

Russia's Energy Weapon and European Security

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Introduction: Russia's Energy Weapon and Strategy

Whether or not individual European governments and the EU claim that Russian energy and their dependence upon it is Moscow's weapon to secure their compliance with Moscow's preferences, Russia clearly believes that its gas and oil serve precisely that purpose. Similarly other analysts have also discerned the links between Russia's energy strategy and its overall security strategy in Europe.¹ Russia has also repeatedly used energy, threats or actual cutoffs to punish states that have conducted policies that it does not like.² Russia's 2003 energy strategy and subsequent statements by President Vladimir Putin make it clear that energy is Russia's most important instrument of foreign policy and that energy policy's purpose is to facilitate Russia's return to great power status in Eurasia.³ Indeed, Moscow recently dropped the mask and formally admitted what everyone has known although some would like to deny.

As Roman Kupchinsky has written,

On February 4 *Ukrayinska Pravda* reported that Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin stated: "Russia enjoys vast energy and mineral resources which serve as a base to develop its economy; as an instrument to implement domestic and foreign policy. The role of the country on international energy markets determines, in many ways, its geopolitical influence." This thesis was not new, it found its way into the 2003 "Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period of up to 2020" which stated at the outset that: "Russia possesses great energy resources... which is the basis of economic development and the instrument for carrying out internal and external policy." Putin's views were incorporated into the security doctrine in a roundabout but nonetheless blunt manner. Paragraph 9 of the doctrine states: "The change from bloc confrontation to the principles of multi-vector diplomacy and the [natural] resources potential of Russia, along with the pragmatic policies of using them has expanded the possibilities of the Russian Federation to strengthen its influence on the world arena" In other words, Russia's energy resources were once again officially acknowledged to be tools of Russian foreign policy, or as some believe, a lever for blackmail. There was apparently no further reason for denying the obvious, and the authors of the [2009] security doctrine decided to lay out Russia's cards on the table.⁴

Similarly abundant evidence exists that Moscow has used and continues to use energy as an instrument of dominance in the CIS as a whole and of leverage in Europe, either by controlling pipelines from Eurasia to Russia and then Europe or by maximizing its control of gas supplies from Russia (including those Central Asian supplies) to Europe.⁵ Moscow's frequent resort to energy punishments to get its way testifies to its view of energy as a primary lever of policy. This use of punishment does not end at the CIS' borders even though it is most frequently employed there. Indeed, it has also regularly been employed against the Baltic States and in Central and Eastern Europe.⁶ For instance, in the summer of 2008 Moscow cut off gas to the Czech Republic because of its support for the US missile defense plan.⁷ So both history and overt Russian statements confirm that Russia has used and will use energy as a weapon of foreign policy.

Moscow turns this weapon on or off as needed to suit its needs. Right now Moscow's apparent main goal is to ensure that one of its favored candidates wins the upcoming Ukrainian presidential election in January 2010. Accordingly it is lending Ukraine \$2 Billion and allowing it to slash purchases of Russian gas and pay only for what is actually used rather than for the full amount of contracted gas given its depleted treasury due to the current crisis.⁸ It is doing so to ensure that either Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko or opposition leader, Viktor Yanukovich, defeat President Viktor Yushchenko. But it will demand a quid pro quo for its support and that can be expected to be participation in the current EU-Ukraine plan to reform Ukraine's gas infrastructure with a view to neutralize that program, or control over gas transmission distribution in Ukraine on pain of more shutdowns. And it is quite possible that a new Ukrainian

government that comes to power after those elections will not face an immediate crisis in gas supply as the gas company Naftohaz Ukrainy is practically bankrupt so Ukraine may not be able to pay for its gas by mid-winter 2010, leading to a contractually approved Russian shutdown or more coercion to take over its network. Moscow may also demand an end or at least a very protracted slowdown to the campaign for Ukrainian membership in NATO and/or the EU. Certainly it has made major threats against Ukraine even before President Medvedev sent a vitriolic blog and letter to Yushchenko on August 11, 2009 cataloguing Ukraine's supposedly "anti-Russian" policies and essentially demanding a change of government in Kyiv.⁹

In earlier statements the Russian government has also denied that Ukraine is a truly sovereign state and has threatened it with missiles if it were to join NATO. Thus at the NATO summit of April, 2008 in Bucharest President Putin told President Bush, "But, George, don't you understand that Ukraine is not a state?" Putin further claimed that most of its territory was a Russian gift in the 1950s. Moreover, while Western Ukraine belonged to Eastern Europe, Eastern Ukraine was "ours." Furthermore, if Ukraine did enter NATO, Russia would then detach Eastern Ukraine (and the Crimea) and graft it onto Russia. Thus Ukraine would cease to exist as a state.¹⁰ Putin also said that Russia regards NATO enlargement as a threat, so if Georgia received membership, Moscow would "take adequate measures" and recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia to create a buffer between NATO and Russia.¹¹ So we cannot say that we have not been warned what Moscow wants and what it might do if it so chose.

Indeed, there can be no denying Moscow's disposition to threaten the EU in the future and in particular its bitterness over Ukraine's turn to the EU, notably the way in

which Ukraine successfully demonstrated the politicization and thus unreliability of Russian gas supplies to Europe in the 2009 crisis and the EU's decision to support Ukraine and join with it to reform its gas transmission infrastructure.¹² Indeed, Stanislav Tsygankov, Head of Gazprom's International Business Department, told a foreign affairs roundtable in Moscow that,

The Energy Summit held in Sofia in April (2009) was a kind of touchstone that revealed the true position of the European Union in these issues. Whereby keeping in mind the latest events; we no longer find general words sufficient with respect to Gazprom's efforts to diversify natural gas delivery routes to Europe. We expect unequivocal support of specific projects from the EU, primarily at the practical implementation stage of the North Stream project, as well as the planned South Stream gas pipeline. If Europe is truly concerned about its energy security, it should understand that the only way to ensure it is to diversify the gas delivery routes, thus balancing out the significance of each of them.¹³

Russia has also recently reiterated the same threat that it made throughout the spring and summer of 2009, namely that Ukraine could not afford to pay for the gas that it bought from Russia. Therefore probably in February 2010 it would default on its payments leading to a Russian shutdown of gas to the rest of Europe.¹⁴ While this is certainly an attempt to interfere in Ukraine's politics, it also represents an ongoing effort by Moscow to compel Ukraine at a minimum to surrender its domestic gas distribution network to Gazprom and Moscow, rendering it permanently vulnerable to Russian pressures. It also represents Moscow's effort to undermine the 2009 EU-Ukraine agreement that the EU will renovate Ukraine's gas infrastructure. That agreement, if implemented, would greatly set back Moscow's goal of establishing a lasting hegemony over Ukraine and would put paid to any economic justification for Moscow's favored North Stream and South Stream gas projects. As Kupchinsky writes,

If the through-put capacity of the [existing] Ukraine pipeline is expanded by almost 60bcm, there would be little commercial justification for building either

the Nord Stream or South Stream pipelines. The cost of upgrading the Ukrainian pipeline is believed to be about \$5-7 billion, far less than the estimated \$12 billion needed to build Nord Stream and the \$13 billion needed for South Stream, not to mention the untold billions of dollars to build a second string of the Blue Stream pipeline to Turkey.¹⁵

Accordingly, and despite these Russian “concessions” to Ukraine, there is great concern throughout Central Europe, if not Europe as a whole that in 2010 we will see another chapter in the Russo-Ukrainian gas wars that have occurred since 2006 as Moscow seeks to bend Ukraine, and with it Eastern Europe, to its will.¹⁶ Adding to the concern is the fact that there is no infrastructural connection between countries that may be very hard hit by this potential crisis: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.¹⁷ This issue becomes especially urgent now that Russia has overtaken Saudi Arabia as the world’s largest oil producer in an attempt to flood the market with Russian oil to gain revenue in the short-term.¹⁸ Most importantly in July, 2009 following a conversation between Head of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso and Prime Minister Putin, the Commission directed EU members to fill their storage tanks because it believed a Russo-Ukrainian gas war to be imminent.¹⁹

This warning has clearly resonated with at least some individual governments. For example, the Hungarian government and Hungarian gas companies are worried about a possible gas crisis that they seek to ward off. Concerned about a likely gas war between Moscow and Kyiv that would prevent Hungary from getting the gas that its officials (as in Bulgaria) have said is vital to their winter heating; they are undertaking more serious coordination with the EU Commission than ever before, drafting appropriate legislation about gas security, and ran a simulation earlier in 2009. Hungary has also put into use three new compressor stations to improve maintenance of the

domestic gas balance and carried out other measures to ensure that Hungary can survive a Russian gas cutoff.²⁰ In Ukraine, the President's international energy envoy, Bohdan Sokolovskiy, voiced his concerns that Russia's violent attacks on President Yushchenko that mentioned Kyiv's refusal to support Russian gas policies meant that Russia intended to use the gas weapon to influence Ukraine's January 2010 presidential election.²¹ And, as noted above, this already appears to be the case.

