers are not limited to the munitions' travels and use. Ukrainian officials and military analysts have warned that as Soviet-era munitions have aged, environmental and safety risks have mounted. This was made clear last year when a depot exploded near Melitopol, in the south, scattering tons of ammunition in the surrounding countryside. The blasts killed five people and forced the evacuation of at least 5,000 more.

The concerns over accidental explosions were evident here in Ichnya, where firefighting equipment was neatly arranged near the gate and laborers hacked at saplings and thigh-high grass, removing material that might kindle flame or block the passage of the depot's armored fire trucks.

Throughout the depot, which consists of 47 warehouses and 47 house-size stacks of ammunition, the military has erected 80-foot-high lightning rods to divert lightning from ammunition stores. At least two of the rods have been struck, said the depot commander, Col. Oleksandr Bogdan.

Amid the mounting safety and security concerns, Western sponsors are trying to accelerate the disposal of Ukraine's arms burden. The efforts include a \$30 million NATO program expected to start this fall that plans to destroy 133,000 tons of munitions, 1.5 million guns and 1,000 portable anti-aircraft missiles known as manpads, which could be used to disrupt air traffic worldwide. The program will last 12 years.

It will be the largest effort in the world to destroy surplus munitions, according to Michel Duray, a NATO spokesman in Ukraine. The United States is a principal sponsor, donating more than \$1.6 million for the first phase.

Donors and Ukrainian military officials caution that it is only a start. Ukraine has been trying to destroy its surplus inventory since 1993, but at the current pace the disposal will last another 50 years or more. "We will have to spend some decades to reach a level of moderate safety," said Leonid Polyakov, Ukraine's first deputy minister of defense, who assumed his post this year in the new government of President Viktor A. Yushchenko.

Before joining the government, Mr. Polyakov was director of military programs at the Oleksandr Razumkov Center in Kiev, a nonprofit organization that studies politics, economics and security. While there, he wrote a report for the Bonn center that recommended collective international action to reduce Ukraine's burden.

Ukraine's munitions centers are filled beyond capacity, he wrote, leaving at least 60 percent of the ammunition exposed to the elements. Most of the ammunition has exceeded its shelf life. At least 15 percent is also unstable enough that it risks exploding from handling, electricity, heat or chemical reaction.

Moreover, Soviet soldiers packed much of it with inadequate spacing between stacks, which has made it more difficult and dangerous to fight or contain fires.

Volodymyr Tereschenko, a deputy minister of defense charged with munitions disposal, also said Ukraine's budget constraints had prevented the installation of better security features, including adequate lighting, fencing and walls, electronic sensors, video surveillance and water reservoirs around important caches.

Ukrainian officials suspect the existing security has been thwarted, as recently as last winter, when two manpads are thought to have been stolen from a depot in the Crimea. The losses were not the first. "We have had several cases when manpads disappeared," Mr. Polyakov said.

He added that these missiles, because of the dangers they pose, were guarded more closely than most other munitions. He also noted that the government did not disclose which depots had stockpiles, or how many missiles Ukraine possessed in all, other than to say there are at least 10,000. "We want not to provoke too much interest," he said.

But Mr. Polyakov also noted that in Ukraine, a nation sullied by its reputation for public corruption, security was only as good as the integrity of those watching over the far-flung depots. "We cannot exclude that there were corrupt schemes between criminal businesses and officials in the previous government," he said.

Details of a few schemes have surfaced in the past, most notably the transfer of Ukrainian arms in 1999 through Burkina Faso to Liberia to the Revolutionary United Front. When the United Nations investigated, Ukraine claimed that it had properly issued the certificates intended to ensure the arms had a legal destination. But the deal was suspicious on its face.

The military in Burkina Faso principally uses NATO-standard arms, and would not be expected to buy large quantities of post-Soviet equipment. The weapons were promptly shuttled to Liberia on a plane owned by a well-known international crime figure, Leonid Minin, the United Nations found.

One of Mr. Minin's partners was also involved in 2000 in the transfer of 103 tons of Ukrainian munitions to the Ivory Coast where, the United Nations later reported, the ammunition was split between the Ivory Coast and Liberia, which was under an international arms embargo.

These deals, made through false declarations and obscure companies and involving linked networks of criminals, governments and insurgents, showed how mobile post-Soviet arms stockpiles could be, and how Ukraine, unwittingly or no, helped arm rebel bands for war.

Even disposing of old munitions poses severe technical challenges. One example, Mr. Polyakov and Mr. Tereschenko said, involves stocks of PFM land mines, small antipersonnel devices that the Soviet Union deployed extensively in Afghanistan by simply scattering them on the ground. The mines, which contain a liquid explosive, are now too unstable to handle, raising a baffling question: how do you dispose of munitions you cannot touch? Ukraine has about six million such mines.

There are other logistical and safety issues as well. The few facilities in Ukraine now capable of disposing of munitions are far from most depots, meaning that unless special arrangements were made, ammunition would have to be moved through Ukraine on public roads and rail lines.

"There is a whole complex of problems, many of which cause a great threat and danger," Mr. Tereschenko said. "The tragedy of Ukraine is not our own only. This is a tragedy for Europe."

Correction: July 23, 2005, Saturday A credit last Saturday for a front-page picture of rotting boxes of mortar rounds at a Ukraine arms depot misspelled the photographer's surname. He was Nikolai Khalip, not Khalap.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/17/books/arts/a-modern-kgb-colonel.html>

By **ANDREW MEIER**

JULY 17, 2005

A Modern K.G.B. Colonel

KREMLIN RISING Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution. By Peter Baker and Susan Glasser. Illustrated. 453 pp. A Lisa Drew Book/Scribner. \$27.50.

DURING the darkest days of Vladimir Putin's war in Chechnya, the press briefings in Moscow were growing ugly. Instead of offering even the most minimal information from the war zone, the Kremlin was chastising journalists in public -- at times by name. A group of correspondents, Western and Russian, contemplated a boycott. A plea circulated by e-mail. One reporter, a longtime Moscow resident with a European passport, shot back a blunt reply: "We can only do one thing -- remind our readers that Putin is intent on building a semi-authoritarian regime that's prepared to kill its own citizens to stay in power."

"Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution" echoes that dismal judgment. Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, a husband-and-wife team who for nearly four years between 2001 and 2004 served as Moscow bureau chiefs for The Washington Post, have written -- thanks to an unrivaled compilation of fact and analysis -- the official record of the Putin era, or as close to one as Western readers are likely to get. "Kremlin Rising" is the chronicle of "the rollback" -- the years in which a former lieutenant colonel in the K.G.B., dispatched to the backwater of Dresden under Mikhail Gorbachev, rose to become a would-be post-Soviet czar, and presided over "a newly assertive Russia, rejecting international loans instead of defaulting on them, glorifying its lost empire rather than exulting in the downfall of dictatorship." It has been a time, the authors tell us, of a Russia eager to rise again, when "nationalism mixed with Soviet-era symbolism was the perfect balm to the collective bruised ego." In these days, "managed democracy" -- the triumphant euphemism of Putin aides -- has become more than a slogan.

Baker and Glasser's indictment is a fugue on a single theme, state-sponsored malfeasance. Whether the subject is the takeover of the independent NTV television network; the school siege in Beslan that left at least 330 dead, more than half of them children; the prosecution of the oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky and the takedown of his Yukos oil giant; arms sales to Iraq; oil vouchers from Iraq; or oil deals rigged to benefit state-owned companies, the same notes are played: falsification, fraud, indifference, neglect, deception, disinformation, manipulation, corruption, thievery and lying -- all undertaken in the name of the state. Nonetheless, if this gloomy picture is fundamentally a true one, important shadings sometimes get lost.

Baker and Glasser came to Russia from Washington as veteran political reporters. They took part in the coverage of the Monica Lewinsky scandal and Bill Clinton's impeachment. Few of their predecessors had arrived in Moscow with sharper inside-the-Beltway reportorial tools. Yet their American experience contained a danger: a

readiness to scrub Russian politics of its contradictions. So they give us a restoration drama in primary colors, a battle between "Western-style liberal democracy" and "a budding dictator," between democrats and "Soviet leftovers."

Baker and Glasser are right to note that siloviki -- the men from the "power ministries," the secret services, police and army -- now surround Putin. Still, as they acknowledge, "these were contradictory times . . . when a new generation of cellphone addicts could speak confidently about business school degrees one minute while bemoaning the collapse of the Soviet Union the next."

As they explain, the "trade-off" between "greater stability" and "less freedom" is one "many Russians have proved willing to accept." A former physicist who once nurtured dissident dreams has "found a measure of economic security for the first time" under Putin. And Baker and Glasser offer near-mirror quotations in the book's opening and close. In their introduction they report that one senior official told them, "There is no ideology at all," only a belief in grabbing power and keeping it. In the epilogue, an unnamed official, perhaps the same one, says: "The ideology is power and redistribution of property. . . . Power is a means of keeping property in their hands."

Russians seem less discomfited by contradiction than Americans. They can vote for Putin and at the same time disdain his policies. As one woman tells Baker and Glasser, "People had no real choice; they were offered Putin and they accepted him." Russians can applaud Putin's goals, "the dictatorship of law" at home and the rebirth of Russia abroad as a great power, while wincing at the grim realities of his rule: a pocket parliament, servile regional barons, a muted intelligentsia, a middle class forever emergent and business and state power interminably intertwined -- along with crime that is organized, aboveground and so cozy with the government that it is often hard to discern the difference. In short, Russians -- as the authors amply record -- understand their state's essential nature: for all Putin's muscle and talk, officialdom remains, as in the days of Pushkin, a bardak -- a mess.

Putin's rule, above all, has yielded serial contradictions. He has even given political scientists cause to devise a new classification: authoritarianism without authority. To be sure, he has undergone one of history's greatest on-the-job training courses. He now struts comfortably across the world stage, thanks to his sang-froid as a veteran K.G.B. operative and a helping hand from Western leaders. Yet his blundering over the past year -- the lethal incompetence at Beslan, the arbitrary prosecution of Khodorkovsky and, most recently, the ungainly and disastrous intervention into Ukraine's presidential election -- has resulted in an annus horribilis for him. Putin will reign on, but such momentous missteps hardly lend support to Baker and Glasser's portrait of a strongman atop a resurgent and rising Kremlin.

Andrew Meier, the author of "Black Earth: A Journey Through Russia After the Fall," was Moscow correspondent for Time from 1996 to 2001.

August

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/13/world/europe/pervasive-corruption-in-russia-is-just-called-business.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

AUG. 13, 2005

Pervasive Corruption in Russia Is 'Just Called Business'

MOSCOW, Aug. 12 - A businessman here recently formed a company to supply equipment used in new office and apartment buildings. Despite the country's construction boom, it nearly foundered. That is, until this summer, when two "intermediaries" arranged to fix the bidding for contracts from a regional government.

He has since received four new contracts, he said, and expects more. Success has its cost, though. He had paid bribes, he said, amounting to 5 to 10 percent of each contract. The largest, so far, totaled \$90,000.

The amount of each bribe was punched out on a desktop calculator to avoid any paper trail. He expressed disgust but said the bribes were an unavoidable cost of doing business in Russia today.

"If you want to be competitive you have to play the game," he said, agreeing to speak in a lengthy interview only if he, his company and the regional government were not identified. He said he feared legal difficulties and being harmed or even killed.

"It used to be called bribery," he added. "Now it is just called business."

Bribery is certainly not new to Russia, but according to several recent surveys and interviews with dozens of Russians, it has surged in scale and scope in recent years under the presidency of Vladimir V. Putin, so that today it touches just about every aspect of life.

With greater urgency than ever, anticorruption campaigners and even some government officials warn that the government has become so ensnared by corruption that it threatens to undo Russia's progress since the dismantling of the Soviet Union 14 years ago.

The Indem Foundation, a research group in Moscow that has conducted the most extensive efforts to measure bribery here, estimated last month that Russians paid more than \$3 billion in bribes annually and that businesses paid \$316 billion -- nearly 10 times the estimate of its first survey just four years ago.

The total is more than two and a half times what the government collects in budget revenues, the survey found. That means that vast amounts of Russia's wealth flow in a shadowy netherworld of corrupted officials -- unreported as income, untaxed by the government and unavailable for social or economic investments.

