

## EIR Feature

# The 'Cold War' with Russia never ended

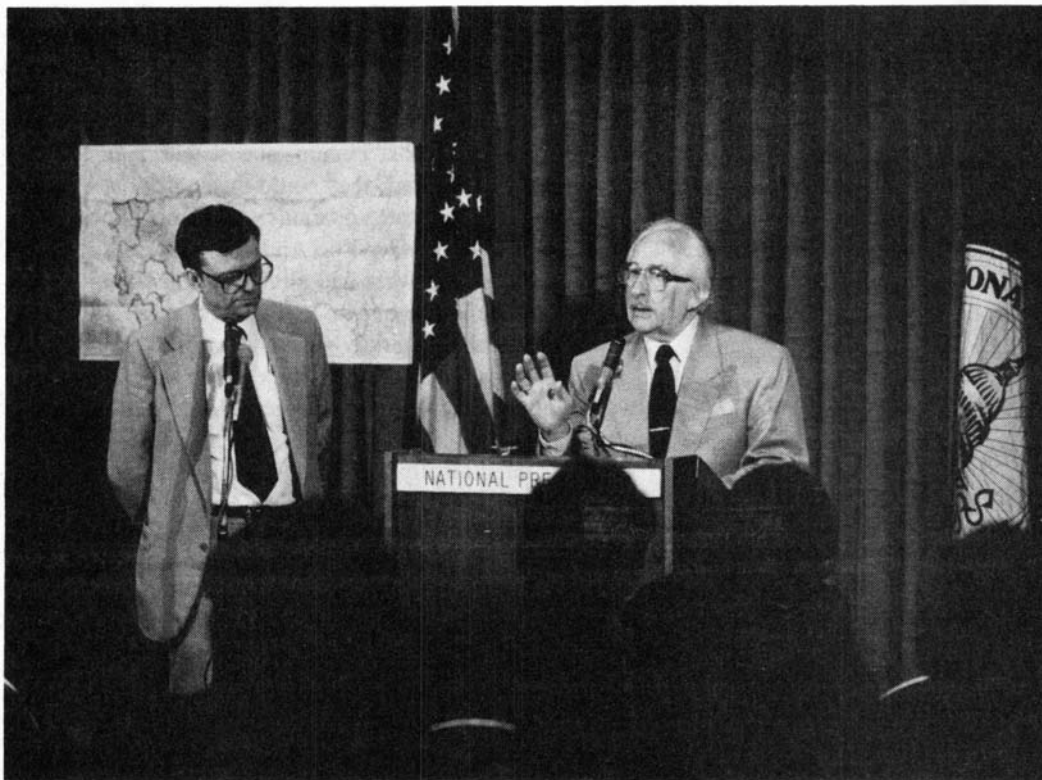
by Brig. Gen. Paul-Albert Scherer (ret.)

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*The full title of this article is "The Near-Term Perspective: Russia Running Amok . . . and the Pitfalls for the West; Copycats of Serbia Are Intent Upon Chaos in Ukraine Without Military Invasion." It was translated from the German by John Sigerson.*

Just as I did during the heady years of the transformation of the Soviet Union since 1985, I have now once again been asked to issue for publication a spring analysis of my perspective on the current state of our knowledge. This time, however, I must preface it with a personal statement: In the course of my three careers (soldier for 31 years, since 1937; journalist for ten years, beginning in 1946; and for 21 years, since 1956 and continuing to the present, secret intelligence officer), I have learned in my capacity as a longtime observer of intelligence matters, to also take into account the effects of my own statements in situations characterized by dramatic change. The bringer of bad tidings frequently gets killed for his pains; but once one has recognized grave developments, it is silly and irresponsible to allow fear to prevent one from making timely analysis and commentary on them—all the more so because many of my contemporaries in leading positions are urgently in need of such assistance in their decision-making.

In my view, during this year 1994, the mortally wounded Russian giant is on the verge of stumbling over the edge of a deep, not yet fully recognized abyss, into a mindless rush to revolution, in which the angels of death and civil war could



*General Scherer at a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington on April 30, 1992. "The bringer of bad tidings frequently gets killed for his pains; but once one has recognized grave developments, it is silly and irresponsible to allow fear to prevent one from making timely analysis and commentary on them."*

come to strangle man, woman, and child. This is not an overdramatization or some scandalous and thoughtless disaster mongering; we must in all seriousness consider the existence of a concrete threat to the very existence of European-American civilization.

### **What threat, and why?**

*First*, because the attempts at pro-communist reform during the first phase of the Soviet Union's revolution from above, along with the failed *perestroika* and the censured Glasnost efforts in the direction of the intelligentsia, have led to a destabilization of power and of the social order, and especially to uncertainty about the mechanisms of control over the deadly systems of mass destruction of the nuclear age.

*Second*, because, despite the new leadership and popular participation in elections, the post-communist shock reformers, along with the continuation of the revolution from above, have not been able to halt the catastrophic economic and social collapse of now-federalized Russia.

