



Domestic Politics and America's Russia Policy

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Foreword

The making of foreign policy in the United States, as in most democracies, is not a tidy process. As we all know too well, it has rarely been a matter of political elites or senior bureaucrats determining behind closed doors what is in America's best interest. Domestic political factors are important, if not paramount, in the foreign policy decision making of every administration. A well-known movie, *Wag the Dog*, poked fun at the idea of domestic politics pushing presidential decision making to the extreme of starting a war; today some Democrats are asserting that President Bush is using the Iraq issue to further Republican fortunes in midterm elections. Congress and business are usually involved in shaping foreign policy, and in recent years the number of private groups and individuals struggling to make their views national policy—from chicken farmers to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) to Human Rights Watch—has grown greatly. Sometimes there are so many players involved you want a scorecard.

The impact of domestic political factors on foreign policy has quite correctly drawn considerable attention in recent years. But the subject has been an elusive one for generalization, particularly in going beyond the statement that domestic political factors are very important in the making of foreign policy. Spurred on by Dr. Janne Nolan, who conceived the project in early 2001, the Stanley Foundation and the Century Foundation agreed to set up a task force to take a concerted look at this aspect of US foreign policymaking. The focus of the task force was US policy toward Russia. A distinguished group comprised of Russia policy experts, former senior officials, pollsters, journalists, congressional staff, and officers of nongovernmental organizations was brought together to sort out and draw conclusions about the impact of domestic political considerations on our Russia policy.

While Russia does not have the cogency for policy of the Soviet Union or draw the domestic political attention that it once did, it has remained a main preoccupation of policymakers after the Cold War to integrate Russia into the Western community of nations and help make it a more democratic, market-oriented state. Despite diminished public attention, US Russia policy during the Clinton years drew considerable domestic partisan activity, generating in the late 1990s something of a political debate on “who lost Russia?” The improvements in US-Russia relations under the Bush and Putin administrations have narrowed domestic partisan interests. Nevertheless, the war against terrorism and American unhappiness with Russian policies toward Iraq and Iran in different ways raise questions about the significance of the overall US-Russia relationship and in turn its domestic political underpinnings in the United States.

The task force was convened in September 2001 and concluded its deliberations in May 2002. It focused on four key issues of US policy toward Russia: Chechnya, reducing the threat of proliferation from Russia's vast stock of weapons of mass destruction, Russia's policy toward Iran and Iraq, and US efforts to promote democracy in Russia. All these issues were important in the nineties and remain important today. They are not about to go away. All meetings began with a deeply knowledgeable presentation by a member of the task force or an invited guest laying out the nature and rationale of US policy on a specific issue, the domestic players and politics involved with the policy issue, and the interaction between the two spheres. It was sometimes difficult to avoid focusing on the merits of policies rather than their domestic politics. The task force is grateful for the presentations by Kenneth Myers, of Senator Richard Lugar's office, on cooperative threat reduction policy; by Kenneth Wollack, president of the National Democratic Institute, on promoting democracy in Russia; by Dr. Michael McFaul, professor of political science at Stanford University, on US policy toward Russia over the conflict in Chechnya; and by Dr. Steven Sestanovich, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, on Russian policy toward Iraq and Iran and its impact on US policy toward Russia.

I particularly want to thank Dr. Sarah Mendelson for her report. She drew upon the task force discussions, her own deep knowledge of many of the topics, and her own independent research of the issues to reach conclusions about the impact of domestic political forces on policy in each case the task force reviewed. She also provided some important generalizations on the broad subject.

Dr. Mendelson's essay covers a wide swath of territory, showing the varying impact of domestic political forces on our policy toward Russia. On an issue like Chechnya, nongovernmental organizations—the main outside protagonists—have had little influence in stiffening policy, in great part because Russia is not Serbia and there are so few Chechens in the United States. On the other hand, organizations like AIPAC have significantly influenced policy on the US response to Russian-Iranian nuclear cooperation—a much easier target to focus on than the complex issues involving diplomacy and economic assistance. Nor has Iran been one of our favorite nations. On other subjects like “loose nukes” in the former Soviet Union, strong individual US senators backed by determined advocates within the government and private sector could make a policy difference. In general, Dr. Mendelson finds that the Clinton and Bush administrations have not been politically constrained in managing policy toward Russia.

Finally, on behalf of the members of the task force, I want to extend our thanks to the Stanley Foundation and the Century Foundation for their generous support of the task force and the project.

Morton Abramowitz
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By Sarah E. Mendelson¹

Introduction

Policy typically evolves from a series of interactions among many different players inside and outside government. US policy toward Russia is no exception. But who or what forces shape how an issue is perceived and managed? Do experts make much of a difference? Congress? Business? Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)? In short, what are the domestic political influences that impact US policy toward Russia? How have the domestic factors evolved since President Putin rose to power? And how have the events of September 11 affected these influences? The task force looked at four cases to try and get some answers to these questions:

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- The US response to Russia's wars in Chechnya.
- US support for development of democratic institutions in Russia.
- US support for the safe dismantlement and storage of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Russia.
- The US response to Russia's relations with Iran and Iraq.

These cases were chosen because they reflect the diversity of issues that characterize US-Russia relations in the post-Soviet period and, at the same time, capture a wide spectrum of domestic actors inside the United States who attempt to influence the policy process. The issues examined embody both old and new dynamics: disagreements over how the Russian government uses force and treats its population; its unprecedented involvement in institution-building; the destruction of Russia's nuclear arsenal—the very weapons that were pointed at the United States; its lingering concerns about the proliferation of nuclear technology and, most recently, Russia's friendly relations with countries that threaten the United States.

Who and what drives a policy depends on the issue, but certain generalizations emerge across these cases: regardless of the policy, whatever the issue, from promoting democracy to stopping nuclear proliferation, the American public rarely has been engaged. Electoral politics have generally not been part of the mix since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instead, US policy toward Russia is managed and maintained as an elite, mostly inside the beltway issue. The White House and the State Department are intermittently focused on US policy toward Russia's wars in Chechnya. The State Department and the US Agency for International Development oversee democracy assistance while Congress has funded this work. Congress; the departments of Defense, State, and Energy; as well as various parts of the intelligence community work the issues related to threat reduction and Russia's dealings with Iran and Iraq.

While the public has not been a factor, US policy toward Russia is not free of domestic political influences. Policy on Chechnya, since September 11, has been subject in great part to maintaining a counterterrorism coalition with Russia. Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) budgets have been driven

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by bureaucratic politics, Congress, and interpretations of Russian behavior. Democracy assistance budgets have been subject to similar dynamics. Powerful lobbies have at times affected policy on Russia's relations with Iran.

Presidential personalities play a powerful role in some cases. Throughout the 1990s, and continuing in 2002, the shape and tone of US policy toward Russia were driven largely by one big concept: the pursuit of integrating Russia into the West. In the 1990s, this concept was mediated largely through the relationship of Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton.² The Bush administration initially distanced itself from what many regarded as an overly personalistic foreign policy, but eventually President Bush took a similar approach to Russia through his relationship with President Putin.

The analysis of the cases has been informed by the lengthy and focused discussions held throughout 2001–2002 in Washington, DC, in meetings of the Task Force on Domestic Politics and America's Russia Policy. Some of the US policies discussed in the meetings of the task force have changed even since the task force convened in May 2002 while others are in flux. In-depth

interviews with many current and former government officials and foreign policy experts supplement the task force discussions.

This paper is not a consensual document on behalf of the task force, nor is it an exhaustive study of the impact or the interaction of domestic political influences on US policy toward Russia. Instead, it focuses on specific aspects of several policies and draws some conclusions from the range of cases that may have some relevance to larger problems that emerge from time to time in the relationship. For example, whatever the determinants of US policy on Chechnya, it is a portrait of factors that are missing, of decisions not made, things not said, actions not taken. Similarly, the policy of promoting democracy in Russia captures many inconsistencies and competing goals. At high levels, elections are called free and fair despite manipulation; but at other levels, US funds support activists monitoring elections, calling for transparency, and identifying fraud. CTR is a case study in the power of ideas, of effective policy entrepreneurs influencing from both inside and outside government, and then the bureaucratization of these ideas inside government.

In each case, I briefly outline the policy and Russia's responses to it. I then consider who affects an issue and how. What are the forces, the influences, and the tensions shaping the policy? How consensual or contested was the policy? In cases where the policies were unconstrained, how did an administration use its power? Who were the main actors? The paper concludes with some brief observations of overall patterns in the domestic political influences on US-Russia policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Problem of Chechnya

Russia has waged two wars in Chechnya since 1994 that violate numerous treaties and rules of organizations to which Russia belongs. Tens of thousands of people have been killed. The abuses have occurred over many years and are ongoing. They have been well documented: highly respected organizations have amassed much evidence that Russian federal forces have clearly and repeatedly violated the Geneva Conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Russian and Western organizations have documented the disproportionate use of force and the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, in addition to "mop-up" operations (*zachistki*) that regularly involve looting, ransom, rape, and execution. They have detailed forced disappearances of up to 2,000 people and "filtration camps," where rebels and civilians are routinely tortured. There is even evidence that the human rights monitors themselves are being targeted and killed by federal forces.³ The scale of human rights abuse is far greater than in Kosovo, where NATO intervened.⁴

US policy on Chechnya in both the Clinton and Bush administrations has been largely a rhetorical response to terrible events. Sometimes the tone has been harsher than at other times, but the US government's position has been

essentially the same: there is not a military solution to Chechnya and there must be a negotiated settlement. The US government has for years also insisted that there be accountability for human rights abuses, that there be an end to the infamous *zachistki*, and that internally displaced persons return voluntarily.⁵

Given how destructive and extralegal these wars have been, and how well the abuses have been documented, why has US policy been mainly limited to rhetoric? A military option was never on the table, but why, for example, weren't sanctions imposed or other tougher policies implemented? And why were so few inside or outside the government advocating a different response? An important explanation lies in the nature of the problem itself and competing priorities. Russia (and China) are not Serbia or the Congo. There are numerous and major equities involved. Many inside and outside government have been reluctant to pursue a different policy on the war that either threatens these other equities—such as fighting terrorism and combating the proliferation of WMD—or that threatens Russian policymakers at the same time that the United States pursues policies over Russian objections, such as missile defense and NATO expansion. These wars have never been regarded as a “first-order problem” the way that Russia's dealings with Iran have. There has been instead a general bracketing of the issue. As one senior American diplomat intoned, the United States will not jeopardize its relationship with Russia over Chechnya.⁶

How was this rhetorical approach sustained, given that since the early 1990s the dominant US policy toward Russia has been its integration into the Euro-Atlantic community? If Russian troops have repeatedly violated the Geneva Conventions, why has this not affected Russia's integration? And in the post-September 11 era, has the frame through which US policymakers view the war in Chechnya shifted? Is it still seen primarily as a human rights issue, as a successful contribution to the war on terrorism, or as a security threat? How has dissent inside government on this policy differed from dissent outside? Where were the NGOs and Congress on this issue?