Russia's Overall Strategy

These concerns over Russian energy policy go beyond Ukraine for the evidence is abundant that Russia's energy policy is part and parcel of a broader strategy to undermine the foundations of European security and European public institutions. **Moscow's goal is to use the energy weapon to rebuild Russia economically and militarily while also using it to hollow out European membership in NATO and the EU so that they are a shell and these organizations are in fact incapable of extending security or managing it beyond their present frontiers while Russia has a free hand in its own self-appointed sphere of influence and can leverage developments throughout Europe and with the US.** As Joshua Spero has written,

Crafting alternative security structures to NATO underlines Russian politico-military strategy today as much as the past sixty years of NATO's existence. The fact that such Russian counter-NATO efforts failed over the decades --- need not prevent NATO's downfall.²²

Spero further observes that, "Russian leaders continue to employ a two-pronged policy toward NATO, constantly trying to oppose NATO with external military structures, while trying to hollow-out NATO's politico-military planning structures internally."²³ European diplomats and intelligence officers have acknowledged in private that these Russian goals remain operative and even call Russia a Mafia state based on the

pervasive corruption that links the government, security services, energy and other businesses, and organized crime though their governments remain afraid to say this in public.²⁴ Nonetheless the evidence to support this argument is overwhelming. Indeed, this evidence is occurring at this very moment as President Dmitry Medvedev's recent visit to Switzerland showed. Here Medvedev tried to get Switzerland to quash a criminal investigation of the oligarch Viktor Vekselberg's takeover of two Swiss firms by criminal means. Indeed, Vekselberg was quoted as saying that "From this visit to Switzerland we are awaiting the acknowledgement of the seriousness of bilateral economic relations that will create a big opening for Russian investments."²⁵

Using the energy weapon, i.e. control of the gas and pipelines to Europe, Russia seeks to dominate Europe's sources of supply by monopolizing Central Asian energy flows to Europe and by buying into African energy sources such as Libya, Algeria, and Nigeria, including liquefied natural gas (LNG).²⁶ This strategy, as applied to the CIS, is frankly and openly neo-colonialist despite Moscow's denials of that appellation. This was clearly the case long before Medvedev overtly cited the creation of a sphere of "privileged interests" in the CIS as one of the guiding principles of Russian foreign policy.²⁷ As Eugene Rumer observed in 2004, a revanchist tendency was already visibly coming to the fore in Russian politics.

In terms of Russian domestic policy, the revanchist idea can be summarized as restoration of state control over key sectors of the economy, state supervision over them, and expansion of the redistributive functions of the state. In terms of foreign policy, revanchism means first and foremost restoration of Russian influence in former Soviet lands and establishment of an exclusive Russian sphere of interests in the territories of the former Soviet Union. --- Nonetheless the fact remains that a growing number of Russian political figures hope to expand and consolidate influence over domestic and foreign policies of the many countries that once were part of the Russian empire. --- Thus, regardless of how one feels about Russian ambitions to rebuild the old empire, the term

neoliberalist accurately describes the mindset of the Russian foreign policy establishment.²⁸

This strategy also obliges Russia to pursue an openly neo-colonial policy in Central Asia and even to subsidize Central Asian gas production at a time of depressed gas prices in order to ensure that only Russia gets Central Asian gas regardless of cost.²⁹ Not surprisingly, Moscow is now trying to compel Ashgabat to lower the price of the gas that it exports to Russia saying that it is unprofitable for Moscow to sell Turkmen gas to Ukraine and Europe where energy prices and demand have fallen sharply.³⁰ Thus Russia replicates Soviet precedents like subsidizing its imperial peripheries even if they are burdensome. Evidently this subsidization of the peripheries to continue subordinating them to an imperial center remains a traditional pattern of Muscovite domination. But these practices also have wider implications as well. This pattern also underscores the inherent contradiction between an imperial neo-Tsarist or neo-Soviet policy and one based on market economics. Another way of saying this is that Russia's policies, for all the emphasis on development and growth, are fundamentally political policies that subordinate market logic to the elite's rent-seeking and to the establishment of a neo-imperialist outcome throughout Eurasia. Using the energy weapon, Russia aims at the following foreign policy objectives:

- Economic and political domination of the CIS' energy economy comprising both producers and consumers as well as a commanding position in their overall economic and political structures. This energy position includes leverage in both the upstream and downstream energy sectors (production, transit, and distribution) as well as other key economic sectors.

- Economic and political domination or at least substantial influence throughout

Eastern Europe, again through leveraging these countries' upstream and downstream energy sectors and what Lenin called the commanding heights of their economy.³¹ Through the ensuing control of energy distribution that can be turned on or off as necessary Russia seeks to obtain an ongoing position of influence throughout the politics of these states and bend them to its political preferences. Towards this goal Gazprom has obtained minority equity holdings in some 60-80 entities across Europe according to C. Boyden Gray. Yet the EU does not pursue Gazprom as a monopolist which it undoubtedly is (it also has been likened, not unfairly, to an organized crime syndicate).³² Gazprom, according to a recent list in the Russian press,

Has a share in over 20 European companies from 16 countries, which engage in distribution, marketing, and transport of gas. At the same time, in half of them, its share comprises or surpasses 50 percent (Gas Und Warenhandelgesellschaft, Overgas In. AO, Fragaz, WIEH GmbH&Co KG, Prometheus GAS S.A., Promgas SpA, Blue Stream Pipeline Company B.V., Gas Project Development Center Asia AG (Zug), WIEE, Nord Stream AG). Furthermore, at the end of January (2009) Gazprom created a joint enterprise with the Austrian OMV company for updating the system of gas storage facilities and the distribution network in Baumgarten, which are geared toward storage and distribution of gas from the Nabucco pipeline.³³

Thus Gazprom already (not to mention other Russian firms) commands an important position in the overall European gas economy if not other sectors as well. And it also has targeted certain key European countries like Germany where Russian and especially Gazprom investments are flourishing.³⁴ Indeed, as a result of the extensive Russo-German commercial ties German businessmen have become a major lobby arguing against any policies that might upset this relationship and the government too possesses a fundamentally different Weltanschauung (world view) about Russia and the opening up of Germany to Russian commercial influence (not to mention Eastern Europe) than does the US, a fact that has corroded all hope of unified policies towards

Russia.³⁵

- Using energy rents, monopolization of supplies to key countries, and the capabilities of all the organizations listed above Moscow clearly aims to weaken the EU. It plays off individual members, especially Germany and Italy, against the entire organization headquartered in Brussels to impede any genuine European integration. At the same time, as shown below, it incites Balkan countries against each other to stimulate their competition to offer Moscow the best terms for shipping gas to them through Russian-dominated pipelines.

- Using its position in energy and other sectors as well as the rents thereof Russian has orchestrated a strategy using the following instruments of power: the government, energy firms, Russian intelligence services, and organized crime, all acting together, to suborn politicians, corrupt political parties, influence politics throughout Eastern Europe, and in general aim at a final goal of hollowing out European security institutions from within and corrupting European public institutions. The funds accruing to Moscow through the corruption of energy relations in Ukraine and elsewhere are the lubricant facilitating this effort to subvert European political institutions and politicians.

In this context we can see two prongs of the Russian offensive. One is the purely diplomatic offensive using energy as an inducement and common opposition to previous US policies to create points of concord with European governments and insert Russia into their energy and other key economic sectors. For example, a Greek analysis observed that relations between Moscow and Athens improved dramatically after the New Democracy Party won the Greek elections in 2004. Russian sources soon realized that Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis intended to follow an individual policy

bolstering mutual cooperation on issues like arms sales to Greece. Russia fostered a common understanding with Greece on issues in energy and defense, supported Greece on the Cyprus issue, incited it against the US, and pushed to overcome Bulgarian reservations about an oil pipeline, the Burgas -Alexandropolis pipeline. Through these mechanisms Russia has clearly loosened Greece's support for unified European policies directed towards Russia and Athens now prefers to follow its own course.³⁶ Although Karamanlis' party has just lost the recent Greek elections, it is far too soon to predict what the PASOK party that won the election will do.

It also is typical of Russian diplomacy that it promises to virtually everyone that if it joins with Russian energy plans it will become a hub or a major player and rack up hefty revenues from the energy trade. Russia has done this with both Greece and Turkey, for example.³⁷ Karamanlis has publicly embraced the idea that the Burgas-Alexandropoulos oil pipeline and South Stream gas pipeline will turn Greece into an energy hub.³⁸ And in Turkey's case, not only is its stated ambition to become an energy hub long-standing, it also sees opportunities to create a vibrant energy and economic relationship with Russia that accepts large-scale Russian investment in downstream and domestic distribution of energy networks inside Turkey. As a result Moscow is eagerly investing in such projects.³⁹ More recently Russia made the same pitch about becoming an energy hub to Bulgaria as Russia's Minister of Energy, Sergei Shmatko said, in speaking about the three current Russian projects with Bulgaria.