*Third*, because the groundswell of nationalism—a nationalism born out of despair and the obligatory search for self-affirmation in the direction of forming a new identity, fueled in the meantime by Jacobin whipping-up of the masses—has reduced the willingness of those still in power to adjust to a western orientation, and has choked off that avenue to such a degree, that a new, anti-western, enemy-capitalist image is taking shape.

*Fourth*, because during this year the combined burdens of

poverty, inflation, criminality, and hopelessness will outstrip even the well-known ability of people in Russia and the independent successor states of the Soviet Union to tolerate suffering, so that we must now reckon on a torturous outbreak of revolution from below in some areas. The only thing left to do now, "is to balance on a razor's edge," in the resigned words of one leading government politician.

*Fifth*, because the dramatic, indeed tragic deterioration in the supply situation of a state recognized by the world as sovereign, namely Ukraine, with its 52 million inhabitants, among them 12 million Russians, with a territory larger than that of France, is combining with the sordid legacy of Stalin's independent centralism, to make it feasible for a foreign enemy to dissolve that state without having to resort to military invasion. This fragmentation strategy, in keeping with experience in the Balkans, is being pursued by means of underground terrorism, so that the West will be able to muster nothing more than fine words of protest.

*Sixth*, because the quite visible success of winning back the Black Sea coastline, the "successful colony" of Crimea, the Dnepr-Don-Donets countryside along with the Don River basin (60% of the coal resources of the entire former Soviet Union are located there!), combined with the new oath of allegiance which the military personnel of the Black Sea fleet have sworn to the Russian flag, can make the pressure cooker explode in one great neurotic cry of relief. Who could withstand that domestically, following the unfortunate outcome of the elections this past winter?

*Seventh*, because already before amnesty was granted to the conspirators in the August 1991 putsch attempt, and to the leading putschists in the October 1993 coup attempt, there were signals that the socially disastrous power struggles between the advocates of reform and the red-brown neofascists would be brought to an abrupt end by the formation of a long-term national junta dictatorship, run according to the ideas of the former chief of staff and Gorbachov adviser Marshal Akhromeyev (who took his own life following the failed coup attempt). We can be rest assured that a third

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conspiracy in Moscow will not be adventurous and clumsily prepared.

As the 20th century A.D. draws to a close, we live in a world of two opposing civilizations, still life-and-death rivals, heavily armed with the most modern nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, but both of closely related European stock and living side-by-side on the northern half of our planet. For the past 45 years, we have described them as the rivals East and West. After completing an evaluation of all the information available to me, I am now more convinced than ever, that the illusion of “the end of the Cold War,” tied to the weakling’s talk of total disarmament of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000, is a standard piece of eagerly accepted western self-deception (under the slogan: “We’re beginning a new world order!”) among the brilliant foreign psychological warfare deception operations carried out by the Soviets during the Gorbachov era. Gorbachov himself, as he was being fawned over by the pacifically seduced West during the big change in 1985-86, was merely an executive instrument of that impertinent KGB *dezinformatsiya* strategic plan. It had its origins in 1983, the year of shocks for the Politburo, when the lack of vital supplies forced them to contemplate the likelihood of a disaster in Afghanistan comparable to what the Americans had suffered in Vietnam, and to realize that the only way to avoid being utterly over-

whelmed by the empire’s exorbitant capital expenditures for exporting revolution around the world and sustaining the arms race, would be if they succeeded in talking the West into dividing up the world into two spheres of influence. They thought that under those circumstances, with their territory recognized and secured, they could then carry out a reform of the party and the state apparatus. As we now know, even the deft General Secretary Yuri Andropov was not successful in this, because the West had already learned long before, from inside the jungle of Moscow’s secret agents, about the details of Marshal Ogarkov’s missile warfare preparations, and had to react accordingly, once those urgent warnings were confirmed by western intelligence. The West’s reaction was called the Strategic Defense Initiative—President Reagan’s intentionally high-publicity programmatic proposal to use anti-ballistic missile devices to neutralize the civilization-destroying effect of the entire family of missile weapons systems as they made their way through near-Earth space, thereby in short order making superfluous the Soviet Union’s gigantic investment in offensive weaponry (an arsenal which had become even more dangerous than was generally recognized at that point). Andropov, with his long years of experience in the KGB, thereupon put into effect top-secret plans for a program of feigned concessions to the West—concessions which only a miracle could have prevented anyway—moving in the direction of a breakthrough on the foreign policy front. The top Soviet leadership was thus put into a state of resignation, lacking the nerve to launch a new round of the arms race, or alternatively to launch their weapons systems—still fully effective—immediately against the western enemy.