Rhetoric During the First War

In the first war an important dynamic shaping the US response to Chechnya was the personal chemistry between the presidents, captured in part by President Clinton's nickname for Yeltsin, “ol' Boris,” and Yeltsin's nickname for Clinton, “friend Bill.” This chemistry had the unexpected effect of inhibiting criticism rather than encouraging it. Chechnya was seen as an inconvenient sore spot, to be brought up and then dropped. Clinton was highly sensitive to Yeltsin's domestic political situation and, according to his Russia adviser Strobe Talbott, was reluctant to “pile-on against Yeltsin.” Clinton was “not comfortable about hectoring” the Russians to seek a political solution “when we didn't really know what that meant.” He was reluctant to use his personal relationship with Yeltsin to push him hard on the war.⁷

Policymakers labeled the first war an “internal matter” or an “internal problem.” The selective designation of things internal must have struck the Russians as somewhat odd. Through a variety of programs—including CTR, democracy assistance, and market reform—the US government and NGOs were intensely involved in many internal issues, from dismantling nuclear weapons to training election observers to helping formulate government budgets.⁸ No one inside the US government was arguing that these issues were internal affairs and therefore the United States should not be involved. This labeling of Chechnya, however, was not challenged in any significant way inside the government. There may even have been some genuine sympathy or anxiety associated with what the Russians were confronting. In 1994 many in the US government were still trying to cope with the impact of Soviet disintegration on the nuclear weapons complex. Fears of chaos inside Russia may have driven some more-or-less positive responses by senior officials to the war. It may have also led to what is now regarded as the unfortunate analogy with the American Civil War. Boris Yeltsin seemed to Bill Clinton to be in the same situation as Abraham Lincoln.⁹ Moreover, even if one was

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not sympathetic, the alternative policy course was unclear. No one seemed to know what to do about Chechnya. As former secretary of defense William Perry noted, it was hard to figure out “how do you put a price on it?” What role should it have, and how should it weigh in against other assets?¹⁰ The answer, absent any compelling argument, was that the war was regrettable but not a policy priority.

Rhetoric During the Second War

Chechnya continued to fester after Russian troops withdrew in 1996, but it was not thrust onto the US policy agenda until October 1999 when Russian federal forces began a bombing campaign. This followed an incursion by Chechen rebels into the neighboring republic of Dagestan in August 1999, and then a series of grisly explosions that destroyed several apartment buildings in September 1999 and killed more than 300 Russians in their beds. The crime scenes had been cleared within days and, in one case, even hours. A foiled bombing in the city of Ryazan, which seemed to involve the Federal Security Service (the KGB's successor), raised serious questions as to precisely who was responsible for the other bombings. But despite the lack of hard

evidence, the Kremlin linked the incursion into Dagestan and the bombings in Russian cities and blamed the attacks on Chechen separatists. They used the incidents as the launching pad for the war—and eventually as an election strategy for Vladimir Putin.

How did US policy respond to the second war? The war was no longer seen as an internal affair. Insiders in the Clinton administration argue that they repeatedly took a hard stand against the war with the Russians, particularly at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe meeting in Istanbul in November 1999. In response to Clinton's harsh words, Yeltsin threw off his headphones and stopped listening to the translation.¹¹ No visible consequences for Russia, however, followed from US policy. To some unhappy outsiders, it looked like the administration was taking a "head-in-the-sand" approach. Some Clinton administration officials argue (post hoc) that withholding the second tranche of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan in December 1999 was indeed a response to the second war, but they apparently did not make this clear to the Russians at the time. Later in 2000, when meeting with President Clinton, Putin dismissed the substantial body of evidence of war crimes by Russian forces as "alleged, mythical atrocities." There was, according to Talbott, no response from Clinton. The talk trap, exposing inconsistencies between what Russians were saying and what they were doing, was failing. Instead, the messages from the Americans were coming across as mixed signals.¹²

In 2000 the Bush campaign picked up on this inconsistency in the Clinton administration's approach. But even Bush administration officials acknowledge that "the very critical language" used during the campaign disappeared once in office.¹³ After September 11, the war in Chechnya seemed almost to take on another character for the administration. Because Bush was so focused on getting cooperation from Putin on basing troops in Central Asia, the war was downplayed and eventually reinterpreted as part of the global war on terrorism. President Bush's endorsement of President Putin's approach to the war on terrorism speaks for itself:

First of all, President Putin has been a stalwart in the fight against terror. He understands the threat of terror, because he has lived through terror. He's seen terror firsthand and he knows the threat of terrorism.... He understands what I understand, that there won't be peace if terrorists are allowed to kill and take innocent life. And, therefore, I view President Putin as an ally, strong ally, in the war against terror. And his actions are more than—speak louder than—his words. He has been a man of action when it comes to fighting terror, and I appreciate that very much.¹⁴

In the words of one senior official, "Post-9/11, there has been a greater appreciation for the role played by foreign fighters, *mujahadeen* as they are often called, in Chechnya."¹⁵

Chechnya itself has not figured much in the several meetings between Bush and Putin. At lower levels inside the US government, however, outsiders by summer 2002 were detecting a slight, subtle, but potentially important shift in US policy toward Chechnya. The overwhelming focus for Chechnya inside the Bush administration became, according to some, how to bring the war to an end. "Getting to Point B (ending the war) is where we are at."¹⁶

There is a growing belief that the Russians' strategies and tactics in this war are detrimental to the overall war on terrorism and, specifically, that the way the Russians are fighting is a sort of failed containment that helps breed rather than eliminate extremism. Out of frustration and a sense of failure, insiders report that instead of continuing in what they view as the overwhelmingly critical approach that both the Clinton and (pre-September 11)

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Bush administration had taken, there has been a shift to approaching the Russian government on the issue of Chechnya with interest-based arguments and also more urgency. American diplomats are now spending more time explaining why it is in Russia's interest, the interest of the larger US-Russia relationship, and the region's interest that Russia stop the war.

The Dog That Did Not Bark

A number of domestic political influences that might have caused a different policy on Chechnya and the major abuses of the war have been absent: no key senior administration official pushed this issue, no CNN effect mobilized public opinion, and no strong lobbies worked Congress or the media. In general, the frame through which this war has been seen has largely been from a human rights perspective and not a security one. As a result, it has been viewed inside and outside the government as less important than other issues in the US-Russia relationship.

How a policy is formulated depends in part on who is doing the formulation. If a person in a key job were to make getting a mediated or negotiated settlement in Chechnya a central focus of US foreign policy, it would draw more attention to the issue, even if no guarantee of success. There has never been a high-level working group on Chechnya, as there has been on Northern Ireland and the Middle East. To date, no senior policy entrepreneur inside government has made this his or her issue or been assigned to it. Northern Ireland had George Mitchell. The Middle East had Dennis Ross. Bosnia had Richard Holbrook. Serbia had Madeleine Albright. Chechnya, instead, has been “owned” by a series of lower-level desk officers who may have cared passionately about what was going on but have not been able to wield the political clout inside an administration to change policy.¹⁷ The impact has been profound for lower levels of government. An official who served in both the Clinton and Bush administrations who oversaw military contact programs with the Russians explained why Chechnya eventually dropped out of the talking points his office prepared for Defense Secretary William Cohen in his meetings with Russian Defense Minister Marshall Igor Sergeev: “Frankly there

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wasn't any juice in our points anyway; we didn't have a national policy...on behavior in Chechnya.” If such a policy did not exist, it was hard to press it.¹⁸

The absence of any media impact on policy toward Chechnya is especially striking. Daily reports of carnage in Bosnia from the dozens of reporters who were holed up in the Sarajevo Holiday Inn eventually took their toll on the Clinton administration. Chechnya in 2002 is the place in Europe where people are killed every day, yet there is no CNN or *New York Times* daily coverage. For journalists, this translates into little need to cover the story.¹⁹ Aside from occasional stories in *The Washington Post* or the *Los Angeles Times*, it is all but forgotten. Not surprisingly, there is little demand for a different response. This lack of coverage has many sources, not the least of which involve the extreme danger of operating in Chechnya due to kidnappings and killings.²⁰ Another source includes the deliberate efforts by the Russian government to harass Russian and international media.²¹ Moreover, the vacuum of information on Chechnya inside Russia means that Western media are then forced themselves to drum up stories.²² This raises the bar further and requires motivation and support from the home office.

According to US government sources, pressure from outside the government has come mostly in the form of Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports and repeated, hard-hitting editorials in *The Washington Post* since Fred Hiatt became editorial editor. The information in the reports may be hard to ignore, but the recommendations to the United States advocated by HRW have not been. They have called for change in the rhetoric (use of the term *war crime*) and urged the United States to press Russia to account for the abuses through independent investigations. HRW would like accountability to be a “nonnegotiable minimum condition for enhanced political, economic, and security relationships with the Russian Federation” and for the United States to “oppose payment of any pending loan installments payable to the Russian Federation for unrestricted general budgetary spending.”²³

The “pressure” that organizations like HRW and Amnesty International generate on this issue seems to be taken as ritualistic. For example, some government officials note the “drumbeat” that the NGOs had in the initial period of the second war has not been “maintained or sustained.” This is not surprising; it would be difficult to keep it up without some receptivity inside the US government. Senior officials do meet periodically with human rights organizations on a variety of issues, but little has happened as a result. Many activists report difficulties getting agreement among human rights groups to even bring up Chechnya and that, in any case, meetings tend to be formalistic, rather than serious considerations of how to change Russian behavior or US policy.

There has been, in fact, no strong lobby for a more interventionist US policy. There has been no major effort in the United States to get the Russian actions in Chechnya classified as genocide.²⁴ The groups most likely to wage that sort of policy battle are not necessarily capable of doing it; the American Committee for Peace in Chechnya is made up of a handful of eminent people, but has only one full-time staff person and no serious reach.²⁵ Moreover, despite similar goals, NGOs working on democracy in Russia and human rights groups monitoring abuses in Russia have had almost no communication with one another. Human rights organizations have been consumed with collecting and disseminating information on Russian atrocities and abuses in Chechnya. Despite the increasingly negative consequences of the war for a variety of Russian institutions—from elections to the media—democracy assistance groups do not generally follow their work and have not viewed communication or coordination as central to their mission.²⁶ The lack of coordination has meant that one potentially important effort to influence US policy has been undeveloped.

Because human rights groups tend to be so underfunded and understaffed, they run into serious obstacles, even when they want to share information in a timely way. For example, Physicians for Human Rights collected information

on Chechnya for their report *Endless Brutality* in February and March 2000, but the findings were not published until May 2001, and the publication was not distributed until November 2001. Other factors limit their impact as well: groups that do release information designed to pressure policymakers to use the words *war crimes* in reference to Chechnya may refrain from mounting larger campaigns to stop the war for fear of being perceived as "political." As human rights groups, they are "not for peace, per se."²⁷

The lack of strong lobbies and press coverage has had an impact on congressional pressure. There has been almost none. Aside from a few hearings in the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and condemnation early in the war, Congress has never taken this issue seriously and never forced the White House to clarify or change its position. In contrast with, for example, cooperative threat reduction where senators Nunn and Lugar shaped policy, Chechnya has had no one leading the charge. In the Bush administration the war has continued and, if anything, congressional heat has lessened. As one staffer observed, "The people that used to take meetings on the issue of Chechnya two years ago just don't anymore."²⁸ Not surprisingly, nearly three years into the second war on Chechnya, US policy remains largely rhetorical.

Influencing Support for Democracy in Russia

The political landscape of Russia has changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is no longer one-party rule. Numerous elections have taken place and are regularly monitored by domestic groups. Civic advocacy organizations, independent trade unions, and business associations have all developed. Human rights organizations are viewed positively by a large majority of the population. Russians are free to travel abroad (if they can afford it). Russia's constitution has institutionalized rights, and the government has recently embarked on judicial reform.