We do not doubt that the implementation of those three projects is exceptionally important for Bulgaria itself. The projects will allow Bulgaria to become a very important energy center in South Europe and a powerful energy transit junction in Europe. I think that Bulgaria's current leadership, which has in mind the country's long-range national interests, must excellently understand this.⁴⁰

Of course, should Bulgaria opt to choose other non-Russian alternatives – and this is quite unlikely given its near total current dependence on Russian energy – Russian Ambassador to Bulgaria, Yuri Isakov, reminded Sofia that “Russia has other ways of implementing its energy interests.”⁴¹ Likewise, Moscow has told Greece and Bulgaria that it has alternatives to either or both of them. Moscow has also frequently raised the possibility of having Romania join South Stream, a possibility that then frightens off Bulgaria from leaving the program and incites Serbia to join it lest it be left out. Although Romania has now apparently definitively rejected participation in South Stream it is clear that Moscow’s strategy is not just to divide and conquer in Southeastern Europe, but rather actively to incite rivalries among Balkan states to make them each feel they will all be energy hubs or simply left out of the game when in fact they are merely cutting up the same pie as already exists and which will probably be insufficient in the future to meet European demands.⁴² The political results of this divide and conquer strategy were quite evident in 2008 as the Romanian journalist Cristian Campeanu observed,

Moscow would thus dominate Europe’s energy and political agenda by means of “divide and rule” tactics, as we could see on the occasion of the war in Georgia, when the countries that had lucrative agreements with Gazprom – France, Germany, Italy, and Hungary – claimed to see nuances in something that was simply a brutal Russian aggression.⁴³

Intelligence Penetration and Subversion

At the same time European intelligence services and NATO have discerned a vast expansion of the Russian intelligence network in Europe and its efforts to penetrate and destabilize European governments. These trends are particularly noticeable at NATO headquarters in Brussels and in Eastern Europe. The head of Polish Military

Intelligence, Antoni Macierewicz, observed in 2007 that Poland was under attack from a greatly expanded covert network of agents.⁴⁴ In 2008 Vladimir Fillin, the Ukraine office chief of forum.msk, told a gathering of Ukrainian law-enforcement officials that,

For some time now the Ukrainian special services have been discharging the country's international commitments by working actively to curb smuggling that is 'sheltered' by influential Chekist forces in the Russian Federation. The Chekists have taken over Russia's internal heroin and cocaine market and are now trying to expand as far as they can into the Ukrainian and European markets. --- However nothing has come of their efforts.⁴⁵

In July 2009 Kyiv expelled two Russian diplomats from the Crimea, not for spying, which would be bad enough but unfortunately something we all live with. Rather they were trying to incite the population against the Ukrainian government.⁴⁶

We find analogous examples in Poland, the Baltic, Hungary and the Czech Republic if not elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe. For example, in 2004 Roman Giertych, Deputy Chairman of the commission that investigated the notorious Orlen scandal in Poland, concluded in his report that,

The commission has evidence that a certain kind of conspiracy functioned "within the background of the State Treasury Ministry, the Prime Ministerial Chancellery, the Presidential Chancellery, and big business," which was supposed to bring about the sale of the Polish energy sector into the hands of Russian firms.⁴⁷

In Lithuania, former President Rolandas Paksas was impeached for his connections to Russian organized crime and intelligence figures. As of August 2009 the Seimas is moving to block any possibility that the Russo-Lithuanian capital bank Snoras could gain control of the Leutvos Rytas media group.⁴⁸ But this is hardly a new Russian policy.

In 2007-08 the Lithuanian businessman Rimandas Stonys, President of Dujotekana, Lithuania's Gazprom intermediary, who has close ties to Russian and Lithuanian officials and has extensive investments in Lithuania's energy and transit

sectors, was brought under investigation by Lithuania's Parliament. These investigative reports charge that he had used his ties to Russian intelligence and other Lithuanian political connections to advance personal and Russian interests in Lithuania's energy sector. Dujotekana is reputed to be a front for Russian intelligence services that are already entwined with Gazprom. And a counter-intelligence probe into a foreign citizen's efforts to recruit senior Lithuanian Intelligence (VSD) officers led to the firm which also recruited government officials. Key executives of Dujotekana are apparently also KGB alumni. Similar charges are also raised in regard to Stonys' and his firm's influence in Lithuania's transit sector and his large contributions to politicians and media and his influence over political appointments.⁴⁹

Since then it has become clear that the company was established with the help of Russian special services, but because Stonys failed to gain control of a new power plant in Kaunas that would have legitimized Gazprom as an investor and power in Lithuania, he may well be on his way out.⁵⁰ However that would hardly stop other friends of Russia from trying to capture key positions in the state and its policy.⁵¹ Indeed, Gazprom is still trying to obtain a long-term contract to supply Lithuania with gas and make a deal with the main gas company Lieutvos Dujos until 2030.⁵² Clearly this is a constant, long-term Russian policy. Thus Stonys only took off from where earlier efforts had failed when attempts were made to compromise Lithuanian politics by using such figures as Viktor Uspaskich, founder of the Labor party, who is trying to make a comeback, and Paksas.⁵³ Likewise, in Estonia the 2006 annual report of the Security Police noted that the Constitution Party is financed partly from Moscow.⁵⁴

In Hungary Istvan Simisco, a member of the Christian Democratic People's

Party and Chairman of the National Security Committee of the Parliament, has publicly charged that Russian (and possibly Slovak) intelligence and criminal links may be involved in the murder of members of the Hungarian Roma in an attempt to incite ethnic unrest inside Hungary and/or discredit Hungary abroad.⁵⁵ There are also repeated examples of Russia, either acting on its own or through the Austrian energy firm OMV, attempting to gain control over Hungarian energy firms, notably MOL.⁵⁶ Thus there has been good reason for open US concern about Hungarian policy, especially when the Socialists led by Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany were in power.⁵⁷ Indeed, Gyurcsany has at various times proposed that the EU, Russia, and Caspian Sea governments form an energy partnership or said that despite Hungary's democratic orientation, it cannot expect to become independent of Russia.⁵⁸ More recently there are discernible signs of this phalanx of business, crime and government money establishing havens for itself in Iceland and Montenegro.⁵⁹ In other words, we are confronting a pervasive and strategic policy on the part of the Russian elite.

However, the most comprehensive recent example occurred in the Czech Republic. Prague's recent expulsion of two Russian diplomats, including the defense attache, for spying has revealed the scope of the problem even though Moscow, as is its habit, denounced the charges as provocations. Diplomats have stated that Russia is increasing its network in Prague to the extent of activating sleepers or past agents and reverting to Soviet methods. For some time the Czechs have been investigating this expansion of Russian intelligence, subversion, and espionage activity thanks to the arrest in 2008 of Herman Simm, a high-ranking Estonian official in the Ministry of Interior who was a Russian spy. As one NATO diplomat told the Czech newspaper Mlada Fronta

Dnes,

The extensive building up of Russian espionage networks in the Czech Republic and in other NATO countries, and also the hitherto unprecedented amounts of money that Moscow was starting to invest in this 'project' in the recent period have exceeded the acceptable, and sometimes also tolerated, limits of espionage, -- In the recent period this has exceeded any kind of degree, whether this is a case of infiltrating the intelligence services or of contacting experts involved in NATO strategic defense.⁶⁰

What reportedly most disconcerts NATO about these trends is not the intelligence gained by Moscow but the fact that it has returned to Soviet practices and clearly views NATO as enemy number one.⁶¹ Had NATO paid closer attention to Russian statements and policy it would not have been surprised. Formally Prague expelled these diplomats for attempting to influence public opinion against the planned US missile defense installations in the Czech Republic. Czech officials and reports have long observed that, using business and either Czech or Russian businessmen as a front, Moscow has been trying to make contact with and suborn politicians to influence Czech policies.

Moscow has doubled the number of known agents in the Czech Republic from 50-100 and many officials believe that the leadership of the Czech Social Democratic party is either prey to dangerous illusions about Russia or worse and would undermine Prague's pro-Western policies.⁶² Czech intelligence thus reports that Russian intelligence has attempted to establish and exploit ties to Czech politicians and civic groups for purposes hostile to government policy and on behalf of Russia.⁶³ As one representative of Czech Intelligence, the BIS, told the Czech journal Respekt.cz previously,

In the last few years we have noted numerous attempts by business entities that had proven connections to suspicious Russian capital to gain control over telecommunications, information systems, and transportation infrastructure from railroads to airports and airlines. To what extent the Russian secret services are involved in these activities, however, we do not know.⁶⁴

Knowledgeable Czech experts like the former Ambassador to Moscow Lucas Dobrovsky have little doubt what Moscow wants to achieve through such efforts to penetrate the Czech government. As he observed,

We would stop resisting the efforts to bring Russia's economic, political, and perhaps, to a certain extent, military, influence back to the area of Central Europe. The current Russian Government and the president believe that this is a natural influence in the area that was directly and indirectly occupied by the former Soviet Union. You will find a lot of evidence of this in the statements of Russian politicians. This would lead to the weakening of our Euro-Atlantic relations.⁶⁵

Czech Deputy Foreign Minister Thomas Pojar echoes these comments and notes that recovering Russia's position in Central Europe has been a Putin priority since he took power in 2000.⁶⁶

Apart from Russian efforts to undermine popular support for the stationing of US missile defense radars in the Czech Republic, these espionage activities are clearly connected to Russian efforts to take over and penetrate key sectors of the Czech economy. For example, Russian interests are trying to buy into the nuclear storage sector, an effort that according to intelligence experts immediately raises questions, especially as Russian diplomats are involved in this project.⁶⁷ Russian agents have likewise repeatedly tried to infiltrate Czech political parties and make contact with members of Parliament, their staffs, personnel in the foreign relations departments of political parties, and gain key access to critical economic sectors.