"The weakness, inefficiency and corruption of all branches of government are the most important obstacles to further progress in reforming Russia," the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or O.E.C.D., said in June in a report commissioned by the Russian government.

Other surveys also rank Russia among the world's most corrupt nations, placing the former superpower on a par with developing countries. Transparency International, the worldwide corruption watchdog, said in its latest report that Russia was now following the path of countries like Nigeria, Azerbaijan and Libya -- rich in oil but soaked by graft.

Grigory A. Satarov, the president of Indem, said in an interview that the new growth of bribery fed off the inefficiencies of Russia's still sclerotic state structures, inherited from the Communist past.

But he also blamed Putin policies that have weakened the rule of law. Fighting corruption, he argued, requires three conditions: free news media, a vibrant political opposition and a truly independent judiciary. Under Mr. Putin, he said, the Kremlin has undercut all three.

"The main thing," Mr. Satarov said, "is that all this time, Putin has not done anything to change the situation."

For businesses especially, bribery is ballooning, along with the amounts solicited, which Indem estimated to average \$135,000 -- a 13-fold jump from 2001. Mr. Satarov said the increasing pressure on businesses reflected the expanding role of the state in the economy during Mr. Putin's presidency.

For Mr. Satarov and others, high-profile cases like the legal assault on the Yukos oil company highlighted less the government's determination to root out corruption than its desire to assert its control over valuable economic assets.

In fact, the conviction of Yukos's former chairman, Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, on tax evasion charges that he and his supporters called politically motivated may have had an opposite effect.

According to a very wealthy and prominent Moscow businessman, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of prosecution or political retaliation, as well as others interviewed, bribes have increasingly become a necessity, either to win contracts or to keep inspectors and prosecutors at bay.

The magnitude and scope of this kind corruption make Russia different today from even the recent past, the Moscow businessman said. In the early years of Russia's post-Soviet transition, lingering fear of Soviet control and a romantic optimism for a normal democracy limited corruption to some extent.

"There are no romantics now," he said, "and the old fear is not there anymore."

A recent survey by the World Bank reported that 78 percent of businesses in Russia reported having to pay bribes. Another survey, by the Foreign Investment Advisory Council, created in 1994 by the Russian government and prominent foreign corporations, found that 71 percent considered corruption the biggest barrier to foreign investment.

Mr. Satarov said one major businessman had told him of having to pay monthly bribes to five federal ministries. Fully half of the businessman's profits went to bribes, Mr. Satarov recounted. "He said, 'When it reaches 70 percent I'm going to close the business.'"

A business consultant who until recently worked with the European Union on economic development projects in Kaliningrad and Moscow said he had endured repeated encounters with bribe-seeking officials, who demanded cash, gifts or the hiring of unqualified relatives.

In an interview, the consultant, who agreed to discuss the issue only if not identified because of fears of retribution, said it was necessary to understand bribery in the context of the Russian government.

"Corruption is not a virus infecting the system," he explained, saying that was how bribery was viewed in Europe or the United States: as an aberration that must be isolated and cut out. "It is the system itself that is corrupt."

Indeed, Russia has evolved from its Soviet past in such a way that for many, paying "a little something" is not even considered bribery anymore. Rather, bribes are seen more as a fee for resolving seemingly intractable problems or overcoming bureaucratic delays, one that supplements the meager incomes of otherwise honest civil servants.

"It's not their fault, but the government's inability to provide a decent living," Yaroslav D. Lissovolik, the chief economist at United Financial Group, said. He last paid a bribe -- "a couple of dollars," he said -- to receive the results of lab tests at a state clinic, where state health care is free only in theory.

The O.E.C.D. report concluded that government officials actually complicated legislation or regulations deliberately to increase opportunities for bribery. Or as the businessman in construction put it: "The law is like the Bible. They interpret it any way they like."

An American businessman married to a Russian woman recounted his own example. He said he had to pay nearly \$1,000 in bribes to resolve a Catch-22 involving his infant daughter. She could not receive a Russian passport unless she was registered with the local police. She could not be registered, though, unless she had a passport.

"That perfect problem was solved with a larger sum than I want to remember," he said, agreeing to tell the story only if not identified, because of American laws against bribery.

As a result of its necessity, bribery has become accepted practice.

Bribes have become almost obligatory, for instance, for admission to Russia's universities, even those supposedly available at no cost to those who qualify. The Indem study estimated that \$583 million was spent annually in bribes to deans, professors and others involved in securing admission. The foundation, along with the Moscow Higher School of Economics, estimated that students paid bribes as high as \$30,000 to \$40,000 to enter the most prestigious universities.

Young men of draft age also routinely pay to receive a deferment, either on medical or other grounds, to avoid service in a military roiled by the war in Chechnya and a particularly gruesome form of hazing for new recruits.

One young man in Yekaterinburg said in an interview that the going rate in central Russia was \$1,500, and that he and several peers had paid it gladly. In Moscow it is said to be \$5,000. According to the Defense Ministry, fewer than 10 percent of eligible men are drafted.

The police have the reputation of being the most notoriously corrupt. Sergei S., a lawyer with a prominent law firm, recalled the time recently when his girlfriend was at the wheel in Moscow and, without question, absolutely drunk when an officer waved the car over. She avoided arrest after Sergei went to an automatic bank machine, escorted by the officer, and withdrew \$300.

"The most horrible thing," he said, agreeing to discuss the experience only if neither his last name nor his law firm was identified, "is it is absolutely normal."

Indem's survey uncovered one positive trend: the number of Russians willing to pay bribes has fallen since 2001, suggesting a growing popular frustration with the solicitations. Still, 53 percent of those surveyed said they would pay a bribe.

Mr. Putin's critics and even some supporters charge that the government has done little to combat corruption seriously because it extends to the upper tiers of government, something the president himself has acknowledged, sometimes bluntly.

"The state as a whole and the law enforcement bodies, unfortunately, are still afflicted with corruption and inefficiency," Mr. Putin said in an interview on state television last year. The corruption, he added, reaches to the "highest level, where we are talking about hundreds, tens of thousands, perhaps millions" of dollars.

Aleksandr Y. Lebedev, a wealthy financier and a member of the lower house of Parliament in the pro-Putin party, United Russia, said in an interview that corruption would flourish until drastic measures were taken, like the seizure of assets at home and abroad. "You find deputy ministers who have houses and yachts," he said. "I know ministers who are millionaires."

At the same time, Mr. Putin's government has not completely ignored the problem. It has announced a series of modest anticorruption measures, increasing salaries for law enforcement and other security officials and toughening penalties for seemingly petty crimes, like issuing a false passport.

The latter was a consequence of the deadly wave of terrorist attacks in August and September of last year. Two passenger airliners exploded in flight on Aug. 24, killing 90 people, after a bribe of roughly \$34 enabled at least one of two suicide bombers to board at a Moscow airport.

"The people on those planes were not only the victims of terrorism," Yelena A. Panfilova, director of the Moscow branch of Transparency International, said. "They were victims of corruption." Yet as shocking as it was at the time, she said, the disclosure hardly surprised her.

When Transparency International applied to register its branch in 2000, an official in the Justice Ministry solicited a \$300 "fee" to correct supposed problems in the application that Ms. Panfilova said did not exist.

"I said, 'Do you know who we are?'" she recalled.

Articles in this series examine the impact of corruption on democracy and economic development around the world. Audio of Steven Lee Myers, more photos from Russia and previous articles in the series are at nytimes.com/europe.

September

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/01/world/europe/school-siege-leader-calls-russia-unwitting-ally.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

SEPT. 1, 2005

School Siege Leader Calls Russia Unwitting Ally

MOSCOW, Aug. 31 - Shamil Basayev, the Chechen rebel leader and mastermind of the siege last year at School No.1 in Beslan, said Wednesday that Russia's special services had helped make the assault possible by allowing the terrorists safe passage toward the school in an attempt to ambush them.

In an announcement on a Web site that often posts his statements and videos, Mr. Basayev said he had deceived Russian intelligence services, which believed that his accomplices would attack a government center in the regional capital and cleared a route at the border as part of a trap, which the terrorists sidestepped. The Russian authorities denounced the statement, dismissing it as "total nonsense" and the assertions of a "child murderer."

"Investigators have no evidence suggesting that special services were in any way involved in the seizure," Nikolai Shepel, Russia's deputy prosecutor general, told the Interfax news agency.

Unraveling truth from fiction in Mr. Basayev's statements has often proved difficult; he is prone to exaggeration, absurdities and lies. His past statements, however, have at times offered fresh details or evidence of his activities that have later been confirmed.

The Web posting, which was timed to appear in the news as residents of Beslan prepared for the first anniversary of the school seizure, exploited the uncertainties and lingering questions that surround the terrorist act. The school was seized on the morning of Sept. 1, when the terrorists took nearly 1,200 hostages. The crisis ended in battle and fire on Sept. 3; 331 people died, including 186 children. More than 700 other people were wounded.

There has been little public confidence in the federal investigations into the causes of the siege and the bungled Russian response, and Mr. Basayev touched on one of the questions that Beslan's grieving families have found the most perplexing and disturbing: How did a truck full of armed and bearded men, many in masks, make its way in daylight through a heavily policed region?

The Russian government has been unable to provide an answer that has gained public satisfaction.

According to Mr. Basayev's version, which could not be verified, Russia's special services had managed to plant an agent last year inside the Riyadus-Salakhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs, the terrorist group Mr. Basayev commands.

But the mole, who Mr. Basayev said was detected, was persuaded to become a double agent.

The special services, believing they had inside information on the group's plans, were then led to believe that it would attack a government center in Vladikavkaz, the capital of North Ossetia, on Sept. 6, and would conduct a reconnaissance a few days before, Mr. Basayev said.

He said the group took advantage of the ruse. He said that "from Aug. 31 they opened a corridor for us for active collection of reconnaissance information, and we used it to enter Beslan," having confused the authorities on the time and object of the attack. Beslan is in North Ossetia, a 25-minute drive from Vladikavkaz.

He also said he had at least one "live participant of that operation who is ready to testify."

That claim was a second snub to the Russian authorities, who have insisted that 32 terrorists seized the school and that all but one, who is on trial, were killed. Many survivors say at least several more terrorists were present and escaped or were captured and secretly held.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/18/weekinreview/the-high-price-of-standing-up-to-putin.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

SEPT. 18, 2005

The High Price of Standing Up to Putin

MOSCOW - PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN spoke loftily at the United Nations last week about using "civil society, mass media, cultural and humanitarian cooperation" to confront the specter of terrorism, and he drew laughter at the White House when a reporter noted that his and President Bush's terms would both be ending in 2008. "Are they already firing us?" he asked. "We still want to work."

Back home in Russia, such talk of civil society has a different ring, and the question of what will happen in 2008 is no joke.

In fact, the prospects for Russian democracy when President Putin's term ends three years from now are already shaping up as the country's greatest test yet of the most basic democratic principle: that power changes hands periodically in free and fair elections.

The signs so far are not promising.

Mr. Putin has repeatedly said he would not change the Constitution to allow himself to stay in office past 2008, but the idea refuses to die. Lawmakers across Russia have been falling over themselves to propose constitutional amendments to resolve what has come to be known as the "2008 problem."

The "problem" is that many Russians -- 60 percent of them, according to a poll this month -- would rather not see him go. But perhaps he doesn't have to stay in office to retain power. Mr. Putin has so neutralized the opposition in Parliament, so stifled the news media, so consolidated political power, that the matter of deciding who succeeds him probably will rest entirely in his own hands.

He has already suggested he would anoint a successor -- repeating, and probably enshrining, the process by which he took office. When Boris N. Yeltsin resigned in 1999, he made Mr. Putin acting president and then threw the entire weight of the government's resources into assuring Mr. Putin's election.

Now, no one who wants to continue working with Mr. Putin has dared declare an intention to run, effectively paralyzing any public debate over who the best candidates might be.

It has been left to two critics with little apparent public support -- the former chess champion Garry Kasparov and a former prime minister, Mikhail M. Kasyanov, who declared his intention to run for president last week -- to stand up and get a taste of what they might face in a campaign.

It hasn't been easy for either man.