### **Cleverly buying time for revitalization**

The overwhelming bulk of disparaging commentary on the “star wars adventure,” and the feigned cries of moral outrage from communist front organizations under the banner of peace, made it difficult to recognize that in 1983 we were closer to World War III than we had been during Khrushchov’s 1962 Cuban missile adventure. The planning, target, and preparations ordered by the Politburo on the basis of their secrecy-shrouded predicament, corresponded to the long-term Soviet strategy of never under any circumstances giving up the ultimate goal of world revolution, cost what it may. The approaching bankruptcy of the Soviet empire, expected to occur around 1987, had to be covered up and completely contained by a *transformation*, one convincing enough to be taken at face value by foreigners, with an image carefully crafted through agitational and secret intelligence work. This would provide ample time for reforming the communist leadership cadre, for revitalizing the Soviet Union’s industrial base, and for overcoming the weakness in its capital goods sector. The sharp-minded, disciplined, and insightful Andropov, however, also wanted to eliminate the entire anachronistic parasite system of the Brezhnev era in the process. But

his illness confined him to a sickbed, and death overtook him before he was able to carry out his plans. His successor as general secretary, Chernenko, formerly the chief watchdog over ideology during the Brezhnev era, used his majority to delay the transformation for yet another year, at which point he, too, died. Then in the late autumn of 1984, as the situation worsened, the Politburo moved deftly against Ogarkov, first sending him abroad, and then rigorously giving him the boot, after which they forbade any continuation of nuclear missile operations-based general staff preparations for history's biggest—and perhaps suicidal—arms race to crush the top world superpower.

### **No more talk about disarmament euphoria**

As we know, the clever and manipulative attempt to falsely portray a mammoth, world-historic defeat of the Soviet superpower as the East's "quest for peace," and to transform it on the psychological front into a powerful subversive victory over the West's flagging military preparedness and vigilance, ended in failure, despite great breakthroughs on the foreign policy side. It had almost reached the point of very unwise concessions in the disarmament sector following the break in the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) negotiations. But just as inside experts had predicted, the inability of the Marxist-Leninist nomenklatura on all organizational levels to carry through any reform, had the effect of dampening the western disarmament euphoria, especially once the West found out that fist-thick deception had been practiced in the movements of troops, heavy armaments, and matériel east of the Urals. And to the West's regret, after six and a half years of domestic disloyalty, reaching all the way to personal sabotage (1985-91), the result was the political demise of the loquacious Gorbachov, whose dallying had made him unloved and overly attached to his presidential role, and who had become too naively fixated on saving the party as an institution. Leading echelons in America and Europe have unfortunately not learned to cease naively investing all their trust in the person of the current top leader, while they turn a blind eye to the fragmentation of power in the East, to the quiet manipulation going on in the background or underground, and to signs of a revolutionary explosion. The western practice of elevating Yeltsin into some sort of "Czar Boris," for example, may very well be a somewhat questionable means of calming the masses for the coming tumult; but in reality, beginning in the spring of 1993, it had already become a phantasm of wishful kindergarten thinking. The dangerous influence of naiveté and ignorance on western reactions to challenges, is set in bold relief by the friendly attitude toward Yeltsin shown by leaders on both sides of the Atlantic on the occasion of the foolish amateur conspiracy in Moscow on Aug. 19, 1991, as well as afterwards, when the security apparatus, the head of the KGB, and the interior and defense ministers personally and without any military support stuck their necks out and themselves finished off the

collapse of the communist empire.

### **Cease-fire contains all risks**

If we are to be politically and strategically precise, correct from the standpoint of international law and in respect to the specifics of warfare, and also honest from the standpoint of mass psychology, the interregnum beginning with Gorbachov's rise to power in 1985, on through the announced transformation, and continuing into today's confrontational attitude toward the West, must all be characterized as the West's acceptance of a *cease-fire* between the two civilizations, each of which is engaged in a great struggle for the triumph of their own values and the superior worldwide dominance of their influence. What is at issue here is not word-splitting, of this or that concept, but rather the failure to adequately recognize the *reality* of warfare between possessors of nuclear arms arsenals who either want to or must needs remain below the nuclear age's threshold of destruction, and thus the reality of a war which is perforce "cold" because of this strategic constraint. Such a view of warfare is of course completely unclassical, and has been so ever since 1946-47. On the basis of my own knowledge of agent warfare, extending from strategic infiltration of influence, agitational interlinks, to espionage, subversion, sabotage, and state terrorism, I am inclined to believe that we in the West, with our customary superficiality, have not sufficiently recognized the fact that we have been—and insofar as covertly feasible, continue to be—destabilized on two completely separate levels, one above ground and the other underground: Above-ground, just below the top leadership, this destabilization was first tentatively friendly, then later increasingly coldly conciliatory and adapted (after all, they did need to stay in our good graces); while underground it was pursued with bold impudence to the very limits of tolerability. (After all, don't the renamed KGB and the GRU military intelligence services continue to work ruthlessly with the orphaned networks of the former East German intelligence service, the Stasi? Aren't the funds which the old nomenklatura managed to transfer out of the country in time, still sitting in foreign bank accounts, waiting to be employed for future great tasks?) And thus we are beset by serious consequent errors—errors which foster partial blindness in evaluating the incoming flood of information, and which distort our view of the challenges we must set for ourselves. The enemy is in fact already inside our own countries, using its interlinked underground methods to subvert what remains of our morality, defense preparedness, and domestic stability. We imagine that the transformation in the East has been something final, failing thereby to recognize that the "Cold War" has only been interrupted and rendered temporarily ineffective through the rigors of austerity, western pressure (hampering the export of revolution), and ideological bankruptcy of true socialism on the road to communism. We imagine—though we have already grown quite unsure of this—that the end

of the “Cold War” became an absolute certainty because communism was dead as a doornail, and because turning back the clock of history was completely out of the question. But unfortunately, nine years later, the current state of historic and human potentials tells us something different. If there was ever an empire on this blue planet where lies and cold calculation are entirely at home, where double-dealing is the order of the day, where messianism attracts circles of fanatics, we must admit that an elite which has been largely chased out of office in under-civilized eastern civilization, has only superficially lost its power. Those who have been toppled, and those wrynecks who remain in the foreground of events, have little interest in the old or new ideas now being brought forward—perhaps honestly, or even surely so—by those occupying the top right now.