Shell reportedly wants to sell its 16 percent share in Ceska Rafinerska, a refinery company. One of the main suitors? Supposedly Russian Lukoil which recently expanded its local network of gas stations. The troubled Polish company PKN Orlen might want to sell its stake in Unipetrol, the Czech company that controls Ceska Rafinerska. The likely suitor? Again the Russians. The list goes on. Such worries about Russian expansion aren't surprising when one considers that the Russian company TVEL will, beginning in 2010, start supplying the Czech nuclear power plant Temelin with fuel, replacing Westinghouse, the American firm; a Czech subsidiary of the Russian company OMZ will take part in

additional work on Temelin; and Gazprom, the Russian gas giant, controls Vermex, the second largest importer of gas from Russia.⁶⁸

Although Russian officials deny interfering in the activities of Russian companies, the record clearly contradicts such denials. So until the charges of economic expansion subside and the opacity characteristic of Russian business-government relations lifts, nobody will believe that the signs of increased Russian activity in the Czech Republic are purely commercial, certainly not the Czechs.⁶⁹ Indeed, the criminalization of the energy sector is so great that a Russian newspaper opined that one of the reasons for President Dmitry Medvedev's violent attacks on Ukraine's government on August 11 2009 and refusal to send Ambassador Mikhail Zurabov there is that the attacks also intended to keep Zurabov from gaining control over gas flows through Ukraine so that the state, not Gazprom will run the policy and control those flows at the end of the day.⁷¹

Russia's European Strategy

This Russian strategy aims to limit the damage that could be caused by a genuine European integration and has long been in effect. This damage limitation strategy to prevent European integration has long been known to analysts if not governments. In 1999 Sergei Medvedev (no relation to the President) wrote that,

Damage limitation is a strategy that postpones Russia's European engagement. Underlying this argument is a long-term strategic consideration aimed at the new European balance of the twenty-first century. Russia, currently in a phase of geopolitical and economic decline, must prevent the fixation of this unfavorable status quo by any treaty, agreement or security system. Russia is objectively interested in maintaining the current uncertain and unstructured security arrangement that took shape in Europe in the wake of the Cold War as long as possible -- preferably until the economic upsurge in Russia expected by the middle of the next decade. Russia is therefore instinctively opposed to any institutional upgrade of European security, NATO enlargement included; it would prefer to see European security not as an institution, but as an open-ended process

(much like the former CSCE; hence the current impact of Moscow on the OSCE) and would like to dissolve it in various pan-European collective security proposals, reminiscent of old Soviet designs of the 1930s.⁷²

The only difference between his analysis and the present is that Russia no longer sees itself in decline, quite the contrary. Nevertheless its objectives, as Medvedev and Sperone note, remain constant regardless of all other developments.⁷³ In other words Russia's objectives, analyzed here, are of a fixed and constant nature irrespective of other developments in Europe. They represent a consistent revisionist stance aiming at gaining total freedom to act as it pleases, especially in its sphere of influence, while frustrating European integration.

A recent Danish editorial correctly links energy self-sufficiency to Denmark's -- and by implication other European states' -- ability to conduct a foreign policy based on values as well as interests. Thus it not only rightly links failure to preserve this self-sufficiency to failure to conduct a unified European policy towards Russia that upholds European values. But also and accordingly it argued that,

We have problems in the circle of EU countries when we should be united in condemning Russian aggression. Several of those European countries dependent on Russia for gas supplies are reluctant to criticize Moscow's tough line toward Ukraine and Georgia. Many European countries also don't want to offend the OPEC countries. But we must be aware that over the long haul it pays to hold firm to such values as democracy and freedom of expression.⁷⁴

That is precisely the point. No US or European policy towards Russia, whether it be conciliatory or hostile or everything in between, can succeed without European and Western unity.⁷⁵ Second, no Western policy can succeed if it is mediated exclusively from Washington to or through one or two European states, especially if they are unwilling to take measures against the threat, as Pojar observed.⁷⁶ Consequently Central and East European states who are truly front-line states in this Russian effort to

undermine the post-1989 status quo have continued to complain about Western disunity that leaves them to face Moscow from an even weaker position than would be the case if Europe was unified.⁷⁷ They see the reluctance to confront Moscow as giving signs of an inner EU and even NATO weakness that undermines European unity and integration. And the initial Czech and Polish reactions to the alteration of US policy on missile defenses, even if not warranted by the actual decision, perfectly captures this mood of feeling left to confront Russia alone.⁷⁸

Indeed, that is Moscow's point. Exploitation of its energy weapon remains the main tactic of its foreign policy to prevent the realization of what Russian rulers have historically regarded as the greatest threat to Russian security, the unification of Europe or its integration under a system of rule opposed to that of Russia. While in the past that integration, e.g. under Napoleon or Hitler, represented a military threat to Russia's survival, today the threat is democracy which endangers the survival of the kleptocratic elite that rules Russia. Not surprisingly in 2006 Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov publicly stated that the greatest threat to Russia was alleged foreign efforts (and since domestic upheavals are invariably perceived as special operations fomented by the West all such revolutions are inherently foreign) to alter the constitutional order in any of the CIS states, including Russia.⁷⁹ Accordingly Moscow must limit the threat generated by what has already been achieved in this process by stopping that integration before it reaches the former Soviet borders and then, if possible reversing it. For example, In December 2006 Ivanov advocated delimiting Eurasia between NATO and the Russian-sponsored Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). At the December 1, 2006 meeting of the CIS and Baltic States Media Forum, Ivanov argued that,

The next logical step on the path of reinforcing international security may be to develop a cooperation mechanism between NATO and the CSTO, followed by a clear division of spheres of responsibility. This approach offers the prospect of enabling us to possess a sufficiently reliable and effective leverage for taking joint action in crisis situations in various regions of the world.⁸⁰

Not only is this a frank call for spheres of influence and for Russia to create a security system where smaller states revolve around Russia, it also returns us to the strategic bipolarity of the Cold War minus that epoch's charged ideological and military rivalry.⁸¹ In practice this, after all, is what Russia's multipolar world means for Eurasian security and it features prominently in Russian policy today as President Medvedev confirmed in his August 31, 2008 interview when he overtly stated that Russia has privileged interests with several states, most notably those on its borders.⁸²

Indeed, if Russia cannot extend its form of rule to the CIS its stability or rather the stability of an elite committed to autocracy and with it the neo-imperial policy outlined above comes into question. Ivanov's threat assessment is therefore not surprising. Just as NATO enlargement is crucial to Ukraine's and Georgia's constitutional development so ultimately is it crucial to the long-term process of democratization in Russia because it removes the possibility of realizing the imperial dream once again which is the most potent justification for autocracy and the greatest potential threat to European security and integration.

Russian patrimonialism and autocracy cannot easily survive without replicating itself in Ukraine and across the CIS. Thus it is hardly surprising that Medvedev, like Putin and Yeltsin before him, has now formally claimed an undefined sphere of influence going beyond the old Soviet borders as a fundamental principle of Russian foreign

policy.⁸³ Celeste Wallander, now Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, called this transimperialism although the label is less important than the imperialistic reality.

Transimperialism is the extension of Russian patrimonial authoritarianism into a globalized world. Russia can trade and invest without being open and permeable by selectively integrating transnational elite networks in the globalized international economic system and replicating the patron-client relations of power, dependency, and rent seeking and distribution at the transnational level. Russian foreign policy is increasingly founded on creating transnational elite networks for access to rent-creating opportunities in the globalized international economy. Moscow functions as the arbiter and control point for Russia's interaction with the outside economy to ensure that Russia is not exposed to the liberalizing effects of marketization, competition, and diversification of interests and local power. If that were to happen, the political system that keeps the present leadership in power would be at risk of failing. In this sense, globalization is a threat not to Russian national interests but to the interests of Russia's political leadership.⁸⁴

Both NATO and EU enlargement to Ukraine represent this globalization.

Accordingly the reform of Ukraine's politics and in particular its enormously corrupt gas trading operations with Russia are critical components of Ukraine's integration with the West and the rest of the world. This corrupt trade and Ukraine's undefined political trajectory are foundations of Russia's autocracy and efforts to corrupt Western public institutions and politicians through the use of energy in tandem with organized crime, the Russian state, and intelligence agencies.⁸⁵ Thus this strategy, in its energy and military dimensions aims to stop the threat posed by European integration in its tracks, or to limit the damage to what has already been lost and if possible reverse it by hollowing out the institutions of European unification as Medvedev noted above.⁸⁶

Effectively Moscow aims to undo in practice the content of the post-Soviet and former Warsaw Pact states' sovereignty. Michael Emerson of the Center for European Policy Studies in Brussels reports the comments of a civil society leader in Belarus who told him that, "we have the impression that Moscow has come to see a certain

Finlandization of Belarus as unavoidable and even useful.”⁸⁷ As Emerson describes the term, Finlandization means,

Remaining in Moscow’s orbit for strategic security affairs (strategic military installations, 50% ownership of the gas pipeline, no question of NATO aspirations), but becoming more open to its EU neighbors for personal contacts and eventual political liberalization and for modernizing its economy. All this has the ring of plausibility to it.⁸⁸

While this may look attractive to Moscow or maybe even to some of the governments of the region like Belarus and Armenia, and possibly Moldova, it clearly does not satisfy Ukraine and probably Azerbaijan, not to mention Georgia, or leave any of these states with full sovereignty over their foreign, defense, and economic policies. According to Emerson even if none of those post-Soviet states currently has a credible prospect for either the EU or NATO, Russia’s multi-dimensional presence is either sustained or growing throughout the region.⁸⁹

Although some American analysts, like Thomas Graham, have recommended Ukraine’s Finlandization as a goal of US policy, it is quite unlikely, given Ivanov’s and many others’ statements, that Moscow really looks forward to these states’ political liberalization and enhanced contacts with the EU, quite the contrary.⁹⁰ In other words, Moscow has rather a different definition of Finlandization, one that is much more politically and economically restrictive. Meanwhile in Central and Eastern Europe Moscow wants “trojan horses” inside the EU and NATO. For example, Russian Ambassador to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, publicly said upon Bulgaria’s accession to the EU in 2007 that Bulgaria was Moscow’s trojan horse there and in 2008 stated that Russia counted on Bulgaria and other states to block sanctions against it in the wake of the 2008 war with Georgia.⁹¹ Certainly NATO as well as the EU regarded the Dimitrov

government in Bulgaria that was in power till earlier in 2009 as little more than just such a trojan horse.⁹²