Since he began criticizing Mr. Putin this summer, Mr. Kasyanov has faced a criminal investigation into accusations that he improperly acquired a government-owned summer cottage at a steep discount.

The investigation was instigated by a journalist who is also a parliamentary deputy from the party loyal to the Kremlin.

"I think the optimal prospect for Mikhail Kasyanov would be to be elected the one in charge of a jail cell," the deputy, Aleksandr Y. Khinshtein, said this month.

And Mr. Kasparov, who has been barnstorming around the country for much of the year but has not declared a formal intention to run, has been harassed by regional authorities, pelted with scrambled eggs and assaulted with a chessboard.

"I am lucky," Mr. Kasparov said at the time of the last attack, "that the popular sport in the Soviet Union was chess and not baseball."

Nikita Y. Belykh, the leader of a small liberal party, the Union of Right Forces, referred in dark terms to the travails both men have faced since emerging as contenders. "To run for the presidency, a person must have courage, especially someone who runs from the opposition," Mr. Belykh said in an interview. "He must understand that it is difficult and even dangerous."

Mr. Kasparov, who retired from professional chess this year to devote himself to opposing Mr. Putin, appears as fearless as he was as a player.

"Two thousand and eight is a figure of speech," he said in a recent interview between campaign-style events in Nizhny Novgorod, the country's third largest city. "It means a government that stays in office no matter what."

In small gatherings, meeting with skeptical business people and local politicians, he has relentlessly attacked Mr. Putin as an autocrat and denounced his policies as a threat not only to democratic values, but also to the economic and social well-being of the country.

"I am ashamed," he shouted over and over after a listener in Nizhny Novgorod suggested that Russia needed to be ruled with a Stalinist fist; he listed corruption, terrorism and other evidence of the country's weaknesses that have emerged under Mr. Putin's rule. His immediate aim, he said, is to rally those committed to democracy -- into the streets, if necessary, as disenfranchised voters have done in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, all former Soviet republics that have experienced popular uprisings.

"It is pointless to discuss today who will run and how," Mr. Kasparov told a small gathering in Ulyanovsk, the birthplace of Vladimir Lenin.

"In my view, how we vote is not the principal thing," he said. "The principal thing is our readiness to defend our votes."

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/18/world/europe/russia-hounds-human-rights-group-that-gets-us-help.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

SEPT. 18, 2005

Russia Hounds Human Rights Group That Gets U.S. Help

NIZHNY NOVGOROD, Russia - The Russian-Chechen Friendship Society, a small human-rights organization sponsored by American taxpayers, is a rare independent source of information about this country's war in Chechnya. The authorities here are hounding it out of existence.

The federal tax service accused the nonprofit society of evading taxes, though its financing sources from foreign grants are supposed to be tax free, and billed it for \$35,000 in back taxes and fines. In late August, the service froze the organization's bank accounts. The Justice Ministry has scheduled a hearing in late September to nullify its registration on the ground that by law it cannot use "Russian" in its name.

On Sept. 2, the society's director, Stanislav M. Dmitriyevsky, was charged with inciting ethnic and religious animosity by publishing commentaries by two Chechen separatist leaders in the group's newspaper more than a year and a half ago. One passage cited as evidence in the indictment said, "So far it is not too late to come to an understanding, but for that the Russian people should get rid of those for whom peace means the loss of power."

Russia has long been wary of organizations that highlight the kidnappings and killings that blight Chechnya, but the fate of the society has repercussions that reach far beyond this city on the Volga River, where it has offices, threatening foreign support for groups like it and confronting the United States with a diplomatic quandary.

President Vladimir V. Putin warned this summer that Russia would not tolerate "foreign financing of political activities" by private organizations. The legal assault here appears to be the first to make good on that threat, which echoed one he made a year earlier.

Mr. Putin did not single out the society or the United States, but the State Department, through the National Endowment for Democracy, has given the group \$170,000 since 2001 -- money that was not supposed to be taxed under a 1992 agreement between the United States and Russia, but is now part of the tax evasion case.

Officials in the American Embassy and at the State Department declined to discuss the matter for the record. But John E. Squire, who oversees grants to Russia and Ukraine for the National Endowment for Democracy, said he feared the society would not to be an isolated case. "The range of stuff you can do in criticizing the government is getting more and more narrow," he said in a telephone interview from Washington.

Mr. Dmitriyevsky, who remains free pending trial but is under orders not to leave Nizhny Novgorod, said the authorities were bent on stifling organizations like his, just as Mr. Putin's government has reined in news organizations, businesses and the political opposition.

"They want to do to us what they did to Khodorkovsky," he said, referring to the prosecution of Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky and Yukos, the oil company he founded. "They want to send a message to others. They started the criminal case, the tax claims, to show to others what can happen to them."

Officials here denied that the government actions had been coordinated, but a prosecutor, Konstantin M. Moiseyev, underlined the political aspects of the criminal case.

He said that Mr. Dmitriyevsky used the society's monthly newspaper, Rights Defender, to publish criticism of the Kremlin's policies in Chechnya and the Northern Caucasus. The criticism, he said, amounted to fomenting hatred -- paid for by the United States, as well as the European Commission and Norway, which also provided grants.

"We think that he is receiving grants from abroad -- not only from the United States, but also from other countries that are interested in the Chechen war and reflect the interests of Chechen extremists," he said. "They pay for that."

The society, established after the second Chechen war began in 1999, found itself mired in legal challenges soon after the terrorist siege of Middle School No. 1 in Beslan a year ago by armed militants from a separatist group in nearby Chechnya. Oksana A. Chelysheva, another employee, said the authorities were retaliating for the society's efforts to promote a negotiated end to the siege, which ended in a convulsion of violence that left 331 dead.

In January, officers of the Federal Security Service, the successor of the K.G.B., searched the society's cluttered three-room office in a drab apartment block and seized copies of the newspaper.

At first, Mr. Dmitriyevsky was accused of abetting terrorism, a graver crime, but the charges were reduced to inciting ethnic hatred. Mr. Moiseyev, the prosecutor, said it was the first time a case had been filed in Nizhny Novgorod under that article in the criminal code.

Both charges involved open letters published in 2004 by Aslan Maskhadov, the Chechen leader killed by Russian forces in March, and by Akhmed Zakayev, the separatist spokesman who received political asylum in Britain.

The letters passionately criticized Kremlin policies, but did not single out any ethnic group. Asked how such criticism amounted to inciting hatred, Mr. Moiseyev replied, "The whole tendency is to reflect negatively on the policy of the Russian president and soldiers of the Russian forces."

Mr. Dmitriyevsky could face two years in prison.

The society's troubles, including the tax claim against it, could force the United States and other countries to curtail financing or face a confrontation with Mr. Putin's government. American officials appear eager to avoid that.

The United States provided nearly \$900 million in assistance to Russia in 2004, the vast majority for programs to destroy or secure nuclear and other weapons. But \$45 million went to groups that promote democracy and civil liberties. The State Department says the money is intended to address "Russia's inconsistent transition toward a democratic system."

However, in the wake of political uprisings in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, former Soviet states where the United States promoted similar programs, Mr. Putin has evidently grown more impatient with foreign support of groups viewed as political. "Let us resolve the internal political problems of Russia ourselves," he said in July.

The society's 23 employees continue to gather and publish information about the war and to defend themselves. But with its bank accounts frozen, it has no resources to pay for lawyers and auditors to challenge the charges. Its members have been questioned and, they say, threatened -- by security officers and by unknown people.

[On Sept. 9, leaflets appeared on the walls of the apartment building where Mr. Dmitriyevsky lives, threatening him and Ms. Chelysheva by name. "Death to them," one said.]

Mr. Moiseyev dismissed criticism of the prosecution, saying that Mr. Dmitriyevsky simply refused to accept his accountability under the law. "A person who committed a crime," he said, "must answer for it."

No articles published between June and October.

November

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/16/world/asia/soviet-leftovers-where-statecraft-is-stagecraft.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

NOV. 16, 2005

Soviet Leftovers, Where Statecraft Is Stagecraft

BAKU, Azerbaijan, Nov. 12 - Two years ago, when the government of Georgia collapsed during street protests against a tainted election, its fall energized pockets of revolutionary sentiment against the autocratic rulers who dominate the former Soviet Union. Then Ukraine fell amid similar outrage. And then Kyrgyzstan.

Now an inevitable reaction has taken shape. Behold the counterrevolution, a machination of the state.

Faced with emboldened opposition parties and Western organizations and governments that have made democratic values a foreign policy theme, several post-Soviet governments are rigging the vote almost as surely as ever, mixing old electoral tricks with a nod to public relations, while coolly smothering their own domestic oppositions at birth.

"Managed democracy" has long been the descriptive pejorative for the autocrats' brand of post-Communist political liberalization. And when managed democracy meets an election, it is a democracy that feels not like a domestic policy, but a foreign policy served for Western consumption.

So it was last year in presidential elections in Russia and in the republic of Chechnya, as well as in the opposition-free parliamentary elections in Uzbekistan. And now so it is in Azerbaijan, a corrupt oil state on the Caspian Sea.

The model consists of distinct parts: publicly embrace democracy at the top, while the government proper sticks to pinpointed repression and electoral crime. Win elections overwhelmingly. Then apologize if necessary, a little bit, and as quietly as possible. Repeat pledges about the values of democracy.

Such is the case in Baku. The Azeri government emerged from Communism seeking closer relations with the West. But as its leaders have grown fabulously rich they have clung to a strongman model, building power around a few families and clans, securing police loyalty, maintaining a state television network almost bereft of candor and honesty, and resisting political pluralism.

This system's tenacity was evident on Nov. 7, when an international mission declared that the parliamentary elections failed to meet democratic standards, as has every election here since the ruling Aliyev family came to power in 1993.

Diplomats and observers vented disappointment. After all, President Ilham Aliyev spent half the year publicly insisting that this time there would be a free and fair vote.

Under Western prodding, Mr. Aliyev -- himself elected in a fraud-tainted vote as his father left office shortly before his death in 2003 -- issued a decree in May ordering electoral reforms. The decree pledged, among other things, more open candidate registration, freedom of assembly and an end to using state power to help chosen candidates win.

The opposition youth group, an element vital in demonstrations in Georgia and Ukraine, was harried into near irrelevance by the police. Opposition ranks suffered arrests. Opposition rallies were limited to where the government wanted them, with no access to the central square.

When the opposition appeared at unauthorized times, its marchers were beaten by the police with clubs, and then accused -- without publicly produced evidence -- of throwing stones. The violence appeared to contain the opposition's growth.

"Let's be realistic here," one Western diplomat said. "There is a limited number of people who want to go out and risk having their heads beaten."

The media coverage favored the state, and election commissions were stacked with pro-government members.

As election day drew near, the opposition and independent observers reported that entire villages were told that they would lose utilities if they did not elect the candidate the government desired. Potentially victorious candidates were quietly forced to withdraw from races by the score, even hundreds, the opposition says.

The last gap between the president's words and his government's actions was clear on election day, Nov. 6, which was accompanied by reports of vote-stuffing, vote-buying, inaccurate voting lists, voter intimidation and more.

Even this was not enough. Observers and journalists watched as government officials panicked in several precincts as vote counts favored opposition candidates. Rather than certify the results, some officials fled with ballots. Others called for the police, who arrived, seized votes and carried them off.

By this time the state had prevented at least three foreign television news crews from bringing satellite equipment into the country, ensuring that neither the most egregious violations nor any opposition rallies could readily be broadcast live.

In the morning, candidates loyal to Mr. Aliyev were victorious. The message was clear. The chosen candidate will win.

The results serve not as a milestone of Westernization but as a study in how to rig a post-Soviet vote and manage the fallout. The opposition has 10 of 125 seats, according to the election commission. A heavy majority went to the ruling party and its allies.

Mr. Aliyev's government, stung by exposure of some its worst actions, has recounted or annulled the results of a handful of races, and has said it is investigating more complaints. A few officials have been fired. But the domestic position has been unashamedly upbeat.

"As a whole, the election process before the election and on the day of election was successful, and I think Azerbaijan had normal and democratic elections," Mr. Aliyev said on state television on Nov. 7, hours after the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or O.S.C.E., the principal observer mission, concluded otherwise.