The West has had to learn once again in the Balkans, right on the alliance’s front doorstep, that cease-fires are extraordinarily uncertain and involve every conceivable risk. This lesson is really quite an old one. From Karl Marx onward through Friedrich Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and entire generations of Soviet general staff officers, the world-famous conclusions drawn by the Prussian General von Clausewitz in the field of military scientific thought, have been studied carefully, because their philosophers, shakers and makers, and military leaders wanted to master the essence of warfare along their class-struggle road to world revolution. (Even today, the 718-page work *On War* is required reading for Russian and German officers in training.) Clausewitz regards interruptions of a war on grounds of weakness of one of the adversaries, as part of the natural ups and downs of strategic actions along the way to the chief war aim, namely, to destroy the enemy. An interruption, in his view, can only be appropriate if it serves political ends. The stronger the motivations are for war, the more they encompass a nation’s entire existence, and the more the war aim coincides with the political aim. That is what Clausewitz had to say on the failure to look reality in the face.

### **The watershed experience in Afghanistan**

In the estimation of the overwhelming majority of experts, the “Cold War” as we have characterized it above, could remain “cold” (and not get “hot”) only so long as the danger, that the owners of nuclear weapons would commit mutual suicide, could not be minimized through a new strategy of even more terrifying weapons, to such a degree that a first strike could no longer be answered by a completely deadly second strike launched by the other side. The Soviet Union, as the world’s second offensive-military superpower (but not an economic one, that being its primary shortcoming, which it sought to resolve in the future by buying time in the present), had put in many years of anxious study under the guidance of the military scientist Marshal Sokolovsky, and had come to believe that the only way they could operate was through waging proxy wars beneath the nuclear thresh-

old. Thus they put up and then deployed first the Koreans, then the Chinese, the North Vietnamese, the Cubans, etc., one after the other, in order to move closer to their goal of world revolution through massive destabilization of western civilization, and through exporting revolution into the Third World. Since the early 1980s, General Staff chief Marshal Ogarkov believed he had found the philosophers’ stone with his recommendation to the top Soviet leadership that with a series of the newest, most advanced weapons systems and devices, along with a minutely prepared central operational command for all theaters of war, the Soviet Union could *dare to fight the ultimate war* with a high positive security coefficient. The United States and Great Britain, as well as the few land-based and seaborne retaliatory weapons held by the French, were to be obliterated by a simultaneous, surprise first strike, to be accompanied by the simultaneous blinding of anti-missile defense systems, such that the residual risk of under 40 million Soviet casualties from nuclear counterstrikes would be kept within tolerable limits. Clausewitz’s sober, apodictic doctrine that “There is only one victory [in warfare]: the final victory!” had a new godchild. The lightning rapidity of the attack would keep western Europe’s production capacity intact, so that the Soviet Union could immediately begin postwar reconstruction, and have the modern capacity available to improve its peoples’ living standard. For the war on the high seas, it was considered indispensable that two ports on the warm waters of the Indian Ocean become secure Soviet bases; hence the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. In hindsight we can more calmly see that the military-strategic preconditions for carrying out such a war quickly evaporated. But enormous imponderables remain, because the military hardware is still available, and in the midst of the process of shaping the political will for a revolutionary outburst, chaotic developments are not out of the question.

### **Self-isolation is not over**

Whoever wishes to gain a full perspective on the extent of the current array of East-West problems for today and tomorrow, cannot neglect the task of undertaking an analytical-historical evaluation of ingrown basic attitudes and typical behaviors. Eastern civilization, led by Russia and characterized by feudalistic and colonialist impulses, incorporated the Black Sea coastlines and Transcaucasia in a series of strong southward thrusts, conquered Siberia in great leaps of eastward expansion, and bordered itself off from the Chinese-Mongol regions at the highest chains of the Pamir Mountains, the Karakoram massif, the Altai, and the Amur River barrier. For at least the past 800 years, and as a consequence of its deliberate eastern self-isolation, Russian archetypes and ordering concepts—their overall culture—have generally reflected an obstinate antipathy toward western civilization—with the exception of a few brief periods of opening and readiness to modernize with western European ideas,

or to recognize a leading role for Russia in Europe. Eastern Roman-Byzantine, and later Russian Orthodox enemy images of western Rome, of the papacy, of the Latinate Occident; non-participation in the Renaissance—that grand creative impulse in the Middle Ages to absorb ancient exemplars of high culture, and to let them spread their fruit far and wide—all had a lasting, poisonous effect in the Russian realms. Anti-liberal and anti-revolutionary coercive measures were applied with utmost vigor and oversight, down to the smallest Russian village, in order not to be sucked into the swamp of western European social change, and toward more freedom and fewer privileges for the nobility, as had been forced by the citizenry in America, then in Europe, and then among working people as they grew into the socially hostile world of industry and fought for social recognition in western civilization.