Moreover, close examination of Russian policies throughout Eastern Europe as defined here indicates that Moscow's aims go beyond those listed by Emerson. The multiplicity of incidents we have listed here or that others like Keith Smith, Robert Larsson, Anita Orban, and Janusz Bugajski et al have listed indicate that we are witnessing a coordinated Russian strategy directed against Europe.⁹³ As a recent assessment of Russian policy in Latvia concluded,

We see several, interrelated short-term [Russian] strategies focusing on exercising ever-increasing influence in the politics of the target states. What we do not see is a policy of military conquest but, rather, a gradual but unswerving drive to eventually regain dominance over the social, economic, and political affairs of what are to become entirely dependent client states.⁹⁴

Neither should we think that the war with Georgia represents an end to conflicts in the post-Soviet space. Leaving aside the continuing tensions between Russia and Georgia, the continuing pressure against the Baltic States and Ukraine for allegedly violating the rights of Russians, Russian-speakers, and Russian culture could easily serve as a springboard for further action to revise regional boundaries. Certainly Moscow's acceptance of Crimea as a purely Ukrainian territory is hardly unconditional.⁹⁵ The same thing could happen in Kazakhstan as well. In the wake of the Russo-Georgian war Sergei Markedonov, one of Russia's most insightful analysts of the Caucasus, observes that Russia, now operating in an internationalized negotiating format in Geneva, is interested in obtaining a ratification of the new status quo that it created by force, but warned that,

At the same time, it is still hard to grasp that the two conflicts in question are not simply a matter of rivalry of ambitions and interests, but also an objective process. It is a question of the formation of nation-states after the destruction of

imperial formations and the victory of the nationalist discourse. The breakup of the Soviet Union was not the end point in this process it was a beginning. Such processes, by definition, are not completed quickly. A conflict of “imagined geographies,” different mentalities, is in progress. And not only the conflict but also the actual formation of political and even ethnic identities is not yet finished.⁹⁶

Lawrence Sheets, the Caucasus program director for the International Crisis Group, similarly warns that the frozen conflicts in the Caucasus and Black Sea are now unfreezing and could lead to further ethno-political conflicts there, if not elsewhere.⁹⁷ And nobody can say that Russo-Georgian tensions have abated given Moscow’s efforts to make the truncation of Georgia’s territorial integrity irreversible.

Thus Russia’s strategy not only aims at a sphere of influence and negation of the current status quo, it also entails the weakening of all European security organizations and can lead to conflicts in the region over ethnic and other issues, especially if they are exacerbated by the dysfunctionality of government as in Ukraine. Even Russian observers like the defense correspondent Pavel Felgenhauer, understand that Russia’s current efforts to bring about a new European security treaty based on President Medvedev’s speeches in Berlin and Evian in 2008 are essentially an attempt to bring about ‘a new distribution of spheres of influence’ in Europe with Russia regaining the former Soviet Union as its sphere.⁹⁸

The Role of Germany and Italy

We have seen the effects of this strategy in the EU’s past disunity and in Russia’s truly privileged relationship with Germany and, to a slightly less extent, Italy. These Russo-German ties are based on large-scale energy and commercial deals that make German business the anchor of the relationship and German vision of international relations that argues that Russia is not only not a threat but that actually it is increasingly

dependent upon Europe and is thus being integrated into it. And, as a corollary, this has also entailed a German accommodation to much of Russian policy based on the fear that displays of hostility will jeopardize future business and political contacts. This accommodation takes place to a very considerable degree through large-scale business lobbying.⁹⁹ Germany has blocked virtually every EU effort through 2009 to stand up to Russia and either impose costs upon it or devise a unified EU energy policy.¹⁰⁰ We also saw examples of Moscow's success at the NATO Bucharest summit in 2008 when Germany and France blocked membership in NATO for Ukraine and Georgia. This was widely believed to be due, in part, to Russian opposition that could then explicitly be used to exploit the European dependence on Russia for energy, especially gas and target European countries in revenge.¹⁰¹ Others argued complacently that Europe should not antagonize Russia but that in the end both sides are equally dependent upon gas and energy revenues.

Many in Berlin and in other European capitals - including Brussels - argue that Russia's own economic dependency on its gas exports, as well as its severe demographic problems and military weakness, make Moscow conducive to cooperation with the West rather than serious confrontation. Putin's new nationalism, many claim, is rather a reaction to Western triumphalism than a new Russian movement.¹⁰²

Germany also helped forge a coalition of NATO members that not only refused to give Georgia and Ukraine Membership Action Plans in November, 2008, but also argued essentially to restore ties with Russia and impose no penalties upon it for the war in Georgia. Indeed, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner argued then for tying considerations of EU energy to NATO issues. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier even argued in 2008-09 that Russia deserves "compensations" for the recognition of Kosovo and that the alliance should not push Russia to its limits. Thus

Berlin has to a considerable degree become Russia's lawyer inside the EU and NATO and come close to giving Russia an indirect but real veto over future membership and other NATO issues.¹⁰³

As a result Moscow, according to Konstantin Simonov, director of the independent National Energy Security Fund in Moscow, German businesses ensured that Prime Minister Angela Merkel followed the same policy toward Russia that her predecessor Gerhard Schroeder (who is now on Gazprom's Board) followed.¹⁰⁴ Indeed Simonov frankly outlined Moscow's perspective on Europe given such relations.

We have three different 'Europes' inside Europe ---These are Brussels and the Euro-bureaucracy; post-Soviet countries and former satellites of Europe; and the so called old Europe led by Germany, Italy and France. "With Brussels and this so called New Europe Russia has very difficult relations because of the history and view of the Euro- bureaucracy. --- But our relations and energy relations with Old Europe are usually very, very good and even after the gas war with Ukraine there was no real change in relations."¹⁰⁵

Germany's rationales are clear. It sees Russia as a potential partner and huge investment opportunity, believing that German investments in Russia are bringing about a genuine mutual interdependence rather than excessive German or European dependence upon Russian energy. It sees its responsibilities as guiding Russia, and also benefits from the fact that its ties with Russia give it the comforting belief that it is achieving a greater power status than would otherwise be the case. Naturally Russia has every reason to flatter this German delusion and encourage it to pursue its individual interests rather than the EU's, or NATO's interests. Thus Steinmeier's call for a partnership of modernization is based on a German concept of rapprochement through interdependence or closer ties with Russia (*Annaeherung Durch Verflechtung*).¹⁰⁶ As part of this process not only is Germany Russia's largest trading partner and German firms major investors in Russia.

But also Russian investment in German businesses is growing very rapidly. Perhaps Germany fears this less than its neighbors do because it has, to be fair, an exceptionally diversified policy to ensure multiple sources of gas supply besides Russia.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, there should be no grounds for complacency here as Germany's gas dependence on Russia is set to grow.¹⁰⁸

Apparently the German government has lost sight of the fact that as President Putin put it, oil and gas are “the necessary safety margin for the European and first of all for the German economy.”¹⁰⁹ Therefore excessive Russian power in European energy and other key economic sectors, since we are dealing with an unreformed statist economy, is an inherently dangerous gamble as Moscow can turn on or off that margin of safety whenever it so pleases. Moscow naturally wants to encourage further mutual investments as it needs foreign investment and seeks to invest abroad to gain politically strategic lodgments in foreign economies.¹¹⁰ But Russia's investments appear to be primarily political, indeed President Medvedev called them strategic, and they evidently aim to bail out distressed but strategic European firms, so they are not compelling investments justified in terms of their potential economic returns.¹¹¹ Indeed, the pace of these investments by Russia is picking up. Germany has already agreed to sell to Russia's Sberbank and Magma Corporation the Opel car company rather than turn to a US buyer. Opel, GM's former German subsidiary is strategically important to Prime Minister Angela Merkel for she feared that major job losses in the distressed company would rebound against her and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Germany's September 2009 elections. Germany also is selling the distressed Wadan-Weften and

Rostock-Wanemunde shipyards which have specialized in building icebreakers, freighters for the polar region and ships that can transport liquefied natural gas (LNG).¹¹²

In these deals Germany is offering to provide the Russian buyers who are oligarchs and connected to the government and the Nord Stream energy project in the Baltic credits, essentially subsidizing the purchase of vital infrastructural properties. Berlin is also signaling that it wants Nord Stream to continue even if Moscow intends to build South Stream, its pipeline through the Black Sea. Thus it is also supporting the extension of the incestuous oligarchical ties of business and government in Russia and undermining the EU's campaign for a unified policy to bring gas to Europe through the Nabucco pipeline. Indeed, among the projects that some German business and industrial interests are proposing with Russia and that enjoy government sympathy (although no funding as of yet) include bringing Russia into the Nabucco pipeline, accelerating the Nord Stream pipeline through the Baltic Sea and making clear to Sweden through the EU that any further delays are unacceptable, and establishing a bilateral energy agency that would derail any hope of a common EU energy policy vis-à-vis Russia, and facilitating further Russian investment in German industry.¹¹³ Beyond this Prime Minister Merkel is trying to get Russia to buy the distressed Qimonda memory chip manufacturer and the Munich based semiconductor producer Infineon and to unite Siemens' nuclear power division with Rosatom.¹¹⁴

Germany may think it benefits economically and politically through these policies, but in fact it is very hard to make that case. First of all the companies it is dealing with when it sells assets to Russia are not really businesses but government entities run by cronies of the regime and serving its interests. Sistema, the firm to which

Berlin was thinking of selling Infineon, recently completed an asset swap where no funds were exchanged with the government, hardly a typical business deal.¹¹⁵ In the event the deal to buy Qimonda evidently fell through but it represents a very disturbing precedent. For, as noted above, Berlin is reinforcing the anti-democratic structures of the Russian government in return for short-term gains, not losing jobs in failing firms, but at the cost of institutionalizing a Russian state lobby in its politics. Moreover, Russia's goals are in the European context frankly political. Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in June 2009 on the occasion of what then was an upcoming visit of Steinmeier to Russia. It said that,