Russia is not, however, a liberal democracy. In summer 2002, slightly more Russians think "authoritarian rule is preferable to a democratic form of government" than think that "democracy is always the preferred form of governance."²⁹ The political system lacks many of the supporting institutions that make democracies robust. Russia's political party system, civil society, and the rule of law are weak and underdeveloped. Authorities, both at the national and regional level, have unchecked power. Crime and corruption are rampant. Under President Yeltsin, media outlets became increasingly hostage to oligarchic business interests, and under President Putin media outlets have been targeted by the state. Critical media on a range of issues, including the war in Chechnya, nuclear waste importation, and the presidential administration, do not exist in Russia in 2002. Since 1999 and Putin's rise to power, not only numerous journalists but also environmentalists, human rights activists, students, and academics—Russians as well as Americans and Europeans—have

been investigated, intimidated, interrogated, jailed, accused of treason, or beaten by authorities. Drawing on monitoring reports, democracy and human rights activists in Russia maintain there has been a stark increase in threats and abuses in the last several years.³⁰

From the first Bush administration, developing as a cornerstone of the Clinton administration and continuing in the current Bush administration, the United States government has supported the development of democratic institutions in Russia.³¹ Policy has been driven by the belief that the growth and consolidation of democracy in Russia is in the US national interest. According to Ambassador William Taylor, the coordinator for assistance to Russia, "We observe that stability and even security in Europe and in the world is enhanced if Russia and others are governed more democratically. Security, because of the kind of general tendency for democracies not to fight each other, and stability, because democracy gives an outlet to people expressing their frustrations or support...it is a more stable arrangement than the alternative, and they've had some opportunity to test the alternative."³²

The lack of strong lobbies and press coverage has had an impact on congressional pressure. There has been almost none.

Beyond rhetorical support for the democratic transition in Russia, the US government has spent several hundred million dollars since 1992 supporting and developing democratic institutions.³³ This money has gone mainly to support Western nongovernmental groups working in Russia alongside local activists. US-based NGOs have consulted with political parties and electoral commissions. They have helped professionalize media outlets that were once exclusively state run, attempted to improve the legal and organizational infrastructure of the media, provided information technology to networks of environmental groups and human rights monitors, and supported the creation of independent trade unions. Progress on many of these issues and across many of these sectors has been incremental at best, but the policy has been guided by the idea of supporting people "who are trying to make changes in the direction that we would like to see."³⁴

In the last several years, democracy assistance has shifted from supporting the Russian government to civil society. On coming into power, the Bush administration reviewed all aspects of US-Russia policy and shifted its emphasis in assistance to the development of civil society and support for

democracy at the grassroots level. (Work with entrepreneurs and healthcare was also emphasized.)³⁵

That said, neither the rhetoric of senior administration officials nor the amounts of money allocated for democracy assistance has ever been driven principally by conditions on the ground such as threats to democracy or demand from or capacity in civil society. In fact, as abuses have increased, the amount of money for assistance stayed flat or even decreased. If democracy is considered a national security issue, why was this the case? Why has Russia's extremely unfinished political transition troubled so few? Many of the same domestic political influences shaping US policy toward Chechnya affect US support for democracy in Russia. Democracy as an issue, like Chechnya, has had intense competition on the policy agenda and, as a priority, lies below other aspects of US engagement with Russia. Also like the case of Chechnya, there are a number of missing factors that might have altered the course of policy. Administrations have been relatively free to position this issue lower down on the policy agenda.

Competing Policy Agendas

Domestic political influences on the US policy of democracy promotion—not just to Russia, but worldwide—are layered and subject to many conflicting policy priorities. While policymakers argue that Russian democracy and American national security are intertwined, their actions suggest that few think this link is especially binding while several other influences are much more powerful.

Trade coalitions, for example, have a long history of downplaying democracy and human rights, generally viewing these issues as a threat to profits, yet they exert strong influence on policy. Overall the business community has had an extremely positive view of President Putin and has emphasized progress on corporate governance. Problems concerning democracy and human rights tend to be viewed as having little or no relevance to business. Many who have business interests in Russia do not make the connection that how leaders are chosen can matter for business. They do not see the issue of freedom of the media as related to the fight against corruption. In other words, they view Russia's economic transition as being distinct and disconnected from Russia's political transition.

As US energy companies play a more active role in Russia, some experts predict this dynamic could increase. In the words of one observer, "Most [companies that do business in Russia] want rule of law, but some would be satisfied with a separate rule of law for themselves; for example, production sharing agreements (PSAs). They want their own rule of law and don't much care how everyone else is treated."³⁶

Competition in policy priorities arises also from the different interpretations of national security. Democracy in Russia is seldom viewed as a security issue, and when it is, it is seen by many policymakers as a third-order security issue. This prioritization is reflected in the relatively small amount of money allocated to democracy work. As one former Clinton administration official observed, "Sometimes you felt that certain policymakers held their noses and gave [democracy assistance] money." The democracy-security link remains even more of a rhetorical window dressing in the Bush administration than a part of a coherent strategy.³⁷

The democracy account has never been large and never remotely commanded the place of importance that work on nonproliferation or the destruction of WMD has. Certification for continued congressional funding of CTR rests on Russia's human rights compliance, as well as other issues. However, linking Russia's human rights record to continued funding for CTR has been attempted but has never received widespread support from congressional members.³⁸ Technically, based on the human rights clause, there are grounds

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for noncertification. As part of their annual report on human rights in Russia, the Moscow Helsinki Group reports that there are several areas of human rights law in which the Russian government has made no attempt at being compliant with international standards.³⁹

Similarly, the current national security agenda has mainly meant that the democracy and human rights problems of coalition partners such as Russia have been de-emphasized in the name of fighting terrorism. Democracy promotion as a policy has been constrained by high-level US government support for members of the Russian government, who themselves have deeply mixed records on democracy and human rights.

Inconsistencies in Supporting Democracy-Building in Russia

Within the US government, policy on democracy in Russia has long been shaped by a central contradiction between a high-level policy, focused on cooperation and not confrontation, and a lower-level policy on wanting compliance with democracy and human rights norms. How do we cooperate with Russia when Russia has serious democracy and human rights problems? Or in

the words of one democracy advocate, can US policy “walk and chew gum at the same time”?⁴⁰

Consistency, in fact, has proven extremely difficult to maintain. President Clinton's chief adviser on Russia policy, Strobe Talbott, makes the argument that Clinton's close relationship with Yeltsin had the effect of preventing Washington from pursuing a tougher policy toward Moscow in sensitive areas such as Russia's shaky democratic transition. Clinton's main strategy for keeping Russia “on track” was to lend as much support to Yeltsin as possible. Somewhere along the way, Yeltsin became the frame for democracy in Russia for Clinton instead of the cast of thousands toiling away and building democratic institutions in Russia, often in opposition to Yeltsin, and some of whom were indirectly supported by US government funds. Clinton became convinced that to not support Yeltsin was to not support democracy.⁴¹ Politics were highly personal for Clinton, and Yeltsin was his man. The result was that he seemed to receive or pay attention to a highly sanitized version of events: as long as Russia held elections, he believed it was on the right track, as if this

The current national security agenda has mainly meant that the democracy and human rights problems of coalition partners such as Russia have been de-emphasized in the name of fighting terrorism.

were definitive proof that Russia's main political players accepted democratic rules of the game. This belief belied significant evidence to the contrary.⁴²

Clinton was by no means alone in applauding deeply problematic elections as signs of a state's commitment to democracy, and Russia, of course, is not the only place this occurs.⁴³ Unnuanced, laudatory statements from the White House and other officials hailing a series of elections in Russia as free and fair despite numerous serious irregularities, however, had unintended consequences for US efforts to promote democratic institutions. To Russian activists on the ground it looked at times as if they were cheering the outcome—one that the Americans favored—despite the enormous problems with the process. To officials in the Kremlin, the Americans were interested in what happened in

Russia but not absorbed by the details. This was especially true in 1996; better to have Yeltsin elected than someone else—namely Gennady Zyuganov, the communist candidate. Some argue, however, that this selective attention to detail weakened the work the US government was funding; Russian decision makers learned precisely what the international community would accept as passing for democracy.

In the Bush administration, consistency has been especially compromised. Support for President Putin predates the September 11 attack, but the war on terrorism has pushed issues related to democracy and human rights way down the agenda. Bush administration officials acknowledge the different and very positive rhetoric with regard to Russia post-September 11, and agree that the tendency to downplay threats and abuses to democracy has been exacerbated.⁴⁴ This has been noticed outside Washington as well: Russian activists feel frustrated and isolated by what they view as the close relationship between the president of the Russian Federation and the president of the United States and the lack of condemnation by the US government for gross violations of human rights that regularly occur in Russia. They take some comfort that HRW and *The Washington Post* continue to talk about violations, but ultimately they are looking to President Bush to speak out on these issues.⁴⁵

The policy of democracy assistance to Russia has also been constrained by the way programs and their impact have been portrayed to policy audiences in the United States. Clearly, the Russian context has been a difficult one in which to promote the development of democratic institutions. Nevertheless, officials from various administrations, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the NGOs receiving US government funds have tended to oversell the impact that democracy assistance plays in political transitions. They have helped create expectations that can never be met and that clash awkwardly with the actual pace of what, in fact, are multiple transitions involving the Russian state and society as well as economic, political, and security institutions. Clinton as well as Bush administration officials, staffers at USAID, and the NGOs themselves have tended to talk mainly about “success stories”: the 65,000 NGOs that have developed in post-Soviet Russia, the multiparty system, the regular elections, the millions of citizens who turn out to vote. They have tended not to talk about the grittier details: that few of these NGOs actually advocate on behalf of others or that many have been harassed by the government, that political parties are widely believed to be the most corrupt and least trusted institutions in Russia, or that there are numerous problems with elections. They (correctly) have feared losing funding from a hostile Congress if they discuss openly the difficulties associated with transitions from communism and the rather more complicated, and even gloomy, reality of institutions in Russia.⁴⁶

Partly in response to the “good news,” there has been a backlash in policy circles where critics argue that assistance is a waste of money and that it can even be dangerous. In an article that significantly influenced the policy debate, Fareed Zakaria, then managing editor of *Foreign Affairs*, implied that assistance helped promote what he labeled “illiberal democracy,” where elections occur but rulers ignore constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.⁴⁷ Russia-watchers’ criticisms of assistance became increasingly emphatic following, among other manifestations of arbitrariness, Yeltsin’s firing of several prime ministers, the second war in Chechnya, and money-laundering scandals that appeared to involve both Western assistance and the Kremlin.⁴⁸ Commentary on assistance was even briefly fodder in the 2000 US presidential campaign: the “who lost Russia” debate was one of the few foreign policy topics mentioned. Republicans in Congress who excoriated the Clinton administration for just about everything bad that occurred in Russia fed the debate.⁴⁹

Influences on the Amount of Assistance

Whatever critics or supporters say, budgets for democracy assistance in Russia have never been especially large relative to what Russia could sustain or even compared to what the US government has supported elsewhere. Those amounts have also not been determined by policy debates.

From 1992 to 1996, USAID spent the majority of its Freedom Support Act budget in Russia on market reform, while at times allocating as little as 6 percent for democracy assistance. Budgets for democracy assistance—that is, for work with political parties, NGOs, trade unions, and media—have stayed flat for the last several years at about \$16 million a year. Policymakers offer various explanations for the low amounts of democracy assistance in the early years after the collapse of the Soviet Union (such as, there was little “capacity” to absorb the funds or the work of Western groups). While these considerations were no doubt relevant, they do not account for later figures, which decreased even as capacity increased. Nor do they explain why so much more money was allocated to market reform at a time when capacity in the economic sector was perhaps even more limited. In contrast to many pronouncements, particularly in the United States, actual policies suggested that markets were a higher priority and institutions associated with democracy were, as a whole, a much lower priority.⁵⁰

Why are budgets flat if capacity has increased and threats to these institutions have increased? Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that the handful of US NGOs that work on democracy in Russia have played a weak role in raising the inconsistencies of various administrations’ policies with the public, or in advocating for dramatically increased budgets from Congress. Some organizations actively shun publicity and this may have an impact on their finances.⁵¹ In contrast with human rights groups in the United States, most organizations that work on democracy assistance in Russia receive the bulk of

their funding from the US government. This situation has made democracy groups reluctant, and mostly silent, critics of government policy. Instead, they are grateful for whatever money comes their way from Congress. Absent their voice, however, administrations have encountered few domestic influences urging more money or a change in priorities.