Ever and again in the course of human history, political backwardness and religious intolerance have had intractable, long-term consequences which, not just for generations, but for centuries, render a nation incapable of achieving social progress. Unfortunately, this is fully borne out in the history of the Russians. The Kievan Rus empire, which was Christianized early on, had the misfortune of being located on the treeless steppes; this brought the Mongols storming down upon them. The horrors of the deliberate burning of rebellious villages, the degrading interrogations by pillagers and tax collectors, the inhuman murders over trifles—all of these worked a marked change in the indigenous population's attitudes. One could only save one's life through cunning, feigned obsequiousness. Any relief in those hard times could only be procured through dissimulation, deception, and methodical conspiracy secured through those means by a completely subjugated people. Those 240 awful years of Tartar vassalage profoundly shaped the Russian social model which developed following 1480, a model which, however educated the court and cloisters became, was one of czarist autocracy in combined rule with a powerful Orthodox Church, whose metropolitan, in his capacity as the autocrat's spiritual guardian, could assume co-regency in times of national troubles. Between church and czar stood the landed aristocracy, who represented military power, and below them were the peasants in serfdom, without any property of their own, who had to feed everyone, and who were brutally taxed in order to finance it all.

To put it simply and briefly: There is not all that great a difference between the conditions of rule under the czars, and those under the absolute despotic Bolsheviks Lenin, Stalin, and so forth. In 1862, Russian newspapers were still running classified advertisements offering serfs for sale. In order to keep the "Third Rome, which will assume world domination against the anti-Christ," far removed from the stinking swamp of the satanic West, the powerful popes of Russian Orthodoxy, backed by part of the military, vigorously opposed the introduction of the Latin alphabet, and made

sure that all railroads were built with a wider gauge than the European standard. These and other factors were and continue to be tendencies which make any intermingling with Europe tremendously more difficult, and which conjure up gloomy visions of the future. Admittedly, over the past few years, this impulse for eastern self-isolation has been significantly weakened at the top; but little has really been achieved—especially within people's minds. And now, as a consequence of false expectations and the resulting boundless disappointments, this impulse is again being strengthened by the red fascists, who are poisoning the well with their defiant attitude, on the way toward finalizing a new, dangerously explosive enemy image.

### **Opening toward Europe could be a life saver**

Every once in a while, Russia's westward-facing windows, usually kept forbiddingly closed primarily by the state church, have been opened up a crack by certain reform tendencies toward a closer relationship with Europe; but these initiatives have been repeatedly nipped in the bud, and have never had a chance to effect fundamental change. The influence of the Hanseatic League traders (Novgorod); the subsequent conquest of the culturally western-oriented Baltic during the reign of Peter the Great (czar from 1682 to 1725); the German who ruled the czarist court for over 34 years, namely Catherine II the Great (czarina from 1762 to 1796), who also invited German colonists to settle along the Volga River; and finally the admission of Italian architects and not very popular German administrators—all these have always sparked violent counterreactions, just as always happened whenever czarist troops came into contact with the West. For purposes of projecting its hegemony outward, Russia became a fellow traveler in Europe's coalition wars; then in the 18th and 19th centuries it strengthened its influence among the eastern and southern Slavs in order to counteract the Ottoman Empire. Only after the failure of Napoleon's Russian campaign did it massively play itself up as a European Great Power, with imperial ideas and a powerful state church pulling the strings in the background.

It is only by carefully digging down to the historical roots of Russia's affinities with Europe, that we can correctly answer the highly pertinent question of why Russia should actually become an integral part of Europe, as both Gorbachov and Yeltsin have emphatically demanded, and to what extent it can already now be drawn into the inner circles of those who determine the fabric of our civilization.

What is Europe? It is not merely a geographic area on the map, bordering the Asiatic land mass; rather, it is a sphere of culture, with historically mature, sovereign nation-states whose common history over long periods of coexistence and bloody strife has seen it grow together into a *community of values*—although with a special, insular role played by the British elites, who are hostile to the Continent, who are difficult to pry away from their position of world-imperial self-



*A statue of Czar Peter the Great in St. Petersburg. His opening to the West, under the influence of philosopher and statesman Gottfried Leibniz, sparked a violent counterreaction. "It is only by carefully digging down to the historical roots of Russia's affinities with Europe, that we can correctly answer the highly pertinent question of why Russia should actually become an integral part of Europe."*

importance, and who play out their cherished claims to a special Anglo-Saxon civilization, pulling at the secret strings of an unasked-for balance of power, as they have continued to do over the past century. There are plenty of current examples of this British role. Early in his career, General de Gaulle had personal experience with the burdensome phenomenon of his neighbor's overblown ambitions, and later he emphatically warned about it. But since then, Europe's fatherlands have had to give more importance to the external pressures of the "Cold War," and in so doing, they have been gradually sapped of much energy, élan, and radiant power in the effort to somewhat harmonize the conflicts of interest. The western alliance of values has nevertheless been strengthened by the formation the Atlantic alliance, the recognition of U.S. defense potency, and the resulting allocation of certain leadership functions to America; indeed, this has become indispensable with regard to future East-West relations, even though the low quality of the current U.S. administration's foreign policymaking doesn't always make it any easier to solve many of the world's problems.