Moreover, Azerbaijan has thus far kept the public dialogue narrow, with the concessions to date dealing with misconduct on Nov. 6, while the O.S.C.E. and other organizations that observed the entire campaign reported abuses spanning months.

This larger universe of machinations has as yet not been publicly addressed. Rather, the state has referred to friendly accounts of the elections from observers it commissioned, or from states that employ similar tactics, including Russia.

And it is working toward getting whatever lines it can insert into the European group's final report, a format that, in controlled language, dutifully notes any improvements a state makes, like allowing more candidates to register.

The most enthusiastic opposition members still speak of peaceful revolt. But the duet is familiar.

The election was stolen, they say, the revolution starts soon.

The state's answer comes back: There will be no revolution. We've made sure of that.

This, after all, is a step forward.

BUSINESS

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/18/business/russia-plans-to-use-turkey-as-hub-for-gas.html>

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

NOV. 18, 2005

Russia Plans to Use Turkey as Hub for Gas

MOSCOW, Nov. 17 - Russia will extend the reach of its natural gas exports by using Turkey as a hub for shipments to southern Europe and possibly Israel, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia said Thursday at the formal opening of a pipeline project on the Black Sea.

Mr. Putin and other dignitaries gathered in Samsun, where the pipelines come ashore on Turkey's northern coast after crossing the floor of the Black Sea from Russia. The project, known as Blue Stream, consists of two parallel pipelines that have been operating for two years. The pipelines have a capacity of 16 billion cubic meters a year; Gazprom, Russia's gas monopoly, will ship 4.5 billion cubic meters of gas to Turkey through them this year.

The pipelines begin in Izobilnoye, Russia, and end in Ankara, Turkey. They were built by Gazprom and Eni, the Italian oil company.

Gazprom, the world's biggest natural gas producer, already provides 40 percent of Western Europe's needs, a percentage that rises to three-quarters or higher in Eastern Europe. Blue Stream gives Gazprom still greater leverage.

Gazprom may also build an additional pipeline into Turkey, and within a year and a half will decide on routes for exports from Turkey, Mr. Putin and Gazprom officials said, speaking amid a tangle of shiny white pipes draped with flags.

"The pipeline's start-up is one more step towards building a unified energy system in Europe," Mr. Putin said. "This is a step toward reinforcing the Continent's energy security and diversifying energy supplies to consumers."

The project shows the lengths Russia will go to find routes around Eastern Europe. The routes circumvent Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria, which all get transit fees from Russia and preferential prices that evolved after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Blue Stream is the first of two expensive undersea pipelines for Gazprom, which is drawing new export routes from the Caspian Sea and Russia that will have geopolitical repercussions for decades to come.

This fall, the company announced plans to build the North TransGas pipeline under the Baltic Sea to Germany, with a possible branch feeding Kaliningrad, a region wedged between Poland and Lithuania and separated from the rest of Russia. That pipeline would bypass Belarus and Poland.

Viktor B. Khristenko, Russia's minister of energy and industry, said outbound routes on Russia's southern rim could go from Turkey and pass through Greece or the southern Balkan countries. Exports to Israel could flow through another undersea pipeline directly from Turkey across the Mediterranean, he said on the sidelines of the ceremony, according to the Interfax news agency.

"We see all these projects as quite interesting for Russia," he said.

By diversifying its export routes, Gazprom gains negotiating power over the remaining transit countries, allowing it to reduce its subsidies and force down transit fees, said Vadim G. Kleiner, a specialist on Gazprom at Hermitage Capital Management in Moscow. Conversely, the alternative routes mean the transit countries lose considerable negotiating power.

Mr. Putin's comments suggested an evolving interpretation of the Turkish route's significance for Russia as a hub; earlier, the project had been criticized on the grounds that Gazprom had overestimated demand in Turkey itself.

Gazprom, which is expanding its oil business, also announced its intentions to build an overland crude oil pipeline from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, Turkey, bypassing the Bosphorus, Reuters reported. Those straits are now among the world's oil chokepoints, and congested tanker traffic poses environmental dangers.

Mr. Putin was accompanied by the prime minister of Turkey, Recep T. Erdogan, and Silvio Berlusconi, the prime minister of Italy.

EDUCATION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/30/world/europe/investigation-says-russians-acted-ineptly-in-school-raid.html>

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

NOV. 30, 2005

Investigation Says Russians Acted Ineptly in School Raid

MOSCOW, Nov. 29 - The first government investigation to announce its findings on the terrorist attack on School No. 1 in the southern Russian city of Beslan in September 2004 criticized law enforcement agencies for a confused and uncoordinated rescue effort and blamed them for allowing the attack in the first place, a lawmaker who led the inquiry said Tuesday.

The investigation -- carried out by a commission appointed by the regional legislature -- did not corroborate the official versions of some key events during the convulsion of violence that ended the siege on Sept. 3, though it also cast doubt on alternative theories that had been fueled by rumor and outrage over the government's actions.

The commission's written report, which totals 40 pages, according to the lawmaker's spokeswoman, has not yet been made public but was summarized by its chairman, Stanislav M. Kesayev, during a legislative session in Vladikavkaz, the capital of the North Ossetia region.

While the investigation added few new details about the storming of the school, which left 331 hostages dead, more than half of them schoolchildren, the commission's findings amounted to a rare official rebuke of the federal authorities for their actions during the attack.

"Without any doubt the school seizure in Beslan was the result of insufficient measures by law enforcement bodies," Mr. Kesayev told his fellow legislators, the Interfax news agency reported. "Among other faults, law enforcement bodies did not do enough to stop a large number of armed people from reaching Beslan, a major rail and air hub, unnoticed."

The investigation failed to establish "with absolute conviction" that a bomb wired by the gunmen who seized the school had accidentally exploded, touching off more explosions and a frantic attempt to rescue the hostages inside, as Russian federal officials have asserted. Mr. Kesayev cited inconsistent reports from different agencies for the inability to resolve the question.

At the same time, he said, there were "no grounds" to believe that a sniper's bullet -- fired by forces outside the school -- had set off the explosion, even as he diplomatically acknowledged that victims' relatives continued to doubt the official account.

Mr. Kesayev said that those held responsible for negligence should be punished and that the agencies should be reorganized to prevent future incidents like the one at Beslan.

There was no immediate response by federal officials, but President Vladimir V. Putin and others have shown little willingness to acknowledge errors in the rescue attempt, laying blame on the man who claimed responsibility for the siege, Shamil Basayev, a leader of secessionist rebels in the nearby region of Chechnya.

North Ossetia's investigation is one of three under way. Russia's prosecutor general is overseeing a criminal inquiry that is to continue at least until March, officials announced Tuesday.

A federal parliamentary inquiry, led by the vice chairman of the upper house, Aleksandr P. Torshin, is expected to be released by year's end.

Fatima S. Khabalova, a spokeswoman for the North Ossetian legislature, said in a telephone interview that the commission's findings would be revised to include lawmakers' questions on Tuesday and submitted to Mr. Torshin's committee.

In particular, Mr. Kesayev's report criticized officials' misstatements of the number of hostages in the school, which sowed distrust among frantic relatives and contributed to a botched rescue effort.

The investigation also knocked down another widely held suspicion: that the Interior Ministry and the Federal Security Service knew of the attack in advance and did nothing to stop it.

In one intriguing disclosure, Mr. Kesayev was asked why negotiations with the Chechen separatist political leader, Aslan Maskhadov, had not begun until 28 hours after the siege began on Sept. 1. He replied that North Ossetian authorities had made "numerous attempts to establish contact with Maskhadov, but failed."

Officials reached Mr. Maskhadov's envoy in Britain, but their effort became moot when the violence erupted. Mr. Maskhadov was later reported to have said he would have gone to Beslan to mediate a peaceful end. He was killed by Russian forces in March of this year.

December

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/03/world/europe/russia-to-sell-antiaircraft-missiles-to-iran-in-billiondollar.html>

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

DEC. 3, 2005

Russia to Sell Antiaircraft Missiles to Iran in Billion-Dollar Deal

MOSCOW, Dec. 2 - Russia has agreed to sell antiaircraft missiles to Iran as part of a \$1 billion arms deal that would significantly increase Moscow's military cooperation with Tehran, Russian news media reported Friday.

The announcement of the sale coincided with a visit to Moscow by R. Nicholas Burns, the American under secretary of state for political affairs, who said in a radio interview that the United States had asked the Russian Foreign Ministry to explain the deal, reported by the newspaper Vedomosti and the Interfax news agency.

"For 25 years, Iran has supported terrorists in the Middle East, and that is why we have very bad relations with them," Mr. Burns said in remarks translated into Russian on the Echo of Moscow radio station. "You can understand why we do not support the sales of weapons."

The sale could complicate Russia's mediating role in Iran's nuclear standoff with the United States and Europe, a role that recently received the backing of the United States. Mr. Burns, in Moscow for talks on cooperation with Russia in antiterrorism matters, said Washington otherwise supported Russian efforts to reopen nuclear talks with Iran.

"We believe Russia is a country that has influence over Iran, and we want Iran to return to negotiations," Mr. Burns said.

The missiles, known by the NATO designation SA-15 Gauntlet, are deployed on tracked vehicles and designed to strike aircraft or cruise missiles flying at altitudes of an estimated 30 to 20,000 feet at a range of 7 miles, according to the Federation of American Scientists Web site.

Vedomosti, citing an unidentified weapons factory manager and a source said to be close to the deal, said that Russia would sell 29 missile systems to Iran, and that the weapons would complicate a potential airstrike by the United States or Israel on Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant, which Russia is helping to build.

Based on a 1990's sale of 21 such systems to Greece for \$526 million, the newspaper estimated the value of the missiles at more than \$700 million. Interfax, citing a source in the Russian military industry, said Russia would sell 30 air defense systems to Iran as part of a \$1 billion package that includes upgrades to the Iranian Air Force's 59 Russian-made Sukhoi and MIG fighter jets and the sale of patrol boats.

Under President Vladimir V. Putin, Russia has increased arms sales to developing nations. Last year, with \$6.1 billion in agreements, it was second in global arms sales after the United States, according to a study by the United States Congress released in August.

WORLD

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/04/politics/prodemocracy-groups-are-harassed-in-central-asia.html>

By JOEL BRINKLEY

DEC 4, 2005

Pro-Democracy Groups Are Harassed in Central Asia

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 - Groups paid by the United States to promote democracy in Central Asia are under sustained assault, not only from those governments but also from Russia, which is locked in conflict with Washington for dominance in the region's former Soviet republics.

The United States needs military bases and permission to use the airspace in the region to service its forces in Afghanistan, and it holds large oil and gas investments in some of the countries. But the United States also pays a handful of organizations to aggressively promote democracy in Central Asian nations, many of which are ruled by longtime presidents who do not allow competitive elections. Several also have close ties to Russia.

The nongovernmental organizations -- and American diplomats supporting them -- are under near-constant harassment from their host governments and from Russia.

Russia has always looked askance at democracy programs, but following popular uprisings that led to changes of government in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan over the last year, it began inveighing against them, saying the United States was trying to create "franchised revolutions," as Tass, the Russian government news agency, put it recently.

The United States spent \$75.6 million on programs promoting democracy in Central Asia in the most recent fiscal year for which figures are known. In Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, American-financed groups gave training and assistance to opposition groups that ousted leaders.

In Moscow, the lower house of Parliament gave preliminary approval late last month to a law that would, if put into effect as written, severely restrict, if not close down, many nongovernmental organizations working in Russia, including the pro-democracy groups. American officials and other experts said Russia was pushing Central Asian states to enact similar laws.

Russia worries not only about growing American influence along its southern border but also about change, a senior State Department official and an expert on the region said in an interview. He spoke on the condition of anonymity in keeping with departmental ground rules.

The official said that among the countries debating restrictions like Russia's were Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

The official said a bill that was "analogous to the Russian approach" came close to enactment in Kazakhstan this summer, but President Nursultan A. Nazarbayev pulled it back. The United States had made its opposition clear.

As a result of these and other pressures from Russia, said Nelson Ledsky, a former State Department official who now leads the Central Asia programs for the National Democratic Institute, "we have run into considerable difficulty in the last six to eight months, everywhere, because the Russians have mounted an organized campaign wrongly accusing" the United States of working to foment revolution.