Within Congress, there are key supporters of democracy assistance to Russia who argue that if we want to see a democratic political subculture take root in Russia, it will require more than roughly 5 percent of the foreign aid budget to Russia. Congressman Tom Lantos has sponsored H.R. 2121, "the Russian Democracy Act of 2002," calling for \$50 million more in assistance. The politics of turning it from an authorization into an appropriation will be a good test for democracy advocates trying to influence policy outcomes. Due to come before the Senate sometime in fall 2002, Senate staffers are not optimistic about the outcome.⁵²

Most members of Congress, however, are driven not by firsthand experience or detailed interest but by headlines: whether it is atrocities in Chechnya or a

If assistance is ever going to increase, there will need to be a media campaign driving the effort.

government crackdown on TV in Russia. Therefore, the lack of media coverage of Russia in general in the US media may also be having an impact on congressional support for democracy work. Media, according to US government officials, is "what most influences [congressional] view[s] of Russia and what we should or shouldn't be doing. It's not...long-term trends of growth in civil society or the long-term attitudinal changes among the young generation" or the issues often addressed by the policy community.⁵³ In other words, if assistance is ever going to increase, there will need to be a media campaign driving the effort.

Domestic Political Influence and Reducing Threats From WMD

If US policies on Chechnya and democracy assistance have been shaped by the absence of domestic political forces, the early period of US support for the reduction of threats from WMD is a study in contrast: it is about how to influence Congress and get ideas implemented. And while the domestic politics of CTR have been considered extensively elsewhere, the purpose here is to focus on two particular elements that capture the overall domes-

tic influences shaping the program; that is, the politics of budgets and the politics of certification.⁵⁴

The 1991 CTR Act as a foreign policy represented a distinctly new approach to enhancing security known as “defense by other means.”⁵⁵ Threat reduction was driven initially by concerns that authorities in newly emerging states would lose control of WMD and materials associated with WMD as the Soviet Union collapsed. The risk to US national security was viewed as urgent and important.⁵⁶ What became known as *cooperative threat reduction* was based on the notion that US national security would be enhanced by helping Russia destroy, secure, reduce, protect, and convert their Cold War legacy.

Since the passage of the Nunn-Lugar Amendment to the Defense Appropriations Bill in 1991, threat reduction efforts have developed and expanded into a three-agency affair (to include, in addition to the Pentagon, the departments of Energy and State) to aid Russian compliance with its

A handful of individuals inside and outside government were able to take an urgent issue and formulate a policy response to it, push hard for action, and get movement.

treaty obligations and secure weapons and materials.⁵⁷ Threat reduction assistance has developed into a series of nonproliferation programs designed to secure and protect nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in the former Soviet states; prevent the diversion of scientific expertise to rogue states; increase bilateral military cooperation and transparency in the weapons reduction process; and convert military sites into facilities with civilian applications. About \$8.5 billion has been earmarked for threat reduction assistance through FY 2003. Since 1991 about \$2.4 billion of this has actually been spent on CTR.⁵⁸

Policy Entrepreneurs and Congress

The early phase of CTR is an excellent case study in policy entrepreneurs influencing government behavior through Congress. A handful of individuals inside and outside government were able to take an urgent issue and formu-

late a policy response to it, push hard for action, and get movement. This is a stark contrast with other cases considered in this report, and it is important to understand the combination of circumstances that sets it apart. Boiled down, they involve some contingency but also good information in the hands of concerned people, a plausible and possible solution that had bipartisan support and weak counterarguments by opponents.

The concept of threat reduction was introduced in two monographs produced by the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University and part of a larger working group funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York involving policy analysts and scientists from Stanford University's Center for International Security and Arms Control (CISAC) and the Brookings Institution.⁵⁹ In what has been described as a "chance encounter," Ashton Carter, William Perry, David Hamburg, and John Steinbrunner briefed Senators Nunn and Lugar on the "Post-Cold War Reconstruction Project." The result: an extremely rare case of ideas moving "in real time into legislation."⁶⁰

Success in this case lies partly in congressional politics. A bipartisan effort in the US Congress to fund \$1 billion in humanitarian aid had recently failed. One of the architects of the effort, Senator Nunn, continued to search for ways to engage the revolutionary situation in what would soon be the Russian Federation. In their briefing, Carter mentioned that he and his colleagues were beginning to think about what the impact of a dissolving nuclear superpower meant for US national security. As Carter put it ten years later, there was the hope and belief that "in the new world, our common security interests outweigh[ed] our discrepant interests."⁶¹ Senator Nunn seized upon the concept and the problems inherent in the nuclear aspects.

Because of the congressional origins of this program, however, it was not fully embraced by the parts of the government that had the task of implementation. According to some sources, the Cheney Pentagon did everything to avoid executing these programs in 1991-92. Resistance went beyond ownership of the program to ideological as well as fiscal aspects. Ideologically, opponents, including those in Congress, were concerned that the Russians were benefiting more from dismantlement than the Americans. Those who opposed it thought of it as assistance for the very people and the very place against which the United States had fought for decades.⁶² As one congressman stated in 1996, "Does it make sense for us to subsidize the Soviet Union to the tune of some \$300 million?"⁶³

Fiscally, the structure of early funding inhibited its development. CTR was initially managed as a "transfer authority" rather than as an appropriation. This meant that there was no specific line item for the program in the defense budget. Instead, budget planners at the Pentagon were given the

task of culling (or cutting) money from other programs such as “readiness, procurement, pensions, whatever.” Understandably, the Pentagon was slow to move since it meant taking money from other programs: “for every dollar they spent on Nunn-Lugar, it was a dollar that wasn’t getting spent on something else for which it had been requested and appropriated.”⁶⁴ Nunn-Lugar received an actual appropriation in 1993.

By that time, the input of policy entrepreneurs was institutionalized: the architects of the program moved into senior policy positions in the Clinton administration with William Perry as first the deputy secretary of defense and then as the secretary of defense and Ashton Carter as assistant secretary of defense. Stewardship of these programs was institutionalized with a separate office to oversee the program. The impact of the president on CTR was felt also in the early years and was primarily centered around an important foreign policy goal of the first Clinton administration: getting Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to denuclearize.⁶⁵

Explaining Flat Budgets

Beyond the initiation and early stewardship of the program, the input of experts has been limited, however. This is evident from flat CTR budgets. Among the challenges that Russia’s weapons complex poses, perhaps none strikes as much fear as the possible theft of fissile materials for use in a bomb by terrorists and other forms of nuclear trafficking. If both influential members of Congress and administrations viewed the cooperative threat reduction program as directly addressing these issues and therefore vital to US national security, why didn’t the budgets go up?⁶⁶ Why—regardless of who is secretary of defense or what party is in the White House—has CTR proper; that is, the Pentagon part of threat reduction work, stayed level at slightly over \$400 million a year for more than a decade?⁶⁷ And why, after the initial influence of outside experts, have they played so small a role in the life of the program?⁶⁸

The number \$400 million is especially striking given that it was originally arrived at arbitrarily or with, in the words of someone who worked closely on the program, “no logic.” The Aspen-Nunn initiative on humanitarian aid to Russia had started out at \$1 billion. When it failed in Congress, the senators proposed cutting the budget in half for this new initiative focused on WMD, and it got cut down from there.

The first year it was 400 simply because it was slightly less than 500, which was half of a billion. The second year it was 400 because it was 400 the first year. The third year it was 400 because no one could think of anything better. We knew we were going to take it seriously but none of the agreements had been worked out, which meant that no one had any idea

how this money was really going to be spent, so you had no way of doing a bottom-up budget, a requirements-based budget, and so [we thought] we'll try it at the politically manageable number. And it wasn't until 1994 (FY 1995) that the program had matured enough that you could derive requirements from what had been a collection of implementing agreements and promises and initial contracts and feasibility studies...[and get] a sense of what you thought you could effectively execute in the next year. But by then, you already had a backlog of the two years of transfer authority and then a year's worth of appropriations.⁶⁹

By 1994 the perception had taken hold in the comptroller's office and in congressional offices that a "magic political number" existed. "Even if we were developing a requirements-based budget for more [money], there was always pressure not to grow. That comes from a traditional government budgeting [culture] that flat programs are happy programs. That shows a stable, well-managed program."⁷⁰

Effective work in Russia...is highly dependent on developing and maintaining personal relations. Programs that have high staff turnover suffer as a result.

Budgets for CTR stayed at \$400 million for reasons also having to do with Russian bureaucratic politics. The Russian absorption capacity in defense-related programs has been and continues to be constrained by a "funnel system" that is highly restrictive of who in Russia is authorized to negotiate contracts with Americans on security issues. These gatekeepers operate from orders and an organizational culture that restricts, not encourages, contact. The procedures involved for making contact with colleagues at the Ministry of Defense or the Ministry of Atomic Energy have been described as the equivalent of trying to get past a strict parent in order to pick up your date. Sometimes you do not make it through; sometimes your date does not even know you are trying to get in; and sometimes, alas, your date has no interest in you. Moreover, those who are authorized to have contact with Americans on these issues are not necessarily good program managers or especially interested in seeing the programs go forward.⁷¹

In the implementation of these programs, of course, American organizational cultures may also inhibit growth in budgets. The Russians authorized to work

with Americans are confronted by a constantly changing sea of American faces: as part of an early deal to get CTR funded, the bulk of money goes to American contractors. Inefficiencies sometimes result, however. For example, there is high turnover of staff on the implementation side that has resulted in "repeating mistakes." The American contractors on the ground actually doing the dismantlement work change jobs regularly. Effective work in Russia, however, is highly dependent on developing and maintaining personal relations. Programs that have high staff turnover suffer as a result.⁷²

After September 11, some experts argue the DoD programs acquired a "new look." Instead of portraying the programs in terms of disarmament, they were cast as nonproliferation efforts. One observer notes, "In their programmatic priorities, preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction moved to the top of the list. ...compared to the delivery systems destruction component [which was a core part of the original program]. It's hard to argue that however important it is to blow up an SS18 silo, that it is a nonproliferation mission—it's really a disarmament mission.... What's interesting is that CTR itself

...this delay in certification is viewed as harming US national security interests, because it stops work on new efforts to keep materials associated with WMD from leaking from Russia.

changed its own rhetoric about how it talks about the program to enhance the nonproliferation side of the mission."⁷³ This may in part be driven not only by mandates in the post-September 11 political context but also by the antipathy that the Bush administration has for arms control. In short, better for the survival of the program to have CTR associated with nonproliferation than with arms control.⁷⁴ One clear result of September 11 has been the expansion and reprioritization of biological weapons work. Ironically, it is related to the biological (and chemical) weapons programs, however, that CTR has encountered renewed trouble with Congress.