### **Inferiority complex as the constraining factor**

The cohesive nature of this western-Atlantic world of largely coinciding values, formed over the course of centuries, should not, as has often happened in the past, place any further obstacles in the way of a possible breakout in which eastern Russian civilization takes further steps in the West's

direction. What ended with the 1991 collapse of the Bolshevik Soviet Union, founded in 1922, was of course only a modern example of despotic and bloody aberrancy. For a full ten years after the Soviet Union's founding, the United States, repelled by the Soviet Union's Stone-Age behavior, refused to officially recognize it as a sovereign state. Psychoanalysts say that this taint of failure ultimately weighed heavily on the Russians, encouraging self-doubt, inferiority complexes, and neurotic outbursts in a kind of socialized paranoia. He who has lost his ideological moorings is hampered by painful internal complexes, is always asking whether all that expenditure of time and energy was worth it, and, if mute resignation and paralyzing depression do not prevail, he soon seeks out any alternative sanctuary which offers itself. Many say this is like a Russian paranoia, by which they mean the effect of this change of consciousness. Russians now know for sure that in the course of the Revolution, followed by more than two years of civil war and barbaric terror rule, many millions of their countrymen were murdered; and that with their indoctrinations into stupidity, their police-state system, and their party parasitism, they succeeded in building a giant prison of peoples that could not help but be anti-western. But it would be equally unjust to the people there today, if Russia and the successor states of the collapsed Soviet Union were now to be punished for those past crimes. It must be given the possibility and opportunity to think matters over freely at the point when all their energies

are no longer required for sheer survival. There must be no arrogant raising of barriers; rather, in keeping with the greatness of the challenge, there must be a western obligingness toward free citizens. It does seem unlikely that such a western attitude will prevent a process of self-purification in the East, as is already on the horizon and quickly approaching. The potential for a buildup, particularly in urban settings, of clashing, fanatical political positions, ranging from mutual suspicion all the way to outright hostility, and anchored in the various traditions indicated above, is a hard legacy to overcome. These powerful risks of civil war cannot be simply brushed aside. The idea of quickly including greater Russia, with its 11 time zones, as part of the heart of Europe, and thus as part of western civilization as a whole, is wild hypothesis and is completely out of the question. There is no such thing as a quick harmonization. A long period of willful acculturation will require the consent and active participation of many people; otherwise it will fail. *The fateful question* is thus on the table for all to see: Is the social process of change in consciousness attained so far in the East, strong enough to overcome the restricting factors through imitating to a certain degree the (not altogether convincing) matured ways of western life, so that Russia can finally shed its oppressive shackles?

### **Shock of misery promotes explosive climate**

Anyone who takes a close look at Russia can see that over the past two years things have generally taken more steps backward than forward. The recent re-emergence, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, of Russian territorial and power claims—namely, that Russia, along with its spheres of influence, now encompasses six-tenths of the Earth's surface, reaching from northern and central Asia all the way to the Sea of Okhotsk, the Sea of Japan, the Bering Sea, and in the south beyond the Caucasus, Crimea, and the Black Sea coastline—is an alarming regression into hegemonism, leading on the one hand to accommodation to Russia's brand of fascism, and on the other hand to a Great Russian chauvinism with which even the old Communists can agree. It is my view that the intrigues of underground tacticians are also quite deliberately promoting Russia's would-be Hitler as an enemy of all "democratization." The present cease-fire period is well-suited to this. Following the fall of the Wall, the regained sovereignty of the eastern European nation-states, and the withdrawal of the occupying troops, the European heartland, in concert with the United States and in keeping with the wishes of the governments of the alliance member-states, decided to put off a solution to the controversial problem of NATO membership, while it sought to formalize a cultural attachment to Europe extending through the Baltic states, and to develop relatively non-binding contractual forms of peaceful partnership. Good-neighborly relations were sought with the White Russian state, with the Russians, and with the Ukrainians as the geographically proximate states located within Europe extending to the Ural Moun-

tains. Above and beyond that, of course, Eurasian security partnership, insofar as it was desirable and feasible, was to be gotten under way for the states of the former Soviet Union, in order to project normality into those regions. But what has been going on in the meantime inside people's heads, diversely conditioned by a long history of alienation—with the *mentality* of over 170 million Russians on the one hand, and of almost 120 million people in the other formerly disadvantaged nation-states on Russia's borders, with their over 90 languages and four different alphabets? The explosive climate of increasing pauperization and widespread distress rules out any possibility of reunification under Kremlin rule, as the Great Russian chauvinists have been vociferously promoting. Such an effort would necessarily result in the outbreak of bloody conflict extending beyond the now-familiar confines of the six civil wars already raging in the Caucasus, in Tajikistan, and in Moldova. As long as populations can still be called upon to express their will in quasi-democratic form, the fateful decision about where things will go from here, will continue to be determined by this shock-ridden, explosive social climate.