The institute is a government-financed, semiprivate agency established by Congress and often working under government mandates. In many foreign countries, it is regarded as a branch of the United States government.

Russia places accusatory news articles and commentaries in Russian-language newspapers across the region, American officials and officers of the pro-democracy groups said. One in Kazakhstan asserted recently that Mr. Ledsky's organization, and others like it, "are like secretive, revolutionary spies."

Russian commentators are invited to appear on government-controlled television news shows in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and other states, to rail against the American efforts at promoting democracy. Many of those working for the groups are under constant scrutiny of their host governments, which harass them to show their displeasure.

In Kazakhstan, as an example cited by nongovernmental groups, tax authorities conduct surprise weeklong audits that paralyze operations. Immigration officers sometimes seize workers' passports. In other countries, including Tajikistan, citizens hired to work for the organizations receive threatening visits and phone calls, telling them to quit.

Officers working for Freedom House, a private agency working under a government contract in the region, are on trial, in essence, in Uzbekistan, as the agency faces accusations of violating a variety of arcane regulations governing its work.

"The Russian press and the coverage in the region are incredibly misleading, but they are having a tremendous impact in Central Asia," said Paula Schrieffer, program director for Freedom House. The regional news media "is echoing what is on the air in Moscow," saying "we are a nefarious force."

United States government officials, current and former, express some wonder that the authoritarian leaders in these states put up with the American democracy programs at all, given that the programs' ultimate aim is to remove these leaders from power.

Mr. Ledsky said he believed the states had an interest in "professing to the West that they have an interest in democracy," even if it was not heartfelt.

The international rules have changed, said Lorne W. Craner, a former assistant secretary of state for democracy and human rights and now the head of the International Republican Institute, another of the government-financed organizations dedicated to advancing democracy. "To be a part of the club" of respectable nations, he said, it is necessary to hold elections.

The American organizations can help create credible opposition candidates, the present and former officials said, so that the leaders can offer at least the appearance of competitive elections. But, they said, even that can give a nation a taste of democracy.

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/04/world/us-and-britain-try-a-new-tack-on-iran.html>

By STEVEN R. WEISMAN and DAVID E. SANGER

DEC. 4, 2005

U.S. and Britain Try a New Tack on Iran

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 - In a new effort to pressure Iran to allow strict controls on its nuclear program, Britain and the United States are trying to persuade Russia and China to endorse their conclusion, derived from what officials call new evidence, that Tehran intends to build nuclear weapons, American and European diplomats said.

Until now, the effort to rein in Iran's nuclear program has occurred largely in the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations nuclear watchdog, which has described a pattern of highly suspicious behavior by Iran. But the agency focuses on identifying possible diversions of nuclear material and has little weapons expertise.

The diplomats, who asked not to be identified to avoid any possible disruption of the delicate negotiations, say the new effort has been floated by Britain and endorsed by France and the United States, and seeks the declaration on Iran from the five major nuclear weapons powers that are the permanent members of the Security Council, which has the power to impose penalties.

The statement is the hoped-for result of arms specialists in China and Russia examining the evidence on Iran -- including thousands of pages found on a laptop computer obtained by the United States last year -- and concluding, as the United States, Britain and France have with varying degrees of certainty, that it points at least to an intent to build a weapon.

"If we could get China and Russia to agree that this bears all the hallmarks of a weapons program, it could have an enormous impact on Iran," said one senior European diplomat, because it might signal that if the issue reaches the Security Council, Iran could not count on Beijing or Moscow blocking action.

Russia and China have extensive energy and economic dealings with Iran and have argued that a confrontational approach will simply drive its government to walk away from international obligations on its nuclear program and oust the inspectors who are examining its facilities.

While Russia and China have declared that Iran should not be allowed to have nuclear weapons, they have resisted American efforts to get the nuclear agency to refer Iran to the Security Council for possible penalties. A resolution passed by the agency's member

nations in September said the case should be referred, but specified no time frame, and none was established at a subsequent meeting last month.

Running parallel to the effort to declare that Iran is trying to "weaponize" its program, despite its denials, is a diplomatic effort to support a Russian proposal that Iran be allowed to enrich uranium for its nuclear reactors -- but only on Russian soil. Russian officials said this would guarantee that the material could not be used secretly for nuclear weapons, because it would be enriched only to "reactor grade."

Many aspects of the Russian proposal remain unclear. An American official said it could involve Iranian investment in a company based in Russia, but with the actual enrichment done elsewhere in the country, with no Iranian participation.

The official said the Russian initiative was "more of an idea than a proposal," and European officials said it was being discussed more as a way of involving Russia in the diplomacy than out of a conviction that Iran would accept it.

Eventually, the United States hopes that Russia will develop its idea, and that Britain, France and Germany will try to get the Iranians to resume talks on it, as part of a strategy to keep the talks going.

But Iran has so far declined to discuss the Russian proposal and has steadily insisted that it cannot surrender its sovereignty in developing enriched uranium for what it says is a peaceful nuclear program.

The British, as part of the effort to persuade Russia and China to join a declaration on Iran, are citing documents turned over to the nuclear agency by Iran apparently showing that it was offered technology to make metallic hemispheres from highly enriched uranium.

Iran maintains that it never acted on the offer, which came from the former Pakistani nuclear chief, Abdul Qadeer Khan. British and American officials say they find that explanation impossible to believe.

Britain, France and Germany have forged an ambitious effort to persuade Iran to abandon nuclear fuel activities that could lead to the making of a bomb, in return for economic and political incentives and also some form of security guarantees. But Iran has refused to give up its right to these activities.

"The most important aspect of our discussions is to broaden the support by countries like Russia, China, India, South Africa and Brazil," said a top European diplomat. "To do that, it's important that they feel all the diplomatic possibilities are exhausted before we step up the pressure."

The impasse with Iran is at a stage where "they are talking about talks," said an American official. That is, European officials say, they are trying to reach out to Iran to discuss informally the possibility of resuming negotiations on an eventual abandonment of its nuclear programs.

On top of these problems, European officials say that Iran's negotiating team is in some disarray, with evidence that the new president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is feuding with Iran's chief negotiator, Ali A. Larijani.

OPINION

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/07/opinion/moscows-empty-red-square.html>

By JOHN EDWARDS and JACK KEMP

DEC. 7, 2005

Moscow's Empty Red Square

WASHINGTON - WHEN we visited Moscow earlier this fall, almost everyone we talked to agreed that Russia is becoming steadily less democratic. Yet Russia's society and economy are in many ways freer than ever. Our visit convinced us of the vitality and potential of Russian civic groups and nongovernmental organizations, much like the ones Western Europeans and Americans know in their own countries. Unfortunately this sector -- human rights monitors, environmental groups, policy research institutions, even public health advocates -- is now at risk.

The latest challenge to civil society comes from legislation introduced by members of President Vladimir Putin's party and other factions in the Duma, the lower house of Parliament. This legislation would, among other things, keep foreign nonprofit organizations from having offices in Russia and deny foreign funds to Russian organizations that are suspected of engaging in undefined "political" activities. Even the limited grants permitted under the new law would be taxed as though they were corporate profits, at rates exceeding 40 percent. Virtually all nonprofit groups would be affected.

The Duma has passed this bill by an overwhelming margin of 370 to 18. Two further votes are required before it comes into force; the next is scheduled for December 16.

If this measure becomes law, it will roll back pluralism in Russia and curtail contact between our societies. It will flagrantly breach the commitment that President Putin has made to numerous Western leaders to strengthen such ties.

Its passage also raises the bizarre prospect that the president of Russia will play host to next summer's Group of 8 summit meeting even as his country's laws choke off contacts with global society. If this happens, the contrast with last summer's meeting at Gleneagles, Scotland -- at which nongovernmental organizations from around the world led the effort to "make poverty history" -- could not be starker. It will unfortunately bolster the arguments of those who say that Russia has no place in the G-8 at all.

Russian officials and legislators have responded to criticism of the legislation by saying that they are trying only to prevent outside interference in internal political affairs. Though this response carries unsettling echoes of Soviet times, the Russian government has a legitimate interest in protecting the integrity of the electoral process and political campaigns. After all, other nations, ours included, have the same goal -- but they accomplish it without encroaching on fundamental freedoms or cutting off their country from the outside world.

In truth, the aim of the proposed legislation is much broader. Senior Russian officials have described nongovernmental organizations as a "fifth column" in Russian society and even as fronts for foreign intelligence services. If this proposal comes into force, the government will have in its hands the authority to close down nonprofit groups simply because it finds their views and activities inconvenient.

The Kremlin's initiative reflects the unwillingness of those who wield the power of the Russian state to accept the idea that civil society is not theirs to control. For Europeans and Americans, this principle is fundamental. You can't claim to be a modern country without it.

Those of us who strongly support greater partnership with Russia and believe that it can build modern political, economic and social institutions need to send an unambiguous message: such laws put this goal out of reach. President Bush apparently raised this issue when he met with President Putin in South Korea last month, and we expect him and his administration to continue to do so.

But President Putin should not hear only from the United States. European leaders, both in and out of government, have as great an interest in this matter as Americans do. European organizations have built active and successful partnerships with independent organizations in Russian society. Indeed, Europe's relations with Russia would not really be "normal" if such partnerships did not exist.

President Putin has said he'll consider modifications of the bill, because "civil society in Russia should not suffer." But what's wrong with the bill is not this or that offensive provision. The real problem is its underlying purpose, and that cannot be fixed.

Russia faces a choice between entering the mainstream of the modern world, or trapping itself in an eddy of reaction and isolation. For Europeans and Americans who want to welcome Russia into the mainstream -- and who believe we have many reasons to work together -- the legislation before the Duma is a serious warning about how that choice is being made. The right advice for Mr. Putin is obvious: shelve the bill and start over.

Op-Ed Contributors John Edwards and Jack Kemp are co-chairmen of a Council on Foreign Relations task force on United States policy toward Russia.

WORLD

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/08/world/europe/rice-criticizes-russias-plan-to-curb-private-rights-groups.html>

By JOEL BRINKLEY

DEC. 8, 2005

Rice Criticizes Russia's Plan to Curb Private Rights Groups

KIEV, Ukraine, Dec. 7 - Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice criticized Russia on Wednesday, saying she had serious concerns about a proposed law that could shut down private groups, including some financed by the United States, that promote democracy, human rights and related issues.

She made her remarks during a news conference here with President Viktor A. Yushchenko, who came to power in Ukraine a year ago after a popular uprising. Many

leaders of that uprising received instruction and advice from the very groups that Russia is proposing to ban or seriously restrict.

"We have concerns, and the United States government has expressed these concerns at all levels," she said. "We would hope that the importance of nongovernmental organizations would be understood by Russia."

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia has called for revisions in the proposed law, while defending its central aims.

Representatives of several private groups have said Russia is trying to persuade many of the former Soviet states in Central Asia to pass similar laws.

Ms. Rice's statement was the first public criticism of Russia's plans by the United States since the lower house of Parliament voted preliminary approval last month. Until Wednesday, administration officials were noncommittal. But a senior State Department official traveling with Ms. Rice said that was because the department had hoped to convince Moscow behind the scenes that the proposed law was a bad idea.

"With the Russians, it is important that we discuss it discreetly," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity so as not to upstage the secretary.

Two senior State Department officials -- Assistant Secretary Daniel Fried and Under Secretary R. Nicholas Burns -- were in Moscow last week talking to the government about the proposed law, the official said. At that time, he added, Russian officials professed an interest in changing the proposed law so it would not seem so onerous, though he said he did not know how seriously to take the statement.

The proposed law would force 450,000 private organizations to register next year under tighter rules. The draft bill would require the foreign organizations to close their offices and try to re-register as purely Russian organizations, which would give the government greater control over their activities.

In the face of internal and international criticism, Parliament has delayed a second vote on the measure until Dec. 16.

Ms. Rice's statement about the bill came during a 24-hour visit to Ukraine, where she and her aides said they wanted to encourage President Yushchenko to move ahead with political and economic change.

The government is riddled with corruption left over from the Soviet-backed government that lost power last year, American officials say. Partly in response to that problem, Mr. Yushchenko fired his entire cabinet in September, including his popular prime minister, Yulia V. Tymoshenko. Ms. Rice met briefly with Ms. Tymoshenko on Wednesday.