The Battle of Certification

Over the years, CTR has faced a myriad of challenges, but the fiercest battle is as yet unfolding and has come from the executive branch. As such, it represents a good example of domestic constraints on foreign policy. In 2002 the Bush administration for the first time held up the annual certification

process.⁷⁵ Every year the president, through the secretary of state, is required to certify that the Russians are “committed” to complying with arms control.⁷⁶ The language for certification stipulates that the Russians are attempting compliance, but not that they are actually in compliance. In spring 2002 the State Department declined to certify because of concerns about compliance with the chemical and biological weapons treaties. Instead, the Bush administration asked Congress for permission to sign a waiver, which at the time was not authorized in the law. Some explain what then turned into a tug of war between Congress and the administration as an attempt to destroy the program. The battle lines are between those inside the Bush administration—along with some members of the intelligence community who want the program stopped—and others in the administration, along with some powerful members of Congress who want it to continue.⁷⁷

The process of certification provides insight into the many different points at which the program could have been derailed over the last ten years, and where threats to the program continue to lurk.⁷⁸ Certification is ultimately based on “political judgment, not a technical determination.”⁷⁹ The certification review begins at the staff level inside the State Department with members of the intelligence community reviewing the previous year’s certification and assessing changes. The one issue that has been repeatedly debated over the years has been evidence of commitment to comply with arms control. How analysts attribute Russian intent has played a large role in certification. According to a former official who participated in these reviews in the Clinton administration, the team would look at “a whole series of official statements—Yeltsin, defense ministers, foreign ministers, saying that ‘yes, Russia is committed to comply with START, with CWC [the Chemical Weapons Convention], with BWC [the Biological Weapons Convention].” In contrast with these official statements, analysts also had before them what this former participant in the process referred to as “murky intelligence reports, none of them ever provable, without on-the-ground inspection.” These reports outlined clandestine production and continued (extra-legal) experimentation with chemical and biological weapons. How these reports were interpreted in 2002 affected the certification process:

Every year, you had to make a balance: okay, we’re not judging actual compliance. We’re judging commitment to comply, and if you’re judging commitment to comply, do you believe official statements or do you believe possible actions by individuals...? Every year in the Clinton administration, we said well, if you’re judging national commitment to comply, the official statements have more weight, but it’s a close call. For eight years, we were able to certify.... In spring 2002, the staff starts to do its thing again and all of a sudden these murky intelligence reports begin to carry a lot more weight with the new team.⁸⁰

To arms control advocates, this delay in certification is viewed as harming US national security interests, because it stops work on new efforts to keep materials associated with WMD from leaking from Russia.

Chief among the concerns of the Bush administration were Russia's refusal to share strains of anthrax that had been developed by Russian scientists and the continued refusal to share information on Soviet biological and chemical weapons programs, including one possibly involving smallpox.⁸¹ In the words of Secretary Powell, "I didn't have enough information to form the basis of a certification."⁸² Initially, the administration asked Congress for a permanent national security interest waiver for CTR certification requirements. Congress in summer 2002 began debating whether the waiver should be annual, in which case there would be some jeopardy of a work stoppage every year for as long as six months, or a continual one, in which certification ceases.

This battle emerged in early April 2002 and played out precisely as the Moscow Treaty—involving the dismantlement of thousands of Russian

Russia's relationship with Iran and Iraq has been a persistent and serious irritant in the US-Russia relationship in the post-Cold War era.

strategic weapons over the next decade—was signed in May 2002. In other words, the Bush administration signed a treaty with the Russians "based on so much trust in the future" at the same time the administration effectively said they could not certify that the Russians were committed to comply with arms control.⁸³ Without certification or a waiver, there is no authorization for new contracts or the extension of old contracts. In August 2002 the administration signed the temporary waiver it was granted by Congress freeing up money until October 2002, at which time the future of the program will again be debated.⁸⁴

The stalemate has led to bitter exchanges in Congress between Senator Lugar and Secretary Powell, among others, and reveals the degree to which the issue of who benefits more from dismantlement, Russia or the United States, continues to shape the political discussion. Exasperated, Senator Lugar proclaimed to Secretary Powell, "Why in the world you ever put yourselves in this predicament as an administration, I don't know." This must be a "worker bee" causing a "bureaucratic flailing." Lugar has urged

the president to “waive the whole business and get on with the destruction of these materials.” Powell responded, “The Russians have been part of the problem in terms of giving us what we need to know.” But then he conceded, “The reason I couldn’t certify is because Congress put a certification requirement on me that I could not meet with respect to Russian activities.... I was forced into a situation. I implore the Congress to not waste any more time on this. Give us a permanent waiver.” Lugar’s retort is stunning in what it reveals about past certification, and also as an indication that he sensed something else driving the battle in 2002. His reply to Powell was, “For the 10 years since the Nunn-Lugar Act...somehow or other we’ve been able to waive things every year.” What is different in 2002? According to some, the intelligence is no more concrete. Yet, for certain people in the administration, “intelligence reports have more value, official statements have less.” This stalemate perhaps also indicates that in certain parts of the US government and Congress, there may be less trust of the Russian government and increasing concern about it precisely as the executive branch has forged close relations with President Putin. The domestic political battle over this program is likely only to increase. The pitch of the battle will likely be determined by how open Russia is to inspections of its weapons facilities but also by Russia’s relations with countries such as Iran and Iraq.

US Domestic Politics and Russia’s Relations With Iran and Iraq

Russia’s relationship with Iran and Iraq has been a persistent and serious irritant in the US-Russia relationship in the post-Cold War era. Although the reasons for Russian engagement with these two states are different, they share similarities in terms of US strategic concerns: Iran and Iraq are the Persian Gulf States with which the United States has the worst relations and Russia has had the best; both threaten our allies in the region, especially Israel but also other Arab states; both are considered sponsors of terrorism; and both have made efforts to acquire WMD.

The contours of the US policy goals are different. With Iran, the US policy is mainly geared at trying to get the Russians to stop assistance to Iran’s nuclear energy program and what looks to be a dangerous technical leap in their ability to acquire nuclear weapons. With Iraq, American policymakers are focused on trying to make sure that Russia does not become an obstacle to policy designed to pressure Saddam Hussein and, ultimately, to remove him from power.

US Efforts and Russian Resistance on Iran

Russia’s support for the Iranian nuclear program “was always one of the three top issues” in the US-Russia relationship.⁸⁵ The focus of concern is the ongoing, major (\$840 million) commercial deal between Minatom and

Iran to build a nuclear reactor at Bushehr on the eastern banks of the Persian Gulf. Currently, there are more than 1,000 Russian engineers and technicians working at Bushehr. Russian policymakers insist they are opposed to helping Iran acquire nuclear weapons capabilities and that the plant will not produce weapons-grade nuclear materials. They accuse the United States of holding them to a double standard, pointing to the light water reactor the US government is currently building in North Korea. The Bushehr arrangement, Putin insists, is purely economic; indeed, the Russian machine parts and technological sectors were among the hardest hit after the Soviet collapse, and neither the United States nor Europe are viable markets for them. Minatom has turned to Iran for income. Some Russian experts estimate that as many as 300 Russian enterprises benefit commercially from the Bushehr project and that it has produced 20,000 jobs.⁸⁶

While this had been a constant issue in the Clinton administration, it has played a smaller role in the first year of the Bush administration; the entire Russia portfolio was being reviewed and many areas were put on hold as

Russia's Iranian connection could lead some Americans to the perception that Russia is much more of an enemy than a friend.

the administration formulated its new approach. The Iranian connection has steadily risen in 2002 in the security agenda for the Bush administration. In his State of the Union address in January 2002, Iran's (and Iraq's) efforts at acquiring WMD made it part of the "axis of evil." By summer 2002 a large delegation led by Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham was (again) urging the Russians to stop the Iranian deal and decline further expansion of nuclear cooperation with Iran. Perhaps this has been driven in part by a shift in the US policy on Iran in the last several months. With evidence of support for Hezbollah and arms shipments from Iran to the Palestinians, the administration has largely pulled back from support for "reformers" inside Iran and is essentially calling on Iranians to overthrow the mullahs.⁸⁷ Whatever the source of US policy toward Iran, US efforts so far have yielded no change on Russia's work in Bushehr.⁸⁸ The Putin administration is seriously considering expanded work in Iran, which would involve building five additional reactors, and bringing in somewhere between \$6 billion and \$10 billion through 2012. US experts worry that this development will increase the plausibility and rationale for Iran to develop its own fuel-cycle capabilities.

Inside and outside the Bush administration, experts argue that plutonium produced by the fuel rods and the uranium conversion facility at the plant is capable of producing fissile material for nuclear weapons.⁸⁹ Others are concerned that the nuclear know-how gained through the Russians' work with the Iranians at Bushehr could have a military application. As a CIA official explained, "This project will not directly support a weapons effort, but it affords Iran broad access to Russia's nuclear industry. Russian entities are interacting with Iranian nuclear research centers on a wide variety of activities."⁹⁰ Experts fear also that Russian support for Iran's WMD ambitions may extend far beyond Bushehr and include the transfer of ballistic missile technology and nuclear know-how. Robert J. Einhorn and Gary Samore characterize Bushehr as "only the tip of the iceberg."⁹¹ There are worries over illicit transactions between rouge elements within Minatom and Iranian officials, including money-laundering schemes to front companies in Moldova and Armenia.

Other Iranian capabilities worry policymakers. Iran has plans to develop a Shahab-3 missile that could reach targets in Europe and the Middle East and could carry a nuclear or biological warhead. US intelligence agencies argue that Russia has been clandestinely involved in the Iranian conventional weapons programs. The Russians deny involvement. In an attempt to convince the Russians, US policymakers have shared intelligence about Russian activities, which not only compromised sources but also effectively let the Russians know that the Americans knew they were lying. Russian denials remain a stumbling block.

The Influence of Fear and Lobbies

Latent within Russia's work on the Iranian nuclear program lurks a threat to the dominant US theme of trying to integrate Russia into the Euro-Atlantic community. Russia's Iranian connection could lead some Americans to the perception that Russia is much more of an enemy than a friend. If Russia is proliferating technology related to WMD, does it make sense to be working on integration with Russia? Equally distressing, does the Russian government have firm control over the type of technology and expertise that is being passed to the Iranians, and are officials choosing not to exercise this control? Or do they simply not have control over what is going on? How far does institutional incapacity extend in Russia?⁹²

To date, the Iranian factor has not overwhelmed US Russia policy. On Russia's relations with Iran, the White House has had a clearer role in setting policy than in the other cases addressed in this report, although congressional politics put definite limits not only on what any administration can do but also on how large a role the Iranian connection should play. Administration policy has been influenced by a combination of those working nonproliferation issues inside the National Security Council, the State Department, the Department of Energy, and those primarily responsible for Russia.⁹³ A Clinton White House whose

primary target was helping Boris Yeltsin stay afloat was constrained, however, in the degree to which it could “put really big carrots and sticks on the table.” As Einhorn observed, “In terms of big sticks, we were never prepared to jeopardize Russian reform or Russian economic recovery by lowering the boom with IMF programs. On the carrot side, what we were offering was stuff that looked like two birds in the bush. Even less, even one bird in the bush, for one bird in the hand, and it’s a no-brainer for them.”⁹⁴ The Bush administration has made a similar argument: “The real question they need to consider eventually is [whether this is] penny-wise and pound-foolish. Do they want to do business with us or do business with Iran?”⁹⁵ In the post-September 11 era, the Bush administration faces an additional disquieting dimension. Will Russia’s policy with Iran develop into a deal-breaker in the war against terrorism? Or does it continue to be an area in which the United States and Russia simply disagree? More optimistically, can the closer post-September 11 relationship help lead to a common approach to the problem?