### **Dissolution of power and hopelessness prevail**

At the moment, there are only a very few factors influencing the internal state of eastern civilization. Our measuring rods are: the degree of change in basic attitudes toward the West, the state of public opinion, the boundless disappointment over social conditions, and the primitiveness of the supply situation. After nine long years of backsliding, loss of habitual order in this sprawling police state (explosion of criminality), and a widespread apocalyptic mood linked with calls for a new national savior, prospects of a coming readiness to strive for further rightful freedoms on the path to more human dignity, are looking decidedly dim. First and foremost, people want a strong figure who can lead them out of this vale of tears. The level of voter participation in the most recent elections was still relatively favorable for constitutionally securing Yeltsin in that role. But his flagging influence, and his resumed and increasing dependency on contrary wishes of the elected Duma representatives, is now making the irritation worse. On the basis of my knowledge of intelligence situation reports and the scientific results of well-aimed opinion research, I can say that the rural population, which remains numerically strong, and the lower urban layers have largely reverted to their old guiding images of rejecting democracy and capitalism, and of hostility toward the ownership of any property larger than the smallest personal holding. The spoilage of willingness to undergo reforms has now penetrated deeply into layers of the intelligentsia, and one cannot overlook the hopelessness, coupled with anxieties over the future, which constitute an immense impediment to the urgently necessary task of bringing the two civilizations closer to each other. This comes as no surprise, in view of the horrendous, ongoing debasement of the currency and the bitter backlogs of unpaid wages. The number of



people who are promoting the opening to the West with a religious convert's courage and conviction, seems to be declining sharply. From time anon, such people have always been popularly labeled as "westerners." In the estimation of knowledgeable eastern observers and media professionals, such people's arguments are getting far too little support. Precisely because of the relapse of official government circles into imperial modes of thinking even during the waning days of the Yeltsin era, and because of the highly dangerous ideas which Russian neo-fascists are playing with during this

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cease-fire in the "Cold War" between the two great civilizations of East and West, all that now remains for the West to do, in view of the security problems associated with the future collapse of power in the Kremlin, is to massively support the so-called "westerners," and to issue the direst possible warning that whatever all-too-understandable search Russia may undertake to find a new identity following the collapse of the Soviet Union, it must under no circumstances return to colonialism and hostility toward the West, because that would mean opting for chaos and World War III. The West can ill afford a repetition further eastward of its weak-willed and cowardly behavior in the face of Greater Serbia's war of aggression and genocide in the Balkans.

### **The West's loss of authority is its own fault**

One can characterize the period beginning in 1985 and lingering on through 1990, as the time when Russians in particular, but also the majority of people in the East, looked with the greatest affection and openness toward America, the country of boundless freedom and superior strength that is similar to Russia in so many ways. Perhaps there was also an element here of turning away in disgust from the anti-American indoctrination carried out by the Communist Party. But this sympathy was already waning significantly by the time of the Persian Gulf war. Later on, the diatribes against capitalism and accusations against radical "disregard for the interests of Russian citizens" made their reappearance in the wake of the West's shameless shock therapy policies. And

now, after western-inclined people in Russia and other CIS countries have seen the much-touted war-prevention capability of the United States, NATO, and the United Nations, wither in the face of the Balkan situation over the past two years, doubt is visibly growing about whether there is any power left on Earth that can be trusted. The West's complete lack of decisiveness and determination to use force against the Serbian aggressors in order to prevent genocide and to underline the point that the use of barbaric "ethnic cleansing" to alter the borders of duly recognized sovereign states would not be tolerated, had an especially negative effect in the Baltic, in Ukraine, and in the Caucasus region; but it also sent shivers of fear through distant parts of Russia which are interested in seceding from the federation. Pro-Serbian propaganda had an easy time twisting the facts and spreading incendiary anti-western threats. The preconditions for decisively deterring copy-cat criminals from similar actions further to the east of the Balkans, vanished without a trace. To that extent, the basic international psychological realities of the East-West cease-fire since 1988-90 have also drastically diminished the future prospects for peaceful coexistence and for a slow accommodation and convergence of the two systems. All dreams about the ostensible advantages of a "new world order," all expectations that post-communist civilization would be able to rapidly fit into the basic framework of states ruled according to law, socially cushioned market economy, and free parliamentary policy-shaping to their own advantage, had to be successively buried. The nagging self-reproaches that the Russians have given up too early, that the Russian empire and their peoples had been thoughtlessly frittered away on big-talking fools and self-important mid-gets, that eastern Europe and East Germany had been given away along with 300 years of imperial conquests, cannot be regarded as the idle chatter of senile former Russian foot-soldiers in the so-called Great Patriotic War, but rather must be taken deadly seriously as the result of critical self-contemplation in the light of the West's weakness and impotence on all levels. It is a warning signal of extreme dissatisfaction. The inability of the leading western political layers to come up with well thought-out medium-term, or even short-term ideas in this connection, or to offer wise assistance for self-help, once again has much to do with this lack of knowledge about that strange eastern world, their traditions, their sense of life's meaning. Most important, it is proof of the ridiculous arrogance, ill-willed one-upmanship, and unfair looting practices of certain western circles. At the worst possible time, promising, extremely psychologically important positions of advantage were lost. The time which Gorbachov irrevocably lost—time which could have been used for domestic reform (and indeed, among all his other accomplishments, this was his chief historic mistake, and Yeltsin in particular is going to go down because of it!)—had similar negative consequences for the western side—consequences which we will be facing for some time to come. Anyone who really wants to know how stupid we have been, should go to

Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Ukraine and track down some of the world-wise people who are "still going to be in business for a bit longer" and who are on intimate business terms with the Russians.