Along with the corruption and infighting in government, Ukraine's economy is stagnating; economic growth slid to 4 percent so far this year from 12 percent last year. Asked about that, Mr. Yushchenko cited a dizzying list of figures he said showed that Ukraine's economy was healthy -- especially given strong exports of "cattle skins" and "nonferrous and ferrous scrap metals."

He blamed the former government for much of his problems, but added, "We managed to correct all those mistakes rather promptly and speedily."

BUSINESS

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/09/business/worldbusiness/putin-presses-ukraine-to-pay-market-price-for.html>

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

DEC. 9, 2005

Putin Presses Ukraine to Pay Market Price for Natural Gas

MOSCOW, Dec. 8 - With aid flowing in from the West after the overhaul of its government, Ukraine should pay market prices for the Russian natural gas it consumes, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia said Thursday.

Russia has been steadfast in a politically charged dispute with Ukraine this fall over pricing and gas shipments that could redraw the routes Russia uses to move natural gas to Western Europe and elsewhere.

Also at stake are efforts by Gazprom, the world's largest natural gas producer, to turn itself into an international energy company from a former Soviet institution, as well as the shifting of Russia's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.

Russia's demand for higher prices was anticipated after last winter's contested election in Ukraine, in which a Kremlin-backed candidate lost. The subsequent loss of cheap Russian gas in the next negotiating period -- the contracts correspond to the calendar year -- is the price Ukraine will pay for asserting its independence, said Christopher Weafer, chief analyst at Alfa Bank in Moscow.

Still, the politically driven decision is good economics, he added. It will set transit fees and natural gas prices through market mechanisms; Ukraine will compete with others for the best deal, rather than courting favors from Russia.

"Russia is saying, You can't have your cake and eat it: if you're in the Russian sphere of influence you get cheap energy; if you aren't, you don't," Mr. Weafer said.

Mr. Putin, in asserting the right of Gazprom to allow world markets to set its pricing policies, said that Ukraine should no longer count on gas at one-fifth the cost of what Western Europeans pay.

Mr. Putin told his cabinet that new privatization revenue and Western aid would compensate Ukraine for the change. He also said that maintaining the Ukraine subsidy would cost Gazprom \$3.6 billion next year.

"It's a matter of billions of dollars," Mr. Putin said. "This is enough for buying the necessary amount of Russian gas at market prices."

Still, not all of Gazprom's deals are market-driven. A day before Mr. Putin's speech, Gazprom quietly agreed to sell natural gas to Belarus, a country firmly in Moscow's orbit, for less than one-third the asking price in Ukraine. Gazprom is asking Ukraine to pay \$160 per 1,000 cubic meters, up from the \$50 paid this year. On Wednesday, Gazprom renewed a contract with Belarus at \$46.68 per 1,000 cubic meters, according to the company. The price of that much natural gas in Western Europe averages about \$250.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/11/weekinreview/russia-tries-pr-to-brighten-its-dismal-image.html>

DEC. 11, 2005

Russia Tries P.R. to Brighten Its Dismal Image

The Web site for Foreign Policy magazine (www.foreignpolicy.com) has an essay, "Spinning Russia," by Julian Evans Page, that looks at how Russia under President Vladimir V. Putin is working on its image.

A 2003 poll commissioned by Putin's government asked Americans to name the top 10 things they associated with Russia. The top ... were Communism, the KGB, snow and the mafia.

The sole positive association -- Russian art and culture -- came in dead last. A poll conducted in August on foreigners' awareness of Russian brands did even worse. The only "brands" foreigners could think of were Kalashnikov rifles and Molotov cocktails.

The Kremlin is convinced the culprits responsible for this distorted view of their country are people like me --foreign correspondents based in Moscow.

In late 2003, the Kremlin decided to make the state news agency, Novosti, its main instrument for image improvement. The Kremlin and Novosti are bypassing the pesky Moscow-based journalists with a two-pronged strategy. Soon, the news network will go global with its own recently launched English-language TV channel.

On a second front, Moscow last year inaugurated the Valdai Discussion Club, an annual meeting for foreign experts and foreign journalists invited to Russia on the Kremlin's dime. Invitees meet and mingle with senior figures from the Russian political scene. They are even treated to a one-on-one session with President Putin.... Moscow-based journalists are pointedly not on the invite list.

I'm O.K, You're O.K.

In "Morality Without Religion," at www.project-syndicate.org, Marc Hauser and Peter Singer argue that morality does not derive from religion, using data from a "moral sense" quiz, at <http://moral.wjh.harvard.edu>.

Is religion necessary for morality? Many people think it is outrageous, or even blasphemous, to deny that morality is of divine origin. Either some divine being crafted our moral sense during the period of creation or we picked it up from the teachings of organized religion. Both views see the same endpoint: we need religion to curb nature's vices.

Yet problems abound for the view that morality comes from God. One problem is that there are no moral principles shared by all religious people but no agnostics and atheists. This observation leads to a second: atheists and agnostics do not behave less morally than religious believers. The converse is also true: religion has led people to commit a long litany of horrendous crimes.

These studies begin to provide empirical support for the idea that like other psychological faculties of the mind, including language and mathematics, we are endowed with a moral faculty that guides our intuitive judgments of right and wrong. These facts are incompatible with the story of divine creation.

Dear Great Leader

The government of Pakistan was embarrassed to learn that an English textbook for teenagers contains an anonymous ode, in which the first letters of each line spell "President Bush." The poem, "The Leader," appeared in Britain's Guardian newspaper:

Patient and steady with all he must bear,
Ready to accept every challenge with care,
Easy in manner, yet solid as steel,
Strong in his faith, refreshingly real,
Isn't afraid to propose what is bold,
Doesn't conform to the usual mold,
Eyes that have foresight, for hindsight won't do
Never back down when he sees what is true
Tells it all straight, and means it all too
Bracing for war, but praying for peace
Using his power so evil will cease:
So much a leader and worthy of trust,
Here stands a man who will do what he must.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/14/world/europe/postsoviet-voting-and-dogging-the-watchdogs.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

DEC. 14, 2005

Post-Soviet Voting, and Dogging the Watchdogs

MOSCOW, Dec. 13 - Early this year, as President Bush began his new term, he declared a vision with allure for many people living within the stunted democracies or autocratic governments in the former Soviet Union. "The policy of the United States," Mr. Bush said, "is to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world."

Eleven months on, Mr. Bush's inaugural challenge is facing an oblique but determined attack in territory once under Moscow's sway. The battlegrounds are elections, which offer a glimpse into an emerging nation's political health. At issue are perceptions. What exactly is democratic progress? And who gets to define it?

In much of the former Soviet Union, a patchwork of corrupt and semifunctional states where authoritarianism has proven durable and political liberalization has been uneven or thwarted, elections are routinely flawed or stolen. From eerily empty polling places in Chechnya to the rubber-stamp victories of President Islam A. Karimov of Uzbekistan, post-Communist governments often manipulate electoral outcomes, ostensibly lending a patina of legitimacy to plainly undemocratic men.

Now, alarmed by popular uprisings that followed rigged elections in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, Russia is leading many former Soviet states in an effort to undermine honest discussion about electoral misconduct. A precise attack is under way.

The target is the election monitoring arm of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is the principal monitor of elections behind the former Iron Curtain. Although attacking observers is not a direct affront to Mr. Bush's stated policy, it might as well be.

The United States makes clear that it relies on the European group to inform its view of an election. And as the United States has applauded the observation missions, the Kremlin and many of its former charges have chosen an opposite course.

The goals are clear: weaken credible Western observers while creating alternate observations for public consumption.

The European group's election-monitoring arm, known as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, or O.D.I.H.R., sends long-term and short-term observer teams to countries holding elections. The teams analyze each campaign period and election day, including voter and candidate registration, safeguards against multiple voting, ballot counting, use of state resources, media coverage, police conduct and more. As they work, they publish, producing assessments that have become prominent report cards of the balloting.

In recent years, as assessments have documented abuses in countries whose leaders then fell amid popular uprisings, and after the observers were critical of the election last year of President Vladimir V. Putin, Russia has begun treating the reports as highly provocative. "Autonomy of the O.D.I.H.R. has turned into a complete absence of control, and decent governments cannot accept this," Sergey V. Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, said at the annual meeting of the European group last week in Ljubljana, Slovenia. "It is also necessary to introduce order in the publications of assessments."

The observers' leadership, while not seeking confrontation with the Kremlin, has firmly defended their work. "We are holding a mirror up," said Christian Strohal, the director of the monitoring office. "Maybe there are some people who do not like the picture in the mirror. But if they smash the mirror, the picture is not going to change."

Mr. Lavrov's speech was only part of the attack. Working with Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Russia also sought to introduce rules that would have weakened the monitoring group and delayed publication of its reports. The United States and other governments rebuffed the proposal, and for now the observation mission seems secure.

But challenges to the observers' positions have been multiplying. As elections have become freighted with the potential to discredit the status quo, the Commonwealth of Independent States, or C.I.S., an alliance of 11 former Soviet states, has begun deploying observer missions of its own.

Those missions release reports that faintly resemble the Europeans' reports but lack detail and underlying data. They invariably reach conclusions the opposite of the Europeans', which are then funneled into state television for domestic and regional consumption, assuring citizens in the former Soviet sphere that democratic change is indeed afoot.

Bruce George, a member of British Parliament who led a mission this month monitoring the presidential election in Kazakhstan, said he regarded such tactics with suspicion and contempt. "In my view their methodology is simple," he said. "Be really nice to your friends. You would think we were observing on different planets."

Vladimir Karpechenko, a supervisor of the C.I.S. observation missions, refused requests for interviews and declined to provide explanations of their methodology. But a comparison of reports shows differing approaches.

In Azerbaijan, the Europeans provided an analysis of television news coverage, showing how it favored the state. It also documented "bad" or "very bad" ballot counting in 43 percent of polls observed. The Russian-led observers said the news coverage was balanced, but provided no evidence of how they reached their conclusions. One concern they did note was a suggestion that the indelible ink used for marking voters' hands, a program encouraged by the West to discourage multiple voting, might carry health risks.

Daniel Fried, an assistant secretary of state who oversees American diplomacy in the region, said efforts to blunt the European monitors' observation are creating "a bizarre alternative universe," which he expects to grow.

In the future, he said, some post-Soviet countries may forbid the European group from observing their elections. But those countries will lose respect in the West. "Respectability goes to countries that let O.D.I.H.R. in," he said.

BUSINESS

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/16/business/worldbusiness/dispute-over-natural-gas-prices-in-ukraine.html>

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

DEC. 16, 2005

Dispute Over Natural Gas Prices in Ukraine

MOSCOW, Dec. 15 - The Russian natural gas company Gazprom is demanding that Ukraine pay Western European rates for Russian gas -- more than four times what it pays now -- or hand over control of its gas pipeline network to a consortium to be run by Russia, Germany and Ukraine.

Gazprom is threatening to cut supplies if talks break down, just as Ukraine heads toward the coldest months of winter, and ahead of the country's first post-Orange Revolution parliamentary elections in March.

The new demands this week came during politically charged talks over gas prices after the elections last winter removed Ukraine from Russia's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.

Gazprom and Ukraine, whose economy depends heavily on Russian gas, are negotiating prices for 2006. Gazprom's deputy director for exports, Aleksandr I. Medvedev, has raised the asking price for natural gas to the amount paid in Western Europe: between \$220 and \$230 for 1,000 cubic meters. The original 2006 asking price for Ukraine was \$160, already a substantial increase over this year's price of \$50.

"It's clear today that Ukraine has passed the time when the price was \$160," Mr. Medvedev said, speaking from Berlin on Wednesday while on a business trip, in remarks that were carried on Russian television. The new rate is based on rising prices for a basket of oil products on world markets, the same formula used in Western Europe, he said.

"We are creating a completely understandable and transparent mechanism of price formation," he said.

Ukraine's president, Viktor A. Yushchenko, responded in a statement on Ukrainian television that he hoped that Russia's "formula for creating a new market should not become a formula for political pressure."

A huge jump in utility bills or cities plunged into darkness and cold by a gas shutoff could dent Mr. Yushchenko's popularity. He won last December's contested presidential election over a Kremlin-backed candidate.