White House policy on Iran has been fairly intensely constrained by Congress. Specifically, Israeli lobbies and the American Jewish lobby—the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)—followed closely Iran’s aspiration to acquire nuclear capabilities. According to a former Clinton administration official, “Israel was understandably concerned about Iran’s programs. They shared with us lots of sensitive intelligence about what Russia was doing with Iran, but they knew that they didn’t have the clout with Russia to get Russia to turn it off based on their own lobbying. They figured that the best and most successful effort was to work through us, getting us concerned and motivated to go to the Russians and tell them to stop. And that’s what they did—and they did that directly with executive branch people and they did it indirectly by working with AIPAC and lobbying the Hill—and they did that very, very successfully.”⁹⁶ At different times, both have pushed Congress and senior officials in the administration to crack down on Russian support for the Iranian WMD program.

In addition to especially effective lobbying techniques, the key to this policy dynamic revolves around antipathy in Congress, specifically for Iran. According to Einhorn, “Any piece of legislation that was going to penalize Iran or those who support[ed] Iran [was] going to be pretty popular.”⁹⁷ A 1995 push by congressional Republicans (led by Representative Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania, then chairman of the House Armed Services Committee’s subcommittee on military research and development) to change the CIA’s assessment of the Iranian threat to a much more dire reading coincided with “a concerted campaign by the Republican-dominated Congress, supported by Israel” to convince the administration that Russia was in fact supplying sensitive material to Iran.⁹⁸ Weldon calls it “the largest turnaround ever in the history of the [intelligence] agency.”⁹⁹

Because of the impact of these lobbying efforts, congressional pressures were a much stronger factor driving US policy than in the cases of either Chechnya or

democracy assistance. If the Clinton administration initially favored a “cooperative” arrangement working with the Russians to stop technology transfers, Congress wanted sanctions. The information the Israelis provided Congress was fueling these demands: “Israel had intelligence that Russian missile experts were traveling to Tehran and giving advice to the Iranians.” According to Israeli intelligence officials, the Clinton administration officials were reluctant to do anything with the information, worried about straining relations with President Yeltsin. “It was as if the Americans did not want to know the facts or the facts were too embarrassing for them to confront.”¹⁰⁰ Former Clinton administration officials describe a different interaction: President Clinton would repeatedly bring up the issue of Russian nuclear relations with Iran, including possible secret deals for fuel-cycle assistance, and President Yeltsin would protest, then order an investigation to be carried out by minions.¹⁰¹

Regardless of the interpretations, the Iranian test of the Shahab-3 missiles, in addition to effective lobbying in Congress and little actual cooperation from the Russians, all led eventually to sanctions on Iran and Russia. The

Because of...lobbying efforts, congressional pressures were a much stronger factor driving US policy than in the cases of either Chechnya or democracy assistance.

Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 (ILSA) was designed to deter investment in Iran's petroleum sector through mandated sanctions on foreign firms investing more than \$20 million in that country. (ILSA was renewed for another five years in July 2001.) In 1998 and 1999, the Clinton administration sanctioned ten Russian firms for providing sensitive weapons technology to Iran. The White House was attempting to preserve its relations with Russia and stave off legislation mandating sanctions. Simultaneously, Clinton administration officials were attempting to handle congressional opposition to their Russia policies while, at the same time, not changing “the paradigm of dealing with Russia.” They were essentially fighting on “two fronts”—Congress and Moscow.¹⁰² Senior administration officials feared losing “control of our foreign policy as a whole.”¹⁰³

By early 2000, however, a presidential veto on sanctions was overturned by an overwhelming margin in both the House and the Senate and the Iran Non-Proliferation Act became law. The bill was specifically aimed at stemming the tide of weapons technology from Russia to Iran. It authorized the president to place sanctions on entities transferring materials that Iran could use to develop

nuclear, chemical, biological, or missile weapons technology. The bill also tied future aid for the Russian Space Agency (RSA) to presidential certification that the Russian government was not supporting Iranian weapons programs, was in compliance with nonproliferation efforts, and that the Space Agency was not supporting Iran's nuclear program.¹⁰⁴

The lobbying efforts of American business—especially Lockheed Martin—has also had the effect of limiting US leverage in Russia's dealings with Iran just as the United States was starting on the sanctions track. US industry lobbied against the quota system that the US government had used to regulate the number of Russian satellites that could be launched. The quota was raised in the summer of 1999 and eliminated altogether in December 2000.¹⁰⁵ In effect, domestic business interests had eroded an important economic incentive for curbing Russian business in Iran.

In light of the dangers inherent in Russia's policy with Iran, why have we not seen tougher policies on Russia coming from either Congress or the

Since September 11, Russia appears to have pulled back somewhat in its support for Iraq. Experts largely agree that Russia is unlikely to jeopardize its relations with the United States over Iraq.

White House? Congressional willingness to make any one issue the central organizing principle in relations with Russia has been absent. The degree to which Russia's engagement with Iran—or intelligence about continued biological or chemical weapons programs—become important issues in US domestic politics, and specifically for the American public, the more impact on the US-Russia relationship they will have. If it turns out in several years that Iran does acquire WMD, and the case can be made that this occurred as a direct result of Russia's energy program with Iran, then this could have a large impact on the relationship and we would expect tougher policies, such as wider sanctions. We do not know whether these issues will emerge or what the impact would be, but they exist as potential large icebergs to be navigated. It is as yet unclear whether the Bush and Putin administrations will use the "new" relationship to solve this issue or if this issue will render serious rifts in the US-Russia relationship.

Russia and Saddam Hussein's Iraq

As in their policy with Iran, the Russian government has had a major economic (although in this case theoretical) investment at stake on three issues: debt owed them by Iraq, potential oil contracts, and trade. The Russia-Iraq connection has figured differently than Iran in the US-Russia relationship. The United States, since the Gulf War, has had an interest in isolating Saddam and bringing his regime down. America also has major interests in effective sanctions against Iraq and WMD inspections, all of which go through the United Nations. This gives Russia a major role with its Security Council seat. Policy on Iran has been handled via domestic US legislation.

Thus Russia has figured significantly in US government calculations on Iraq, as have their objections. Since Saddam Hussein barred UNSCOM weapons inspectors from Iraq in 1998, Russia has been, as one analyst put it, "Iraq's principal advocate and defender in the Security Council. It was difficult especially toward the end of the nineties to do much in New York vis-à-vis Iraq. Russia had become Iraq's lawyer on the Security Council," invariably supporting Iraqi demands for relaxed sanctions although always insisting that Iraq fulfill its international obligations.¹⁰⁶ Russia has continued to criticize US military action against Iraq, calling the US- and British-enforced no-fly zone illegitimate. On crucial Security Council votes that would send a strong message to Saddam Hussein regarding weapons inspectors, Russia has abstained, although it has never exercised its veto power. Throughout the 1990s, Russia has used the issue of Iraqi sanctions to assert its importance in the Security Council.

Since September 11, Russia appears to have pulled back somewhat in its support for Iraq. Experts largely agree that Russia is unlikely to jeopardize its relations with the United States over Iraq.¹⁰⁷ Whereas Russian diplomats had once emphasized the need to assure Iraq that sanctions would be lifted if it met international demands, they now stress that Iraq must show it has no WMD and open up to inspectors. They have worked out with their American counterparts a "smart sanctions" regime for Iraq. As yet, however, they have not become, as one expert has suggested, "unyielding advocates of an exhaustive and unconditional inspections regime in Iraq."¹⁰⁸

In summer 2002, the Bush administration's policy on Iraq had begun to harden around the concept of "regime change" and has held out the possibility of military action in order to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The major concern in the US-Russia-Iraq nexus has shifted focus to a contingent situation: whether Russia will cooperate in the United Nations if the United States decides to attack Iraq. Ultimately, the United States will make decisions on whether to use force on Iraq independent of a Russian response.¹⁰⁹ Certainly Bush administration officials monitor the Russian response and hope to shape it. But what should they expect? What would

influence how they would respond? And what are likely US domestic factors shaping US responses?

The Russians will likely oppose force until it has been used. The preferred scenario for the Russians has been to have inspectors brought back in and sanctions lifted. In a February 2002 press conference, Russian President Vladimir Putin criticized US plans for military action, saying "there is no ground to violate internationally recognized procedures," and insisting that the first step should be the speedy return of weapons inspectors: "there are many options, and the military option is far from being the sole, universal, or best solution."¹¹⁰ Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov echoed Putin's opposition to unilateral US military action in May 2002. Clearly, Russia would prefer that the United States not take military action against Baghdad, both for economic reasons and strategic ones—it would be a major sign of Russia's weakness. But most experts agree it would be unlikely that Putin would put up a big fight if actions were taken. The response may indeed be similar to Putin's response to US abrogation of the ABM treaty: Russia will say this is a mistake, but it will not affect the US-Russia relationship in the long term.¹¹¹

US policy toward Russia on Iraq centers on assurances that Russia will have continued favorable economic relations with the successor regime to Saddam Hussein. For example, Russia's current policy toward Iraq is driven largely by the goal of recouping Iraq's \$8 billion in Soviet-era debt, and Russia will likely respond to arrangements with a post-Hussein government to repay this debt. Russian-Iraqi oil-related business ties could prove extremely lucrative for Moscow once sanctions are lifted. Some experts estimate \$40 billion in long-term Russian benefits, or about two-thirds of Russia's national budget for 2002. Some observers hold out the possibility that there might be a way for the United States and Russia to jointly manage the oil-related business.¹¹²

As of summer 2002, however, the payoff from Iraqi oil for Russian companies is theoretical. Baghdad awarded Lukoil, the largest Russian oil company, a contract to develop Iraq's West Qurna field, which contains 667 million tons of crude and the potential for a half-million barrels a day.¹¹³ According to Leonid Fetun, the vice president for development at Lukoil, the field could yield \$20 billion.¹¹⁴ But Lukoil has been prevented from developing the field by UN sanctions, so profits have yet to be realized. Saddam Hussein has tried to leverage the West Qurna deal to push Russia to end the UN sanctions, threatening to void the contract for nonperformance in November 2000. Hussein awarded Russia by far the largest share of Iraq's contracts last year (1.3 billion) under the UN oil-for-food program, forging another link to Russian business interests.¹¹⁵

There has been some indication that the Bush administration is prepared to sweeten the pill of using force: a senior diplomat has gone on the record as saying that the United States would look favorably on a post-Hussein regime honoring Iraq's Soviet-era debt and lucrative oil contracts with Russian companies.¹¹⁶ A recent sign that indicates Moscow's readiness to turn its back on Baghdad came in late May 2002 when, during the biannual review of Iraqi sanctions, Sergey Lavrov, the Russian ambassador to the United Nations, did not raise the issue of Iraqi oil revenues for the first time. Given the right inducements, it seems that Russia can be bought out on Iraq. Economic concerns are driving Russian foreign policy today, not the need to balance against the United States.¹¹⁷

It is hard to anticipate the degree that a hypothetical, such as Russia's response, affects US willingness to wage war against Iraq. That said, we have little expectation that Russian reluctance about the use of force against Iraq, like the earlier case of NATO's use of force in Serbia and Kosovo, would derail US-Russia relations.

Findings: Domestic Political Influences and US-Russia Relations

Several basic conclusions emerge from an examination of these four cases and the influence of domestic political factors on US Russia policy.