The amassed potential of mutual trust enables Russia and Germany to act in a coordinated way when examining key problems of the topical international agenda, including restructuring the global financial architecture and the system of Euro-Atlantic security on the basis of the principles of multilaterality (translator's word-author). The incipient transformation of the system of international relations and world economic ties opens up additional opportunities for the two countries to bring their positions closer and expand the sphere of alignment of interests, particularly as applied to the key tasks in renewing the pan-European security architecture, bolstering regional stability, and restoring the positive potential of Russia-EU and Russia-NATO relations. For all our differences concerning a number of concrete aspects of movement towards these goals, Russia has in the person of Germany, acting as an influential member of the EU and NATO, a serious partner pursuing a responsible policy in international affairs. In this connection we expect that a wide window of opportunity for deepening cooperation with the FRG is discernible in such areas as preparing and fleshing out the contents of decisions by G8 summit to be held in Italy on July 8-10 [2009]; furthering the Russian President's initiative for a European Security Treaty (EST); restoring Russia-NATO relations; developing Russia-EU relations; putting disarmament and arms control problems (including restoring the viability of the CFE regime) back on the front burner of big politics; carrying out measures to reinforce the WMD nonproliferation regime; and securing negotiations for a politico-diplomatic settlement to the Iranian and Korean nuclear problems. This also concerns the theme of the reformation and strengthening of the UN, Middle East settlement issues, the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan, and the struggle against piracy in the Horn of Africa area, international terrorism, organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, and other global and regional challenges and threats. Among themes for open dialogue, the exchange of arguments and a continued search for common ground and rapprochement of positions are the

EU's Eastern partnership program, the reformation of the OSCE, Kosovo, the post-conflict rehabilitation of the Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia region, and the "frozen conflicts" in the CIS space, including Nagorno-Karabakh and Transdniestria.¹¹⁶

Clearly Bulgaria is not the only country that Russia perceives as a Trojan horse in Europe.

But, as several external observers note, Germany has gained nothing politically from this policy except trade contracts with a highly unpredictable Russia. As Constance Stelzenmuller writes,

Unfortunately, the Foreign Ministry's policy of "rapprochement through economic interlocking" has turned out to have a fundamental flaw: it assumed a reciprocity of interests and intentions. Whatever economic interlocking there is appears to be happening strictly downstream, with Russian state-owned companies purchasing German assets while German companies struggle to get a foothold in the Russian market. Nor has there been any noticeable diversification in Germany's energy supplies. Finally, this strategy of rapprochement offered no guidance when Russia invaded and occupied parts of a neighboring sovereign country. Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the war in the Caucasus, many of Germany's diplomats seemed to be in a collective state of shock.¹¹⁷

Certainly we see no sign of Russia's retreat from its neo-imperial and openly anti-American policies in the CIS and globally. If anything, it is clear that signs of Western disunity and concessions, as was the case in Soviet times, only harden Moscow's resolution to press on with more demands in the belief that they will be granted because its adversaries are weak, confused, and irresolute. Such policies only convince Moscow that spheres of influence are coming if not already present and that Germany has granted them one in the East.¹¹⁸

We can also say with equal certainty that German concessions have not changed Russia's thinking about world politics in Europe or elsewhere. Similarly, Sergei

Karaganov, director of the semi-official Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, recently wrote in the Jordan Times that not only had the Cold War not ended it never really finished.

NATO, moreover, not only enlarged its membership, but also transformed itself from an anti-communist defensive alliance into an offensive grouping (with operations in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Afghanistan). NATO's expansion towards Russia's own borders, and the membership of countries whose elites have historical complexes in regard to Russia, increased anti-Russian sentiment inside the alliance. For all its efforts to improve its image, many Russians now view NATO as a much more hostile organization than they did in the 1990s, or even before then. Moreover, NATO enlargement has meant that Europe itself has still not emerged from the cold war. No peace treaty ended the cold war, so it remains unfinished. Even though the ideological and military confrontation of those times is far behind us, it is being replaced with a new stand-off - between Russia, on one hand, and the US and some of the "New Europeans" on the other. My hope is that, when historians look back at Georgia's attack on South Ossetia of last summer, the Ossetians, Russians, and Georgians killed in that war will be seen as having not died in vain. Russian troops crushed Georgia's army on the ground, but they also delivered a strong blow against the logic of further NATO expansion, which, if not stopped, would have inevitably incited a major war in the heart of Europe.¹¹⁹

Lest we think that the US' reset policy towards Russia has altered this point of view we should consider the following evidence. Dmitri Trenin of the Moscow branch of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace recently wrote that,

The opinion that has predominated in our country to this day that the 'reset' is above all Washington's apology for the mistakes of the earlier Bush Administration and their rectification certainly does not correspond to the idea of the current team in the White House. For example, in our country the concept of the 'reset' is understood as almost the willingness in current conditions to accept the Russian point of view of the situation in the Near Abroad which essentially is wishful thinking.¹²⁰

Similarly Prime Minister Putin announced that the US decision to reconfigure its missile defenses should lead to other concessions even if the Administration unanimously maintains that the decision had nothing to do with Russia.¹²¹

Instead Germany's policy has already led it into some rather dubious moral-political postures. At Prime Minister's Merkel's August 2009 visit to Moscow she stood by silently while Medvedev reiterated his charges that Ukraine has an anti-Russian government and policy and that he sees no present prospects for restoring normal relations with the current government in Kyiv. This can only send the wrong message to Moscow and Kyiv.¹²² Indeed, Moscow has already, as Trenin suggested, taken such a message to heart. Likewise, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov writes that recent Western actions show a declining desire for confrontational actions, i.e. strong challenges to Moscow's assertions of imperial rights throughout the former Soviet bloc but Lavrov advances no sign of a willingness to offer cooperation except in Afghanistan which threatens Moscow more than it does Washington.¹²³ Even though such cooperation is nowhere to be found the German view still retains distinguished adherents.

Steinmeier's foreign policy if not German policy as a whole was essentially predicated on making Germany into a mediator between NATO and Russia, a stance that effectively precludes Ukraine's integration into Europe.¹²⁴ Apart from saying that "Russia deserves some compensation at the expense of Ukraine and Georgia in return for Moscow's presumed 'loss' in Kosovo," Steinmeier proposed to make those concessions at the expense of third parties like Ukraine and Georgia.¹²⁵ German and Dutch diplomats have actually told Ukraine that Russia effectively holds a veto on its entry into NATO, presumably even if it resolved its domestic political mess.¹²⁶ While the elections in September 2009 led to an SPD defeat and Steinmeier's departure from the Foreign Ministry, it remains too early to determine whether or not German policy will change and if so to what extent. Even though there is a debate on Russia in Germany, it is clear that

Moscow is not alarmed at the prospect of a new government there.¹²⁷ Indeed, both sides have already placed on their bilateral agenda the issue of a joint Russo-German energy agency, a proposal that, if accepted, would undermine any hope of a unified EU energy policy.¹²⁸

Germany is only the most prominent or advanced state in this parade of accommodation to Russian policy preferences. Other Western analysts and officials both here and Europe suffer from the same malady identified by Stelzenmuller, namely a misplaced belief in an inherent reciprocity of interests with Russia when it is clear from the evidence above that no such reciprocity exists, quite the contrary. Similarly Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has repeatedly offered to mediate between Washington and Moscow on missile defense, a strange posture for a NATO member.¹²⁹ Paris has gone even farther. French Prime Minister, Francois Fillon told the National Assembly that “relations with Russia should not be disrupted by NATO’s accelerated expansion” and that Russia should be treated as a partner. He even proposed a “compatible anti-missile defense system.”¹³⁰ And Defense Minister Herve Morin overturned sixty years of NATO policy by saying that Moscow must be consulted before any further NATO enlargement because Europe’s security architecture must be built with Russia.¹³¹ Meanwhile President Sarkozy’s most recent initiative (after unilaterally rushing to propose a truce on behalf of the EU in the Russo-Georgian war that Russia has broken with impunity) is to propose that the EU study the possibility of a common economic space comprising the EU, Russia, and Turkey.¹³² Similarly French Minister Pierre Lellouche announced in Warsaw on September 18 2009 (one day after the US decided to withdraw building missile defenses there) that “Europe must take the “hand offered” by

Russia and talk about joint security in Europe” even though Medvedev’s plan for European security is widely seen as an attempt to undermine existing security structures while giving Russia a free hand in Europe and Eurasia. Moreover, it is difficult to see what hand Moscow has offered to Europe or to any particular government other than big business deals.¹³³

These examples show that it is not only Germany that has fallen into the Russian trap. Italy and Italian policy are not much different. Russia here too is striving to make large investments that would give it strategic positions in Italian business and industry.¹³⁴ And, of course, Italy, especially the ENI gas and oil company, is heavily involved in the energy trade with Russia, with ENI being Moscow’s main partner for the South Stream pipeline. Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, President Berlusconi’s ally, outlined a proposal in 2008 for integrating Russia into the West on the basis of common interests, e.g. disarmament and proliferation.¹³⁵ But while Moscow certainly is negotiating disarmament or arms control treaty with Washington, its views on proliferation are not congruent with those of the West despite endless amounts of Western assertions to this end.¹³⁶

Frattini’s argument represents another case as diagnosed by Stelzenmuller where Western experts and policymakers simply disregard the evidence of Moscow’s views, e.g. on proliferation and assume facts not in evidence. Some analysts like Fedor Lukyanov, Editor in Chief of Russia in Global Affairs, even believe that officials believe Russia can live with a nuclear Iran because once Tehran feels more secure, it will engage in deals and negotiations.¹³⁷ However he has also pointed out that if Russia were to disengage from Iran or alternatively if Washington effected a rapprochement with Tehran

that could open the Iranian market to Western technology it would displace Russia, strategically there, an outlook that drives Russia back to Iran. At the same time opening the Western market to Iranian energy again displaces Russia from its most vital export market, and lead to Irano-Western collaboration as regards the Caspian Sea and Central Asia and the Caucasus.¹³⁸ Preventing a pro-Western Iran is therefore a vital aim for which Russia is prepared to pay dearly and thereby exclude the United States.