Moscow is also demanding that other former Soviet states that are tilting toward the West politically, like Georgia and Moldova, pay market rates. Gazprom is not renegotiating rates with Belarus, which is firmly in Moscow's orbit. The price of gas in Belarus's 2006 contract is \$46, according to Gazprom.

On Tuesday, Gazprom's director, Aleksei Miller, said in an interview with Russia Today, a new Kremlin-financed English-language satellite news channel, that Ukraine should compromise by surrendering its pipelines to a consortium controlled by Russia, Ukraine and Germany, a major consumer of Russian gas.

Ukraine's pre-Orange Revolution leadership agreed to form such a consortium, but the new government has ignored the agreement, he said.

As an alternative to surrendering control of its export pipelines, Ivan Plachkov, Ukraine's fuel and energy minister, proposed on Thursday a joint venture with Gazprom to sell natural gas on Ukraine's domestic market, if Gazprom would agree to an incremental price increase leading to free market rates in 2010.

Also, the Ukrainian Parliament passed a moratorium on privatizing the state pipeline, Russia's Interfax news agency reported Thursday. That would obstruct any attempt by the government to fold it into a Gazprom-controlled consortium.

Meanwhile, Kiev was abuzz with ideas on how Ukraine could strike back at Russia. A presidential aide suggested raising the rent on Russia's Black Sea naval base, Moscow's only warm-water port. Ukrainian news media reported that the government had considered allowing United States experts a look at Moscow's advanced warning radar stations in Ukraine.

Gazprom threatened to sue if Ukraine siphons gas from export pipelines, an option that Ukraine's energy officials have discussed in speeches to their Parliament. Ukraine uses only about 20 percent of the gas passing over its territory from Russian fields.

BUSINESS

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/27/business/worldbusiness/in-estonia-former-sovietera-port-seeks-more-bustle.html>

By DAN BILEFSKY

DEC. 27, 2005

In Estonia, Former Soviet-Era Port Seeks More Bustle

Correction Appended

SILLAMAE, Estonia - In the early 1960's, the Kremlin ordered the Soviet military to blow up the port of Sillamae to prevent enemy ships from infiltrating this sleepy industrial town of 18,500, where uranium was enriched to build nuclear bombs during the Cold War.

Now, Tiit Vahi, a former Estonian prime minister and a leader of the country's revolution against Soviet rule, wants to lure the ships back. His aim is no less than transforming a place once nicknamed Uranium Lake into a bustling commercial port that will allow Estonia to serve as a bridge between East and West and shake up European trade.

"Even if we could transport the dust on the containers coming from China, we'd be happy, since the Chinese cargo flow is so huge," said Mr. Vahi, who helped lead Estonia's independence movement in 1989 before becoming transport minister and prime minister and then entering the business world.

While European companies are lobbying the European Union to rein in inexpensive Chinese imports -- a move that culminated in thousands of containers of Chinese T-shirts and sweatshirts being held up at European ports over the summer -- ports like Sillamae are frantically casting around for even a fraction of China's enormous trade. The money at stake is huge. Over the last 25 years, Europe-China trade has increased nearly 30-fold, to 146 billion euros.

Officials reopened the port of Sillamae in October with a reconstructed berth, a railway station and 2.5 kilometers of metal pipes for pumping oil to and from ships. It is now the European Union's easternmost port -- so close to the Russian border that you can see the city of Ivangorod, 16 miles away, sparkling in a haze across the Baltic Sea.

This site is crucial to attracting China, Mr. Vahi said, because it will permit Chinese companies to cut in half the time it takes for their goods to travel to Europe on the Trans-Siberian Railway through Russia.

Most Chinese companies now send their goods on giant container ships to large Western European ports like Rotterdam, where they are unloaded onto smaller ships that fan across the Atlantic. But by sending goods to Sillamae through Russia, Chinese companies could bypass the long passage along the Suez Canal and shrink their travel times to 14 days from 40 days.

The prospect of such time and cost savings prompted President Hu Jintao of China to invite Mr. Vahi to meet him in Beijing this summer to present his plans. A delegation of Chinese companies from Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing also visited Sillamae earlier this month.

"We are interested in how we can use Sillamae as a gateway and distribution center," said Liu Mingguo, commercial counselor at the Chinese embassy in Tallinn.

Even if Sillamae succeeds in drawing the Chinese, the port will need to shed a Soviet-era image straight out of a John le Carré novel. For 50 years, Sillamae was one of the most heavily guarded cities in Estonia because of the Kremlin's fears that nuclear secrets would leak out. Locals say that K.G.B. agents surrounded the town's gates and arrested trespassers. Inside the gates, the town was preserved as a model Soviet utopia, adorned by uniform Stalinist architecture and palm trees stored in special greenhouses during the winter. Many Estonians recall it as a forbidding place where no one ever smiled.

"I wouldn't want to go there," said Sven Ratassepp, marketing manager of the Port of Tallinn, Sillamae's rival. "Sillamae is an ugly town and it was a closed city for years. Not many people really know what went on there."

Beyond its image problem, transportation executives say that plans to use Russia as a supply route from China to Europe could prove difficult, because parts of the Trans-Siberian Railway are old and outmoded. The Kremlin has been slow to grant foreign companies access to its commercial railways and is sometimes seen as a threat to interfere with their plans.

Meanwhile, Moscow has imposed double tariffs, through the next two years, on goods that are shipped to and from Russia using non-Russian ports, making the use of Russia's commercial railways an expensive proposition.

The Russian-Estonian border also is plagued by congestion. A backlog of cargo chokes the Russian side, and Estonia's railway system, like others in the Baltics, is still not fully integrated with Western Europe's -- a legacy of Russian occupation, when the czars widened train tracks across the empire to prevent infiltration by enemy trains.

Pavel Telicka, a European Union official coordinating a multibillion-dollar project to upgrade the Baltic railway system, said that Sillamae was another small step in creating a bridge to the West from the Baltic countries. "The potential for Estonia -- and the Baltics -- to act as a gateway between East and West is strong, but the transport infrastructure needs to be integrated with the rest of the bloc while Russia has to liberalize its transport markets," he said.

Working in Sillamae's favor is a free-trade zone where companies can store goods ranging from DVD players to oil for three years without paying taxes or customs duties.

Rival ports already are grumbling that the free-trade zone gives Sillamae an unfair advantage. "If the E.U. doesn't shut it down, other ports will make a huge stink," said Minco van Heezen, a spokesman for the Port of Rotterdam.

But Maria Assimakopoulou, European Commission spokeswoman for taxation, said that Sillamae was entitled to have the zone and noted that goods were taxed when they arrived at their final destination.

Mr. Vahi is hoping that incentives like this will attract investments to Sillamae and help the town regain some of the cachet it had when the surrounding area was the favored holiday destination of Russian aristocrats in the 19th century. But he acknowledged that Sillamae was still trying to shed its reputation as a Russian enclave. During Soviet times, the Estonian language was not taught at Sillamae's schools, and many Estonians grew up here without speaking their native tongue. When the new Estonian government started to reduce Russian influence in the region in the early 1990's, Sillamae was one of the last cities to give up Soviet rule.

Mr. Vahi says he is confident that the port would prosper as globalization opened the Chinese and Russian markets. And he is undaunted by critics who dismiss Sillamae as just another port in a country of 1.4 million people with 101 ports.

"I am used to seeing potential where other people see nothing," he said.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS Correction: January 31, 2006, Tuesday An article in Business Day on Dec. 27 about efforts by Estonia to transform the town of Sillamae into a thriving commercial port misstated its location in relation to Ivangorod, a nearby Russian city. Sillamae is across land and the Narva River from Ivangorod, not the Baltic Sea.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/27/business/worldbusiness/gazprom-becomes-the-bear-of-russia.html>

BY ANDREW E. KRAMER

DEC. 27, 2005

Gazprom Becomes the Bear of Russia

MOSCOW, Dec. 24 - Last winter, the Kremlin-backed candidate in Ukraine's contested presidential election lost to Viktor A. Yushchenko, the pro-Western leader of the Orange Revolution.

This winter, Russia is demanding almost a fivefold increase in the price of gas supplied to Ukraine, a change widely seen as payback for Moscow's embarrassment a year ago.

At the center of this geopolitical game is Gazprom, Russia's natural gas monopoly, the country's largest company and the producer of a third of the world's supply of natural gas. Gazprom is a corporation aspiring to join the ranks of energy majors like Exxon Mobil and BP, with the scope and bulk to operate worldwide. It is also a powerful instrument of Russia's emerging foreign policy doctrine, which rests on energy exports - and the power and prestige they bring -- in place of lost military might.

Gazprom, which opened its shares to foreign buyers this month, is seeking institutional investors and acceptance in Western markets to further its goals. In the conflict with Ukraine, however, Gazprom is at risk of appearing as a tool of the Kremlin -- used to punish a pro-Western government in Eastern Europe -- rather than as a modern company that could claim to be attractive to institutional investors.

Yet Gazprom's new pricing policy in Ukraine would also benefit stockholders; Gazprom could earn more than \$3 billion next year by raising prices. Far from being a mere tool, some analysts see Gazprom -- Russia's most important company -- as a driving force in pushing the Kremlin's Ukraine policy with the intention of increasing profits from energy sales.

"If you own Gazprom stock, you accept that it is a political arm of the Russian government," said William F. Browder, the chief executive of Hermitage Capital Management here.

The negotiation of market prices in Ukraine comes amid a larger, long-running effort at Gazprom to streamline -- moving away from its origins as a Soviet ministry and into its role as modern corporation -- with uncertain results so far.

Gazprom accounts for 10 percent of Russia's economic activity. But it is sprawling, inefficiently managed and overstaffed, with divisions running everything from newspapers to poultry farms far outside its core business, and it is often seen as a slush fund for the Kremlin's off-the-books needs.

Still, Gazprom is one of the world's largest energy companies, as measured by the volume of its proven reserves. It controls more crude oil and equivalent in natural gas than Iraq. The company has rights to huge, unexplored fields in eastern Siberia; it is expected to win tax concessions next spring to develop them.

It is also actively opening new markets. The company is in the midst of a program to redraw the energy map of Europe by building underwater pipelines in the Black and Baltic Seas, extending the reach and scale of its sales to the West and competing with efforts by companies in the United States to sell liquefied natural gas from the Middle East in Europe.

In the Far East, Gazprom is promising to supply China's exploding energy needs with two gas pipelines; it has promised gas to Japan and South Korea as well.

Yet Gazprom trades at a fraction of the price of other oil majors, partly because of the restriction on foreign ownership, but also because of uncertainty over the company's role.

With the effort to liberalize ownership, Gazprom is feeling the friction between its traditional role within the Russian government and its need to act like a major corporation amid energy prices that are bringing in billions of dollars in profits, at a scale exceptional even for a company that has always been rolling in cash.

Aramco, the Saudi Arabian state oil company that is not publicly traded, holds more reserves. But Gazprom is projected to become, with the liberalization, the largest emerging market stock and the largest freely traded energy company in the world.

"Gazprom is the beautiful girl at the dance," Mr. Browder said.

Gazprom expects to earn \$66 billion next year. But the company is capitalized at \$159 billion, or roughly half that of the world's largest company by stock value, the General Electric Company, which has a market capitalization of \$373 billion, according to the Reuters news agency.

Analysts and diplomats who follow Russian energy policy say the company will easily double in value in the next year or two, after share liberalization.

President Vladimir V. Putin signed a decree Friday lifting a 20 percent cap on foreign ownership and a prohibition on nonresidents owning shares traded on Russian domestic stock exchanges.

The wide acquisition of Gazprom stock by the Moscow elite in recent years means that now many of the same people who craft Russia's foreign policy are also large Gazprom stockholders, according to analysts. Their inclination to use Gazprom as a foreign policy tool is thus tempered by their personal stake in seeing the company run as a business.

Mr. Putin installed new management, including Aleksei Miller, the chief executive, and, as chairman, Dmitry Medvedev, who is also a deputy prime minister. Both are members of a young faction in the Russian leadership from St. Petersburg, Mr. Putin's hometown. Mr. Miller's compensation includes Gazprom stock.

Mr. Browder said, "On any yacht in the south of France this summer chartered by Russians, you would hear talk about the price of Gazprom stock."