1. On the whole, despite lots of drama, good and bad news, not to mention potential threats emanating from inside Russia, US policy toward Russia has not been a major focus of the American public. This contrasts quite starkly with the space that US policy toward the former Soviet Union occupied in the public consciousness and the attention it received in presidential and congressional races as well as from major media outlets. In the post-Soviet era, from time to time, it has been a superficial focus of Congress. Major American media outlets have shut their bureaus in Moscow. Aside from a few issues, there has been relatively little policy debate among even those experts who follow events in Russia on a full-time basis. To a great extent the US government has had an extremely free hand in setting the basic contours and details of policy toward Russia.
2. The role of outsiders has been mixed. Experts with a mission can make a difference, particularly if they can find like-minded supporters in the executive branch and among key legislators. The origin of the CTR program stands out as a particularly important example, when a group of nongovernmental experts working with influential senators were able to get the idea of working with the Russians to dismantle WMD on the policy agenda and then get it financed by the US government.

3. Some powerful lobbies can change policy, again by forming a strategic alliance with members of the Congress or the executive branch. In the case of Iran, AIPAC was able to shape how the US government assessed threats, and thus recast the approach to Russia concerning cooperation on nuclear energy with Iran. These cases, however, are probably rare. Notably there is no strong Russian-American lobby in the United States.
4. The NGO community that works on human rights and democracy has had little impact on Russian policy. They have mostly struck out on Chechnya and on democracy assistance. Finding alternatives to policy on Chechnya has been difficult, but increasing the budgets for democracy assistance and doing more of what was already being done, or doing it better, was in the realm of the politically possible.
5. Inconsistency is an important theme that emerges from these cases. With the myriad of policies toward a major country like Russia, this theme may be inevitable. For example, US policy confronts difficult trade-offs in emphasizing "hard" security issues, such as the proliferation of WMD, over "soft" security issues, such as compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law. The cases examined here suggest that hard security issues decisively trump soft ones and that concerned outside parties largely accept that trade-off.
6. These cases demonstrate that a policy with numerous facets provides innumerable opportunities to bargain and help shape that policy. There is no one office or sole person who controls or drives US policy toward Russia. Some institutions and personalities are more of a factor than others. The US engagement with Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, has been managed and directed by a multitude of forces, people, and competing issues.
7. No single issue in the US-Russia relationship has emerged as a "show-stopper."¹¹⁸ US foreign policy toward Russia evolves on a case-by-case basis and has tended not to link issues or make any one problem central to the entire relationship, even given the overarching and widely accepted theme of integration into the West.
8. While the post-Soviet US-Russia relationship has evolved—if not exactly into the strategic partnership originally envisioned, but into a fairly stable arrangement that is capable of weathering intense disagreement—there are still themes and issues, such as proliferation of WMD and Chechnya, that are deeply intrinsic to the relationship, cut against deeper cooperation, and, depending upon events and media coverage, could generate a series of public questions about our policy toward Russia.

Endnotes

¹ Dr. Mendelson is a senior fellow with the Russia and Eurasia program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The author thanks Morton Abramowitz for extensive comments, as well as Brewster Denny, James Goldgeier, Janne Nolan, Blair Ruble, and Celeste Wallander, along with several former US government officials who wish to remain anonymous. She thanks Wouter Vandersypen and Samuel Charap for their research support. Charap contributed especially to the Cooperative and Threat Reduction (CTR) and Iran/Iraq cases.

² See Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2002).

³ Many groups, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights, Memorial, Doctors of the World, and Doctors Without Borders, have gathered testimony on the abuses by federal forces. See, for example, Human Rights Watch, *Burying the Evidence: The Botched Investigation Into a Mass Grave in Chechnya*, May 2001 and Human Rights Watch, *The "Dirty War" in Chechnya: Forced Disappearances, Torture, and Summary Executions*, March 2001, both available at www.hrw.org; *Welcome to Hell: Arbitrary Detention, Torture, and Extortion in Chechnya* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 2000); and O. G. Trusevich, "Mass Violations of Human Rights During the Armed Conflict in the Chechen Republic," from Moscow Helsinki Watch, available at www.fsmonitor.com/MHG_99/Chechnya.shtml. On activists being targeted, see press releases available at www.friendly.narod.ru for descriptions of killings by federal forces in December 2001 of several grantees of the (US) National Endowment for Democracy.

⁴ Physicians for Human Rights, "War Crimes in Kosovo: A Population-Based Assessment of Human Rights Violations Against Kosovar Albanians," Washington, DC, August 1999; Physicians For Human Rights, "Endless Brutality: War Crimes in Chechnya," May 2001, also a survey-based assessment of rights violations. A comparison of the two studies shows that as of March 2000, the number of civilians that had witnessed abuses was four times as high in Chechnya as in Kosovo.

⁵ In the second war, the US government has also provided money for humanitarian relief for refugees from Chechnya. See, for example, James B. Foley, "Chechnya: U.S. Contributes \$3.3 Million to UN Humanitarian Efforts," December 7, 1999, available at secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/statements/1999/ps991207.html. For a recent statement see, Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, "Russia, The United States and the Challenges of the 21st

Century,” remarks at the Moscow School of Political Studies, July 22, 2002, available at usembassy.state.gov/Moscow/wwwhop8.html.

⁶ Author's interview with senior American diplomat, US Embassy, Moscow, June 5, 2001. See also Mike McCurry's comments in a State Department briefing, January 3, 1995, that Chechnya “by no means defines this very important bilateral relationship.”

⁷ Talbott, *The Russia Hand*. This dynamic was experienced by others in the Clinton administration: Former Secretary of Defense William Perry lamented that whatever good personal relationship he had developed with Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev, it did not carry over when discussing Chechnya. “It was like discussing abortion with a devout Catholic...it was a religious issue, not an objective issue. He was very emotional on the subject, so there was no basis for making any headway.” (Author's interview, Stanford, California, August 20, 2001).

⁸ For details see Talbott, *The Russia Hand*; Mendelson, “Democracy Assistance and Political Transition in Russia: Between Success and Failure,” *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (spring 2001), pp. 68-106; Michael McFaul and Mendelson, “Russian Democracy—A U.S. National Security Interest,” *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (summer 2000), pp. 330-353. For a critical account of this engagement, see Janine Wedel, *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe, 1989-1998* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

⁹ Talbott, *The Russia Hand*.

¹⁰ Author's interview, Stanford, California, August 20, 2001.

¹¹ Stephen Sestanovich, “Where Does Russia Belong?” *The National Interest*, No. 62 (winter 2000/2001), pp. 14-15.

¹² Talbott, *The Russia Hand*. Clinton's ode to Yeltsin spoke of liberating Grozny. William Clinton, “Remembering Yeltsin,” *TIME*, January 1, 2000.

¹³ Author's interview, senior Bush administration official, Washington, DC, July 29, 2002.

¹⁴ “President Bush, President Putin Discuss Joint Efforts Against Terrorism,” June 27, 2002 White House news release.

¹⁵ Author's interview, senior Bush administration official, Washington, DC, July 29, 2002.

¹⁶ Ibid. The other aspect that the US government is especially focused on concerns internally displaced persons (IDPs). Several NGOs claim that the Russian government is pursuing a systematic policy of pushing IDPs back into Chechnya and even back into Grozny. (Médecins Sans Frontières, Human Rights Watch, and Memorial presentation at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Newslane attended by author.) As part of this policy, the Kremlin was engaged in the election of a new governor of Ingushetia (Memorial). The US government is, according to sources, very concerned and “keeping a very close eye on it.” They also have information that two camps were recently closed down and IDPs were forcibly sent back to Grozny.

¹⁷ Those who cover the issue of Chechnya inside the US government, as well as those who follow it from outside, see an enormous difference in the interest level of Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, who came to Moscow in summer 2001, compared with his predecessor, Ambassador James Collins, who was widely seen as not caring much about the war. One source described it as going from “night to day” on this topic.

¹⁸ Author's interview, Dr. Jeffrey Starr, then deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia, July 2, 2001.

¹⁹ Journalists argue that if major news outlets were consistently covering the story, then there would be pressure on the rest of the international media to cover it.

²⁰ Most recently, the humanitarian organization Médecins Sans Frontières has stopped work in Russia following the kidnapping of one of its workers. See “Charity Suspends Work After Abduction in Russia,” Reuters, August 14, 2002.

²¹ Anne Nivat, *Chienne De Guerre: A Woman Reporter Behind the Lines of the War in Chechnya* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000); Anna Politkovskaya, *A Dirty War: A Russian Reporter in Chechnya* (London: The Harvill Press, 2001). In part because of the lack of press coverage, the civilian victims have no clear face in the West, and the plight of the population in Chechnya for most people blurs with the violence of the rebels. Videos shown on Russian television and passed to US government officials show Chechen rebels executing, even decapitating, victims, many of them Russian troops. Some US military in interviews with the author have expressed sympathy for what the Russian military faces in Chechnya.

²² The lack of information has also led some in the US government to argue that the war is popularly supported by the Russian population and that supporting opposition to the war makes little sense. Survey data and focus group results in summer 2002 show that not only is the war unpopular, but Russians

are extremely concerned about military casualties resulting from Chechnya. This war is not, in the words of many Russians, "worth it." Results of research conducted by Theodore P. Gerber and Mendelson including two national surveys, six regional surveys (total sample size 7800), and nine focus groups with 90 Russians in Perm, Rostov, and Ryazan, July 15-23, 2002.

²³ Human Rights Watch, *Welcome to Hell*, pp. 96-97.

²⁴ The Holocaust Museum's Committee on Conscience put Chechnya on its "watch" list in 2001. The committee has graduated categories of urgency. A watch is the lowest category and indicates that there is "a serious potential for the eruption of mass violence that would be within the committee's mandate." A warning indicates that "violence is underway that threatens to become genocide or related crimes against humanity." And an emergency is used when the committee finds that "acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity are occurring or immediately threatened," www.ushmm.org/conscience/index.utp?content=events/chechnya/chechnya.php. The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights issued an appeal July 23, 2002, saying that the behavior of Russian federal forces in Chechnya "borders on genocide." www.ihf-hr.org/appeals/020723.htm.

²⁵ Opinion pieces by the committee's directors, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alexander Haig, and Max Kampelman, are read at high levels in government.

²⁶ There are exceptions: Carl Gershman, president of the National Endowment for Democracy, and Nadia M. Diuk, senior program officer for Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States at the National Endowment for Democracy, are examples. See, for instance, Diuk, "Helsinki Accords Work Today: Human Rights Return as an Issue," *The Washington Times*, May 24, 2001, p. 25.

²⁷ Letter from a human rights organization to the American Committee for Peace in Chechnya. The author thanks Scott Lindsay for sharing the letter.

²⁸ Author's interview, senior staff member, US Senate, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

²⁹ In a national sample of 2400 adults, 35.56 percent prefer autocracy and 32.07 percent prefer democracy, Gerber and Mendelson research. For a different argument, see Timothy J. Colton and McFaul, "Are Russians Undemocratic?" *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 2, April-June 2002, pp. 91-121.

³⁰ Mendelson, "Russians' Rights Imperiled: Has Anybody Noticed?" *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (spring 2002), pp. 39-69; *Human Rights*

in Russian Regions: Collection of Reports on the Human Rights Situation Across the Territory of the Russian Federation in the Year 2001, (Moscow: Moscow Helsinki Group, 2002).

³¹ The "Mission Performance Plan" for the US Embassy in Russia for 2000-2002 claimed that "the consolidation of democratic institutions and values in Russia over the long term is a vital US national security interest" (as cited in Management Systems International, Inc. [MSI Report], "An Assessment of USAID Political Party Building and Related Activities in Russia," report prepared for USAID/Moscow, Office of Democracy Initiatives and Human Resources, June 30, 2000, p. 38).