To be sure not all Russian analysts share Lukyanov's views.¹³⁹ But as Alexei Arbatov has observed,

For Russia the acquisition of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles by India and Pakistan and the prospects of further proliferation are adding some new elements to a familiar and old threat, rather than creating a dramatic new one as is the case with the United States. The USSR and Russia have learned to live with this threat and to deal with it on the basis of nuclear deterrence, some limited defenses (like the Moscow BMD system and national Air Defenses) and through diplomacy, which is used to avoid direct confrontation (and still better, to sustain normal relations) with new nuclear nations.¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, Arbatov notes that,

There is a broad consensus in Russia's political elite and strategic community that there is no reason for their nation to take U.S. concerns closer to heart than its own worries - in particular if Washington is showing neither understanding of those problems of Russia, nor any serious attempts to remove or alleviate them in response for closer cooperation with Russia on non-proliferation subjects.¹⁴¹

Therefore we may summarize Russia's position on proliferation, especially as regards Iran as follows:

- Russia has an interest in enhancing the non-proliferation regimes, but this is not the main priority in its foreign policy or security strategy.
- Russia views with a lot of skepticism the global strategy of non-proliferation and counter-proliferation declared by the United States, seeing in them a policy based in the practice of double standards and an attempt to veil other political, military, and commercial interests, including nuclear exports, with the goal of non-proliferation.
- Russia is not inclined to sacrifice its own economic and political interests in peaceful nuclear cooperation with other countries for the sake of the abstract non-

proliferation ideal (especially in the U.S.'s unilateral interpretation). It will not initiate any further tightening of the regime (especially one associated with economic losses), while at the same time observing the letter of the provisions of the NPT, IAEA safeguards, and agreed-upon norms for nuclear exports.

- Relations with the United States are of considerable significance for Russia (including CTR and GNEP programs) and it is prepared within certain limits to take U.S. demands into account.
- At the same time Moscow will resist Washington's pressure to abandon its dealings with other countries that are legal from the standpoint of the NPT, even if these countries at this point in history are not to the liking of the current U.S. administration and even if there is suspicion about the military nuclear proclivities of Russia's foreign partners. In this sense, the continuation of the Bushehr project and its possible expansion have gained not only practical significance for Moscow (\$5 billion in income), but a sense of principle and political significance as well.
- Russia will object, as will the majority of U.S. allies, to using force to resolve non-proliferation problems (although for political considerations it has supported the Proliferation Security Initiative, or PSI), and will give preference to diplomatic and economic instruments in reinforcing the NPT. Russia has supported recent UNSC resolutions on Iran and [the] DPRK but will resist "hard sanctions" (i.e. oil embargo, cutting communications etc.) and will veto the use of force.
- Russia's non-proliferation policy (just as defense and arms control postures) will probably stay passive and mostly reactive, except when promising direct economic benefits (as with the multilateral uranium enrichment plant in the Siberian city of Angarsk). Without initiatives from outside, Russia would hardly initiate or readily endorse more strict export controls, embargoes on sales of nuclear fuel cycle components or more intrusive IAEA guarantees. However, it may use nuclear and missile proliferation as a pretext for withdrawing from some treaties, foremost the INF-SRF Treaty of 1987, apparently motivated by other military and political reasons.¹⁴²

Indeed, Foreign Minister Lavrov recently again reiterated that Russia will not support further UN sanctions upon Iran.¹⁴³

Frattoni also contended that Russia seeks a share in defining the new ground rules of international finance even though it is by no means a major economic player and its economy is based on anti-market principles, criminality, and protectionism leading to autarchy. And Frattoni's ideas on European security in the East are remarkably confused. Thus he calls for a trilateral concert in the former Soviet Union to discuss security issues

there with Russia, the US, and Europe, neglecting the fact of an alliance between Europe and the US. Yet he also simultaneously argues that the terms of this dialogue must be clear. The West cannot nor intends to give up on the principles of democracy or its own structures in the CIS. NATO and the EU's "open door policies" are similarly non-negotiable principles though concrete decisions on expansion must take account of a complex series of factors including Russia's legitimate interests (which, of course, could easily be construed to favor enlargement).¹⁴⁴ Yet Moscow opposes the expansion of European security organizations on principle. How then does one resolve this contradiction?

Maurizio Massari, Head of the Ministry's Policy Planning Department, writes in a personal capacity that NATO enlargement could lead Russia to freeze its ties with NATO and fall prey to fears of encirclement and isolation from the West, even though such policies are clearly not in Russia's interest as it proclaims them and NATO poses no threat to Moscow. Supposedly the alliance would then revert to its 20th century *raison d'être*, containment rather than on focusing on current threats. Of course this view omits mention of the sustained Russian campaign to undermine governments from Estonia to Bulgaria using all the instruments of power at its disposal and the fact that Russia already refuses to integrate with Europe as a matter of principle.¹⁴⁵ This view also omits NATO's substantial disarmament and utter lack of capacity to threaten Russia even if it had the will to do so when there were no contingency plans dealing with Russia until Russia invaded Georgia in 2008. Like Frattini he calls for a trilateral treaty uniting Russia, the US, and the EU, NATO, and OSCE in a compact to manage security threats in their common neighborhood and resolving the frozen conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh,

Georgia, and Transnistria. Within this framework Russia would shelve its opposition to Georgian and Ukrainian accessing NATO's Membership Action Plan (MAP). Indeed, if NATO joined this larger compact Russia would have nothing to fear from enlargement but rather it would, or so he claims, benefit from it. In return Georgia and Ukraine would commit to new pacts of friendship and cooperation with Moscow.¹⁴⁶ Here again we may see the roots of this policy in a misconceived energy dependency and presumption of reciprocity of interests.

The US ambassador to Italy, David Thorne, actually publicly decried this "excessive energy dependency" within two months of his appointment to Rome. In attacking Thorne Italian newspapers typically asserted the great profits ENI stands to make from South Stream even though dispassionate economic analysis suggests that the objective cost projections for it are so high as to render South Stream a very dubious proposition, not to mention the fact that Italian demands for profits from this still nonexistent pipeline are much more than Russia is likely to countenance. President Berlusconi is even trying to get Turkey to endorse South Stream even though it does not benefit at all from it. Similarly even former EU President and Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi has said that "someone has to lay it on the table that Russian and European interests are complementary", an observation with no basis in fact since there is neither any thing as the European interest given the disunity of the EU nor a genuine Russian belief in this proposition.¹⁴⁷

Moreover, Russia is happy to "wrong-foot" ENI and Rome if needed, e.g. by inviting Electricite de France (EDF) into South Stream and offering it at least a 10 percent share of the pipeline where EDF would benefit through its control of 20 percent

of the Edison firm that is in Italy and which controls the Greece Italy interconnector project, another gas pipeline whose route coincides almost exactly with South Stream's Southern Branch. But where as South Stream exists only on paper the interconnector is a real project that is already being built.¹⁴⁸ Neither do Italian officials appear to take into account Russia's bilateral deals with African firms like Sonatrach in Algeria and Libya for LNG that would enhance Italy's dependence upon Russian gas since it gets much of its gas from Sonatrach and Libya.¹⁴⁹

Massari, like the Germans, omits to mention that Russia opposes NATO enlargement in principle and regards, the CIS as an area of its privileged interests.¹⁵⁰ It regards NATO and the West as a priori adversaries and will not countenance such an arrangement that licenses its presence in the CIS. Thus Vladimir Kozin of the Russian Foreign Ministry, replied to NATO Secretary General's Anders Fogh Rasmussen's September 2009 speech offering a rapprochement with Russia by saying that the "destructive elements in NATO-Russia relations continue to outweigh the constructive components." Kozin postulated eight anti-Russian trends:

- The continuing efforts by members to foster an anti-Russian mood within NATO and at least six (unnamed) members' efforts to pursue anti-Russian policies in countries bordering Russia and former Soviet republics;

- NATO's continued willingness to expand its membership, specifically to Ukraine and Georgia

- NATO's desire for conventional military and nuclear superiority over Russia and failure to ratify the CFE treaty

- Increasing number of NATO bases and installations near Russia's borders with

nine resulting from the first wave of expansion alone in 1994

- Continuing plans to install missile defenses, despite the US reposturing of them on September 17 2009 so that there will be missile defenses throughout NATO not just in Poland and the Czech Republic

- Stepped up security activity by NATO air forces and navies in the Baltic and Black Seas sometimes with nuclear carrying ships

- The fact that Russia remains the primary adversary of NATO's military plans (despite the absence until now of contingency plans) for use of these nuclear and/or conventional weapons

- NATO's rejection of President Medvedev's call for a new security pact and order in Europe¹⁵¹

Given the utter falsity, mendacity, and self-serving nature of these proposals it is clear that what Moscow wants from NATO is not partnership but surrender, as suggested above. No doubt Moscow, like German sources believes that many NATO members do not share Rasmussen's view of relations with Russia and that "trench warfare" in NATO will continue. Therefore it aims to divide NATO even more by taking an intransigent stance, secure in the knowledge that Berlin and Rome will be its advocates.¹⁵²

Thus clearly Massari and others who advocate similar proposals fail to realize that the problem is not Russia's insecurity but rather its ambition. Moscow does not need cooperation pacts with Kyiv and Tbilisi; rather they need Moscow to stop its aggressive policies towards them. But beyond these highly troubling signs of discord within NATO and the EU that preclude any hope of a common European, not to say Western policy towards the Russian threat, as well as the failure to listen to Russian statesmen and

understand the totality of Russian policy the lines of argumentation used by German, Italian, and French officials and leaders contain four very negative implications.¹⁵³

First is the idea that relations with Russia take precedence over other considerations and may or even should constrain NATO's internal decision-making. Some even linked securing cooperation with Russia on Afghanistan to the question of a Georgian and Ukrainian Membership Action Plan (MAP), something never done before publicly. Second is the belief that the West owes Russia something e.g. compensations (a nice 18th century term) for Kosovo. Certainly Moscow thinks this way.