### **Enigmatic goings-on in the Russian earthquake zone**

Looking at the course of revolutions in the written history of mankind, one is struck by the singular phenomenon that it is precisely at the moment of total collapse of a previous order, when orgiastic criminals and gruesome, radical "solutions" are churned to the top, as it were. The political fission process bursts upon the scene like an exploding volcano, at the point when the psychological pressure even minutely surpasses the breaking point, or when the representative of power is removed. There are sufficient indications of this within the enigmatic spectrum of the politically extreme, among miners, transport workers, among the troops, within the general staff, and in intelligence circles. Hardly any doubt remains that ever since the 1905 Revolution (with its Narodniks, Marxists, Bolsheviks, and Social Revolutionaries), Russia has been one giant, highly unstable political earthquake zone. Just as it was at that earlier point of departure, when Russia was shaken to the core by the defeat it suffered from Japan, with the accompanying unprecedented sense of national humiliation (part of British balance of power diplomacy), so today we also see, from a mass-psychological, social, and political standpoint, virtually the identical pre-revolutionary conditions in society and in the army organization—and once again, in the context of a deep sense of humiliation on the Russian side. The situation of Russia's armed forces—despite the remarkable way they held together throughout the empire's 1985-91 collapse and its decomposition into 15 separate states—is just as desperate today as it was back in 1917: betrayed (not only in Afghanistan), conquered, unbelievably mistreated and despised by their own people, and especially by the youth. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers of all ranks and services on land, sea, and air feel on the one hand that traitors are goading them into taking political leadership—which is the reason why they have been so mysteriously hesitant and have offered such scant support for coup attempts—while on the other hand they believe they are the only powerful institution left somewhat intact which can maintain order, and that their most difficult task lies ahead of them. There is nothing so far to indicate the emergence of a Bonaparte, who, as Napoleon, would make his own revolution—even though it is likely that any future junta would be neither able nor willing to dispense with military backing. But to save the Great Power, to halt the collapse—for this the majority of professional soldiers are ready to lay down their lives, with all of their customary ruthlessness and muscular power.

What has been particularly puzzling to many Russians recently, is the Chernomyrdin government's claim that it will be able to quickly bring under control the fury and social

plague of hyperinflation at a time when the entire Russian economy's productivity continues to decline (already 40% below 1985 levels), without destroying every piece of paper money in the process, while at the same time increasing Russian troop strength from 1.5 million to 2.5 million soldiers and continuing its ambitious space program without any restrictions. This is why political demands are now being attached to many strike threats.

### **Concluding theses: searching for the analytical thread**

Important points which for space reasons could not be discussed or mentioned above, are presented below in the form of condensed concluding theses as a complement to the foregoing analysis, insofar as they facilitate our search for the thread into the immediate future.

**Thesis 1:** The more active layers of the East's largely atheist society, are tormented by a permanent sore which ceaselessly goads them on: the fact that their state has been unsuccessful. This irrational, ersatz religious impulse is not to be underestimated, and will darken the future further still.

**Thesis 2:** Infinite hatred is on the rise against the 15 newly independent border states which dropped out of the multi-ethnic Soviet state, and which Russia is now seeking to recapture using dubious, in part quite unscrupulous methods. "Let them crawl back to us on their knees!" Leaderships depend on this hatred to maintain themselves in power.

**Thesis 3:** The Yeltsin crew's emergency program of self-reliance, of quickly destroying the twisted image of the rejected backward child by playing up Russia's foreign policy prowess, and of founding new parties and guaranteeing stabilization, will not be adequate to deal with the growing instability and the lack of time in which to act.

**Thesis 4:** The recognition of sovereignty of the Baltic states signed by Yeltsin in 1991 will continue in effect formally, as long as he has the power to enforce it; but there is a softening-up process which, with radical disregard for the historical reality, is moving in the direction of the establishment of a protectorate out of military and strategic necessity.

**Thesis 5:** The process of creeping political decay, combined with the easily perceived lability of the entire structure, is now reaching into the industrialized south of Russian Siberia, with its huge secret cities which used to have privileged ties to the empire's center, and is having powerful effects similar to those in the all-important space and military industry bases located in what became Kazakh territory in 1992. The more distant cities will swim away, while the closer ones will return to the fold. Both smell of civil war.

**Thesis 6:** Reason seems to be of little consequence; Russia's ruin lay in its inability to forgo its crafty above-ground/underground double-dealing. First Moscow strengthened Belgrade, and following the Persian Gulf war, it advised Serbia (through Marshal Yazov) to destabilize the western paper tiger; now it has temporarily switched its emphasis, and is calling off the dogs.