Mr. Putin has also discussed Gazprom's importance to Russia's broader national interest, asserting that the country's economic well-being is riding on energy exports. In televised comments on Thursday, Mr. Putin said that bringing good corporate governance to energy companies was in Russia's national interest.

"We need more than digging in the ground and sometimes barbarically extracting resources," Mr. Putin said.

The company held a conference call last week, wooing analysts and investors with promises of cost-cutting and management reforms; it promises to break with the past and operate a business as clean and powerful as the fuel it sells.

"We're looking for institutional investors," a Gazprom spokesman, Sergei Kupriyanov, said in an interview.

"Calpers is our dream investor," he said, referring to the California Public Employees' Retirement System, which handles the pension accounts of 1.4 million state and municipal workers and retirees and is one of the largest pools of investment capital in the world.

High on the list of changes at Gazprom that investors are seeking is leveling prices between Western Europe, the former Soviet Union and Russia's domestic market. Prices range from \$30 or so in Russia to more than \$200 in Western Europe.

The effort is uneven, however, and tainted by politics.

Gazprom is not raising prices in Belarus, a country firmly in Moscow's orbit. Under the 2006 contract, gas will sell there for \$47 for 1,000 cubic meters. Gazprom says the lower price is justified because Belarus has surrendered control of its transit pipeline to Gazprom.

As payment in Ukraine, Gazprom has offered to take shares in Ukrainian companies or, as in Belarus, take partial control over the gas pipelines.

[On Monday, Bloomberg News reported that Ukraine's prime minister, Yuri I. Yekhanurov, had rejected Gazprom's offer to guarantee fuel supplies in exchange for a stake in the country's pipeline network. "Ukraine will not sell its gas pipeline system," Mr. Yekhanurov said in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, in remarks broadcast by Channel 5 television. "It's prohibited by law."]

To some in Ukraine, Gazprom's talk of market pricing rings hollow.

"It's a myth," Volodymyr I. Polokhalo, a senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations in the Ukrainian Academy of Science, said. "What market price can grow three or four times in a year? This is political blackmail."

Mr. Polokhalo said Mr. Yushchenko's inability to get a deal from Gazprom would play into the hands of pro-Russian opposition parties in parliamentary elections in March, including the Party of Regions of Viktor Yanukovich, the Kremlin-backed candidate who lost in the Orange Revolution.

Rising gas prices would strike hardest at the industrial belt in eastern and central Ukraine, Mr. Yanukovich's stronghold, deepening Ukraine's political divide and damaging Mr. Yushchenko.

"In this case Gazprom isn't a company. It's an instrument entirely in the hand of the president," of Russia, Mr. Polokhalo said.

Back in Russia, Gazprom shares keep going up. The locally traded stock rose 150 percent this year; American depository receipts traded in London rose 118 percent.

"The goal is to drive the price of Gazprom through the roof," said one Western diplomat who spoke on condition of anonymity because of protocol. "For Gazprom it's a nice twofor. You punish Ukraine and make money doing it. There's a few hundred guys in the Kremlin with financial interest in Gazprom."

Company Sees Increase in Export By Bloomberg News

Gazprom, the Russian natural-gas producer, said yesterday that exports rose 9.1 percent in the first 11 months, as demand for the fuel increased in Europe.

Exports rose to 154.06 billion cubic meters, from 141.22 billion in the year-earlier period, Gazprom's export unit, Gazexport, said in an e-mailed statement.

Deliveries to Western Europe rose 3.9 percent, to 100.36 billion cubic meters. Exports to eastern Europe grew 1.4 percent, to 38.74 billion cubic meters. Sales to former Soviet states more than doubled, to 14.96 billion cubic meters, from 6.42 billion, as shipments to Ukraine tripled, Gazexport said. Gazprom supplies 25 percent of western Europe's gas needs -- most of which goes through Ukrainian pipes.

BUSINESS

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/28/business/worldbusiness/ukraine-vows-to-divert-russian-gas-exports.html>

By JUDY DEMPSEY

DEC. 28, 2005

Ukraine Vows to Divert Russian Gas Exports

BERLIN, Dec. 27 - A dispute between Ukraine and Gazprom, Russia's state-owned natural gas monopoly, grew more intense Tuesday as Ukraine threatened to take a portion of the gas exports that Russia sends to Europe. Gazprom called such a move theft.

The verbal sparring intensified as Gazprom insisted that it would more than quadruple the price of natural gas exports to Ukraine, and the Ukrainian prime minister asserted that Ukraine had a right to take 15 percent of the gas that Gazprom exports through Ukraine to Western Europe.

Gazprom has said it will shut off gas exports to Ukraine on Sunday if the country fails to agree to the new price. Ukraine's president, Viktor Yushchenko, has said the country will accept higher prices, but only if they are phased in over two years.

The acrimony reflects a determination by Russia and Ukraine to stand firm in a dispute that could have long-term consequences for the foreign policy of both nations.

"If Ukraine holds out and manages to strike a compromise with Russia, then Russia's ambitions to restore its influence in this part of the former Soviet empire could be finished," said Bruce Jackson, president of Project on Transitional Democracies, a United States group that has supported former Communist countries joining NATO.

"This is Russia's last chance to influence Ukraine," he said. "And it is no coincidence that it is using energy as its tool against President Yushchenko before Ukraine's parliamentary elections that take place in March."

Since the Orange Revolution in Ukraine last year, in which Mr. Yushchenko was elected president, Ukraine's foreign policy has shifted toward the European Union and NATO.

While the Kremlin has accepted its former satellites in the Baltic States and throughout Eastern and Central Europe joining those groupings, it has been reluctant to see Ukraine go in the same direction because of its size, geography and importance to Russia's foreign policy goals and economic interests.

Energy experts said Gazprom's tough statement against Ukraine reflected that struggle.

For weeks, Ukraine has said it would be willing to increase the price it pays for gas from Russia as well as place all its energy relations with Russia on a cash basis instead of a semi-barter system. But it wanted a two-year transition period, during which it was prepared to gradually raise the prices to European levels, raise domestic energy prices and introduce energy-saving changes.

Mr. Yushchenko and President Vladimir V. Putin agreed Tuesday that Mr. Yushchenko would send the Ukrainian energy minister, Ivan Plachkov, to Moscow on Wednesday in an effort to reach a compromise.

Their conversation came hours after Ukraine's prime minister, Yury I. Yekhanurov, said the country could take 15 percent of the gas Russia exports via Ukraine to Western Europe. More than 80 percent of the gas Russia exports to Western Europe goes through Ukraine.

Gazprom said the price of gas and the price of shipping it were not comparable and that any siphoning by Ukraine of Russian gas destined for Europe would be considered theft.

"The price of 150 cubic meters of gas is not the same as the transit cost for this volume of gas," Gazprom said. "Ukraine refuses to understand that."

Alexander Medvedev, deputy chairman of Gazprom, said the company was simply applying market principles to Ukraine. "Since the E.U. has applied a market economy status to Ukraine then Ukraine should live up to that," he said during a recent interview.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/31/world/europe/as-ukraine-balks-at-gasprice-rise-russian-company-renews.html>

By C. J. CHIVERS

DEC. 31, 2005

As Ukraine Balks at Gas-Price Rise, Russian Company Renews Cutoff Threat

MOSCOW, Dec. 30 - Worries of a winter gas shortage in Ukraine intensified Friday as Russia's energy giant, Gazprom, renewed its threat to cut supply lines to Ukraine on Sunday morning if the country did not accept a nearly fourfold increase in price.

The impasse showed no sign of easing. Gazprom rejected an appeal from Viktor A. Yushchenko, Ukraine's president, to freeze prices and maintain the flow of natural gas through Jan. 10 to allow for further negotiations. The company also said it had run technical tests and was capable of stopping flows for Ukraine, through which much of Europe's gas travels, while meeting export obligations to countries downstream.

The European Union proposed an emergency meeting of energy officials on Jan. 4. The call reflected worries that the stalled negotiations could tighten supplies in European countries, many of which buy large portions of their gas from Gazprom but receive it after it has passed through Ukrainian pipelines.

Ukrainian officials and industry analysts played down any immediate risk, saying gas reserves in Ukraine would ensure that its supply was maintained for at least two days and perhaps longer than two weeks. Europe's reserves would also prevent any immediate shortages there.

"I hope Gazprom will not turn off the tap," said Valery Nesterov, an energy analyst at Troika Dialog, an investment firm in Moscow. But he added that if the flow was cut, "They still have the time to negotiate."

The test of wills underscored enmities that have tainted relations between Ukraine and Russia since Mr. Yushchenko and his supporters overturned a fraudulent election last year, defeating a Kremlin-backed candidate and pledging to steer Ukraine toward a more Western foreign policy. It also marked Russia's willingness to use its state-controlled natural gas monopoly as an instrument of foreign policy, even coercion, in dealing with neighbors.

That policy is not without risk. The Kremlin and its allies at Gazprom have seized a strong position in the short term. But their threats against Ukraine, their mocking of Ukrainian proposals and concerns, and their willingness to foster worries among other gas customers have raised fresh questions about whether Gazprom, Russia's largest company, is a reliable energy partner.

The dispute centers on Gazprom's politically influenced pricing system. Ukraine, through a deal arranged under former President Leonid D. Kuchma, has been paying \$50 for 1,000 cubic meters of gas, reflecting Russia's practice of providing discounted energy to former Soviet nations still in the Kremlin's orbit.

Gazprom, with President Vladimir V. Putin's approval, has proposed charging \$220 to \$230 for 1,000 cubic meters, in line with prices in Europe. Mr. Putin has offered a \$3.6 billion loan to Ukraine to help cover the costs, a gesture variously seen as pragmatic or patronizing.

Mr. Yushchenko's government has said Ukraine is prepared to pay more, but not so much or so fast, and proposed a transition period with a much smaller increase. Mr. Yushchenko has also turned down the loan offer, saying Ukraine should pay for energy itself.

Ukraine's volatile domestic politics lie just beneath the surface.

Ukrainian parliamentary elections are scheduled for March 26. The elections will be accompanied by constitutional changes, negotiated near the end of the protests that ushered in a new government last year, that will weaken the Ukrainian presidency and strengthen the Parliament and prime minister. Russia has made clear its disaffection from Mr. Yushchenko and his government.

A gas shortage during heating season could discredit the president and weaken his party, perhaps leading to a more pro-Russian government in Kiev, Ukraine's capital. Ukrainian officials have acknowledged the risks. At a news conference on Thursday, Anatoly Kinakh, secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, said if talks broke down, the effects on Ukraine's heavy industry would be severe.

"It is forecast that Ukraine's G.D.P. will decline 4 to 5 percent in 2006," he said, according to a translation by the BBC. "Inflation will be at 27 to 30 percent. The social and economic situation in the country may worsen significantly." He added, "There is the potential loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs."

Gazprom has been unflinching. Aleksei Miller, its chief executive, reiterated the threat on Friday. "If Ukraine does not sign a contract on the purchase of gas in the remaining hours before the start of the new year, on Jan. 1 at 10 a.m. Moscow time, gas supplies from the territory of the Russian Federation to Ukraine will be completely cut off," he said in televised remarks.

Gazprom officials later clarified his statement, saying gas would still be sent through Ukraine to European customers, but flow would be reduced to account for the cut to Ukraine. Mr. Nesterov, at Troika Dialog, said it was impossible for Gazprom to meet contractual obligations to European customers without sending gas through Ukraine, because other transit options, through Turkey or Belarus, lack the capacity for those markets.

This raised the possibility that without a settlement, Ukraine might divert transiting gas for its own use, which earlier in the week Prime Minister Yury I. Yekhanurov threatened to do. Gazprom said that would be theft. Ukraine's threat, if acted upon, could create shortages in Europe.

Mr. Nesterov said that if there was no settlement, Gazprom's position could harm it over the long term. Gazprom is aggressively seeking new markets, but its competitors might now raise new questions about how it makes its decisions, and whether it can be trusted. "This will not get the company international good will," he said. "The gain is tactical, but the loss would be strategic."

The company seemed undeterred. According to the RIA Novosti news agency, it said it would invite Russian television stations to broadcast the reduction in gas flow live on New Year's Day.