“America owes Russia, and it owes a lot, and it has to pay its debt,” grumbled this key adviser to President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. His message was that America's past actions had threatened Russia's security and the Kremlin wasn't about to forget it. Given what they see as American disdain for their interests, the Russians drag their feet on U.S. security worries such as the Iranian nuclear program. “Iran is an American mania,” says another Putin adviser dismissively. “Maybe it goes back to your fear of the Indians [in the Wild West]. We don't know. Iran is a problem of yours, not of ours.”¹⁵⁴

Third, these Western officials have, in their statements raised the danger of counter-posing the EU agenda to NATO's agenda, including the MAP and enlargement. These ministers publicly spoke of opposing the granting of the MAP, a NATO issue, did so on the basis of Russia's complaints regarding its relations with the EU. The creation of this artificial dissonance can weaken both organizations from within especially “if certain influential governments start invoking the EU's authority to bend NATO decisions.”¹⁵⁵ Fourth, these arguments repeat the long-standing error of Western approaches to Russia by saying that we have to give Medvedev a chance and personalizing relations between states when it is clear that Medvedev has done nothing to lower temperatures (indeed he may well be unable to do so) in East-West relations and has aggressively pushed on his own the agenda of converting the CIS into a sphere of

influence.¹⁵⁶

From the EU to NATO

Perhaps what is most distressing here is the palpable evidence that leading European governments no longer believe that the model of European regional integration developed since 1945 functions as an exemplary model of conflict resolution even though the evidence is very strong that it has done just that.¹⁵⁷ This is perhaps even a greater failing than the refusal to take Russian policy seriously. Under the circumstances it is hardly surprising then that states who feel themselves threatened by the revival of Russian power are losing faith in NATO and seeking extra guarantees, whether by bilateral agreements with the US as in Poland's case or by a comprehensive program of rearmament as in Norway's case.¹⁵⁸

Thus the new US-Polish agreement on missile defenses, signed as the guns were blazing in Georgia, openly calls for direct U.S. assistance to Poland before NATO in case of an attack and provides for US forces to be stationed in Poland for just such a guarantee.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, even before this war Poland and Norway had publicly raised questions concerning the viability of the Article V guarantee and NATO's extended deterrence.¹⁶⁰ Russia's war against Georgia, which we can see as being only a stage in its efforts to revise the current status quo, has brought the specter of armed conflict back to Europe. Therefore those states in the front-line, the Baltic States, Poland, Norway, and the rest of the CIS south of the Baltic States need security, not just promises. As former Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rotfeld has said,

From Poland's perspective and in my opinion, this is an issue of fundamental importance. However, this is not about redefining or rewriting Article 5. It is necessary to interpret it in such a manner as to offer a sense of security and security guarantees to the signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty – so that the

political philosophy expressed in Article 5 would be put into practice, not merely represent a decorative slogan or even a figure of speech.¹⁶¹

Rotfeld's remarks could not be timelier. Roger Cohen, writing in the New York Times states that,

For Poland, as for other newer NATO members who joined the West after falling on the totalitarian side of the post-World War II European carve-up, Article 5 is beyond sacred. It is the very foundation and essence of the alliance. Changing it is as unthinkable as disputing the existence of God at the Vatican. That is not the case for the United States and its allies in "old" Europe, who, six decades on from NATO's foundation, in a transformed world, are as conscious of the shortcomings of Article 5 as they are aware of its iconic status.¹⁶²

Indeed, Cohen even rephrases the infamous 1939 refrain "Pourquoi mourir pour Danzig? (Why die for Danzig), e.g., "Were boys from Turin and Topeka really ready to die for Tbilisi"?"¹⁶³

Thus this war, like the rest of Russia's policies further aggravates the preexisting tensions that had divided the alliance regarding relations with Russia and NATO's future purpose and character.¹⁶⁴ Clearly they understood that. Yet, "Europe will never be entirely secure if the Caucasus is left out of Europe's security purview."¹⁶⁵ The same principle applies to Ukraine. Therefore NATO's and the EU's viability as security providers, the indivisibility of European security, and the vision of a truly integrated continent are at stake here. Since Russia clearly states that America's European presence is unnatural and that European solidarity is "silly" and a complicating factor for it, that solidarity becomes all the more critical if European security is to be preserved. But a disunited Europe bifurcated by blocs where Russia has a free hand to do as it pleases undermines all the work of past generations for a peaceful, whole, and free Europe.

Indeed, Russia will then become more than just the sole *Ordnungsmacht* in the Caucasus. It can then inhibit any moves towards democratization there. Thus Georgia's defeat puts the rest of the CIS at risk as well for,

Georgia has become the testing ground for the West's resolve to advance democracy, security, and free markets in the post-Soviet space. Georgia is also a test of trans-Atlantic cooperation in a strategically important area of the world where the United States and Europe have common goals. The West's success, and the handling of this conflict in general, will not only affect access to energy resources across Russia's southern flank. It will also influence Russia's demeanor in world affairs, where cooperation between the United States and Russia is critical.¹⁶⁶

Beyond integrity and independence these states' democratic and Western future are also at stake. NATO and EU membership expresses these countries' deepest aspirations to join Europe and as its officials well understand, the future of Ukraine's democracy and constitution, however imperfect, is bound up with membership in those organizations.¹⁶⁷ Tesmur Basilia, Special Assistant to former Georgian President Edvard Shevarnadze for economic issues, wrote that in many CIS countries, e.g. Georgia and Ukraine, "The acute issue of choosing between alignment with Russia and the West is associated with the choice between two models of social development."¹⁶⁸ Similarly Sabine Fischer recently wrote that,

Ukraine's foreign policy orientation does not only involve a choice between different partners for political and economic cooperation. It is a strategic decision between two models of development, and as such essentially a decision on the identity and future of the country. It forms part of Ukraine's state and nation-building processes, and its outcome will have a decisive impact on the future of the region, and Europe in general.¹⁶⁹

Russian analysts like Dmitry Furman also acknowledge that, "The Russia-West struggle in the CIS is a struggle between two irreconcilable systems."¹⁷⁰ Furman even concedes

the link to the old regime, saying, “Managed democracies are actually a soft variant of the Soviet system.”¹⁷¹

Conclusions

The foregoing analysis and numerous other examples indicate that Moscow has made substantial progress on realizing what is in effect a centuries old goal of Russian statecraft, namely preventing by all available means the integration of Europe. This was understandable when such integration, under Napoleon, Hitler, or Hohenzollern Germany, represented a mortal military threat to Russia. But whom does European integration today threaten other than the oligarchs of the Kremlin whose domestic power and property remains contingent upon their postulation of a continuing state of siege between Russia and Europe or the West and neoimperial policies of diminished sovereignty among the post-Soviet states, if not territorial revision as well? Using the energy weapon it has launched a comprehensive assault on Eastern European states using all the instruments of power, including force (and not only in Georgia as Estonia’s cyber-attack in 2007 indicates). Using that weapon it has also inserted itself into the EU and through that NATO by alluring offers of cooperation and profit to key European states who are members of those organizations. It seduces them with the siren call of national interest and wealth, often corruptly acquired and the willingness to entertain Western illusions such as the presumption of reciprocal or shared interests. But the end result is the corruption and subversion of Europe’s public institutions.

Recently the EU has begun to awake by challenging Moscow for dominance in the provision of gas. It is helping Ukraine reform its gas infrastructure, fighting to launch the Nabucco partnership and has inaugurated the promising Eastern Partnership.¹⁷² But

none of this has slackened Moscow's drive for revision and empire as it believes that there is no substance to the EU's professions of resolution and no coherence to NATO. The evidence adduced here shows beyond a shadow of a doubt the means of Moscow's daily assault on the European status quo and the vigor with which it is systematically pursued. It also shows that the corruption of EU members, not in the sense of venality (though that is present) but in terms of their political judgment as to their true self-interest inevitably spills over into NATO and is a major cause of its current discord. Russia wants to stop and even reverse the history of Europe's international affairs but Europe cannot and must not accede to the notion that European integration, the advance of democracy, peace, and prosperity should be arrested in order to preserve the Russian empire and its progenitor Russian autocracy. As the short but already bloody history of the Russian Federation strongly suggests, that is a course that not only preserves instability but leads to war. If Europe, including Russia, is to become truly whole and free than the principles upon which it has heretofore advanced and which are embodied in NATO and the EU must be reinvigorated, for it is only on the basis of those principles that true security and peace can reign over all of Europe, including Russia and its neighbors.

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