³² Author's interview, Ambassador William Taylor, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

³³ Democracy advocates note that the numbers are extremely difficult to calculate because USAID has tended to include support for economic programs under the democracy heading, but it has consistently been a small percentage of overall assistance to Russia. The State Department lists the total amount as \$650 million as of November 2001. Funds from private sources are easier to calculate. The Ford Foundation has spent \$28.5 million on "Peace and Social Justice" (human rights, legal reform, civil society, and governance) since 1997. (Author's e-mail correspondence with director of the Moscow Ford Foundation office, Steven Solnick, August 15, 2002).

³⁴ Author's interview, senior Bush administration official, July 26, 2002.

³⁵ For a more general catalog of lessons learned, see McFaul and Mendelson, "Russian Democracy," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (summer 2000), pp. 330-353, esp. 342-349.

³⁶ Task force meeting, May 2002. It is important to note, however, that only some companies really want "special" treatment. Others would prefer an adherence to the rule of law for everyone but believe that this is unachievable in today's Russia. It is possible that the pressure will grow for a society in which, as more and more Russian companies enter the domestic market, everyone is bound by the same rules.

³⁷ Howard LaFranchi, "To Fight Terror, Bush Plays Democracy Card," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 15, 2002. There are a few signs this might be changing. In a "notable shift" in policy, the Bush administration informed the Egyptian government that future aid would be conditional on its treatment of prodemocracy organizations. Peter Slevin, "Bush, in Shift on Egypt, Links New Aid to Rights," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2002.

³⁸ Former Representative Gerald Solomon attempted to expand the list of conditions for CTR certification including ceasing military activity in Chechnya in the debates over the FY 1997 Defense Authorization Bill. Amy F. Woolf, "Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs: Issues for Congress," March 6, 2002, 97-1027 F, Congressional Research Service, p. 26, 28. Some Senate staffers view this as a "near-death experience" for CTR, although the reasons for considering the Chechnya clause were driven by partisan politics rather than concerns about democracy in Russia. Jason D. Ellis, *Defense by Other Means: The Politics of US-NIS Threat Reduction and Nuclear Security Cooperation* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001), p. 90.

³⁹ Moscow Helsinki Group, *Human Rights in Russian Regions*.

⁴⁰ Task force meeting, May 2002.

⁴¹ Talbott argues that this conviction took hold despite the best intentions and efforts of aides who were trying to get Clinton to focus on concepts and not on the person. This point will undoubtedly draw skepticism from some former Clinton officials who argue that the consensus for supporting Yeltsin was greater than Talbott makes out.

⁴² On serious irregularities, see *Media and the Russian Presidential Elections: Preliminary Report* (Dusseldorf: European Institute for the Media, 1996); *Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Russia, 1999-2000: Technical Assessment* (Washington, DC: International Foundation for Election Systems, 2000). See also articles in the *The Moscow Times*, September 9, September 29, and October 29, 2000, www.TheMoscowTimes.com/election_fraud.html, which cite evidence of ballot-box stuffing, ballot burning, inflated numbers of voters in the 2000 presidential election, and many cases of systemic fraud in several regions of Russia including Bashkortastan, Dagestan, Saratov, and Tatarstan.

⁴³ A memo written by the in-house expert on international election observation at the National Democratic Institute (NDI), a US-based NGO, notes that "autocrats have become more sophisticated in their attempts at electoral manipulation"; p. 3. "Autocrats know [that observers tend to focus on election day] and increasingly attempt to manipulate other elements of the electoral process so that election day seems more or less normal," prompting observers to release statements just 48 to 72 hours after polls close, p. 5. Patrick Merloe, "Lessons Learned and Challenges Facing International Monitoring," NDI, March 1999.

⁴⁴ Author's interview, senior Bush administration official, July 29, 2002.

⁴⁵ Based on author's interviews and conversations with more than 50 activists from Moscow, Perm, Rostov, and Ryazan, July 2002.

⁴⁶ USAID budgets did decline from \$14.1 billion worldwide in 1993 to \$12.6 billion in 2000, making the United States the largest industrialized nation with the smallest foreign assistance budget. Examples of "success stories" such as Russia's "65,000 NGOs" that appear in US officials' speeches come from documents such as "USAID/Russia Activity Description as of October 31, 1999"; "USAID/Russia Activity Description as of March 31, 2000"; and "Russia's Economic and Political Transformation: Some Results of USAID Support to Date" (spring 1995). These documents are available on request from USAID/Washington. For examples of senior officials then using "success stories" to bolster US policy toward Russia, see Talbott, "Testimony Before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations," April 4, 2000, carried on David Johnson's Russia List (to be archived at www.cdi.org/russia/johnson).

⁴⁷ Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 6, (November/December 1997), pp. 22-43.

⁴⁸ Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2000); Wedel, *Collision and Collusion*.

⁴⁹ Speaker's Advisory Group on Russia, "Russia's Road to Corruption: How the Clinton Administration Exported Government Instead of Free Enterprise and Failed the Russian People," (September 2000), policy.house.gov/russia. See also US General Accounting Office report to the chairman and to the ranking minority member, Committee on Banking and Financial Services, House of Representatives, "Foreign Assistance: International Efforts to Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results," November 2000.

⁵⁰ Mendelson, "Democracy Assistance and Political Transition in Russia."

⁵¹ According to the communications director of a major US human rights group, any mention in a major newspaper of their group translates into \$10,000 in (private) support. It is therefore a part of their fund-raising strategy to publicize their activities. Author's conversation, Moscow, July 2002.

⁵² Author's interview, senior staff member, US Senate, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002. Within the appropriations (Foreign Operations Subcommittee) and the authorization committees (Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations) there are additional supporters of democracy work in Russia. On occasion, these committees have staff members who come out of the democracy assistance community.

⁵³ Author's interview, senior Bush administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

⁵⁴ For a detailed discussion of the domestic political influences on CTR, see Jason D. Ellis, *Defense by Other Means: The Politics of US-NIS Threat Reduction and Nuclear Security Cooperation* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001).

⁵⁵ Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1999).

⁵⁶ Kurt Campbell, Carter, S. E. Miller, and Charles A. Zraket, "Soviet Nuclear Fission: Control of the Nuclear Arsenal in a Disintegrating Soviet Union," CSIA Studies in International Security, No. 1 (November 1991); Graham Allison, Carter, S. E. Miller, and Phillip Zelikow, "Cooperative Denuclearization: From Pledges to Deeds," CSIA Studies in International Security, No. 2 (January 1993).

⁵⁷ CTR refers to programs that are managed and housed in the Department of Defense. Threat reduction assistance refers to a larger set of programs that include programs managed by the Department of Energy and the Department of State. Confusion over terminology has allowed the current administration to make vague references to the press, such as when National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice argued, "We're not cutting CTR at all." She was accurate in a very literal way, but left out dramatic decreases in budgets for work housed at the departments of Energy and State. See David S. Broder, "Safeguard Russia's Nukes," *The Washington Post*, November 25, 2001.

⁵⁸ Judith Ingram, "US, Russia Work to Combat Threats," Associated Press, May 27, 2002; Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, "Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions," Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 17, 2002, has the number for CTR at \$4 billion. The \$2.4 billion figure comes from Woolf, "Nuclear Weapons in Russia: Safety, Security and Control Issues," Congressional Research Service, IB98038, June 7, 2002.

⁵⁹ Campbell, Carter, Miller, and Zraket, "Soviet Nuclear Fission"; Allison, Carter, S. E. Miller, and Zelikow, "Cooperative Denuclearization"; Carter and Perry, *Preventive Defense*; Ellis, *Defense by Other Means*. See also Carter, Perry and John D. Steinbrunner, *A New Concept of Cooperative Security* (Washington, DC: Brookings Occasional Paper, 1992); and Janne E. Nolan (ed.), *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution 1994).

⁶⁰ Author's interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

⁶¹ Author's interview, Carter, Cambridge, Massachusetts, April 25, 2001. See also Ellis, *Defense by Other Means*, pp. 78-81.

⁶² Approximately 85 percent of the funding goes to American companies, according to Senator Lugar as cited in Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, "Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions," Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 17, 2002.

⁶³ Representative Hunter, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 142, May 15, 1996, p. H5070-H5071, as cited in Woolf, "Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs," March 6, 2002, 97-1027 F, Congressional Research Service, p. 17. See also US General Accounting Office, "Weapons of Mass Destruction: Reducing the Threat From the Former Soviet Union: An Update," NSIAD-95-165, June 9, 1995.

⁶⁴ Author's interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

⁶⁵ For details, see Talbott, *The Russia Hand*.

⁶⁶ The Baker and Cutler report looked at the Department of Energy's role in threat reduction work and called for \$30 billion in funding over the next ten years. Howard Baker and Lloyd Cutler (cochairs, Russia task force), "A Report Card on the Department of Energy's Nonproliferation Programs With Russia," the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, United States Department of Energy, January 10, 2001.

⁶⁷ Congress allocated \$400 million in November 1991 as a transfer authority. Congress then allocated \$400 million in FY 1993, FY 1994, and FY 1995. In FY 1996 it received \$300 million, considered at the time a victory since Republicans on the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees had initially offered \$200 million. For FY 1997 it received \$364 million, \$382 million in FY 1998, \$440 million in FY 1999, and \$475 million in FY 2000. Congress gave \$433 million in FY 2001. In FY 2002 the Bush administration requested \$403 million for CTR programs. They have requested \$416 million for FY 2003. Woolf, "Nuclear Weapons in Russia," June 7, 2002, IB98038, Congressional Research Service, pp. 6-7. See also Ellis, *Defense by Other Means*, pp. 78-88.

⁶⁸ Ellis, *Defense by Other Means*.

⁶⁹ Author's interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002. On the slow pace of implementation see Woolf, "Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs," March 6, 2002, 97-1027 F, Congressional Research Service, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁰ Author's interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

⁷¹ Mendelson, "U.S.-Russian Military Relations: Between Friend and Foe," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (winter 2002), pp. 161-172. For those actually implementing CTR, the problems are slightly different: programs have suffered because they have gone through executors, such as the Ministry of Economics' control of missile dismantlement work, that had no "stake in the outcome of the program.... MinEcon never cared if a program was successful...after all, they were not responsible for eliminating the missiles that belong to MOD." Additionally, they have also been run through organizations that could not break logjams. (Author's e-mail correspondence with a US contractor who has worked on CTR programs in Russia since 1995, August 16, 2002).

⁷² Author's e-mail correspondence with US CTR contractor. This holds true for democracy assistance programs as well. In meetings with political party activists, some Russian parties are reluctant to work with US NGOs since they have had such high turnover in staff. (Author's conversations, Russian party activists, Moscow, April 23, 2002).

⁷³ Author's interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.

⁷⁴ The Bush administration has pushed to internationalize the CTR effort. At the G-8 meeting in Canada in June 2002, G-8 leaders launched a "global partnership against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction" and have pledged up to \$20 billion over the next ten years. Daniel Horner, "G-8 Pledges Nonproliferation Package, But Some Question Group's Commitment," *Nonproliferation*, July 8, 2002, Vol. 27, No. 14, p. 6.

⁷⁵ Judith Miller, "U.S. Warns Russia of Need to Verify Treaty Compliance," *The New York Times*, April 8, 2002.

⁷⁶ The president is required to certify to the Congress that Russia is "committed to (1) making a substantial investment of its resources for dismantling or destroying such weapons; (2) forgoing any military modernization program that exceeds legitimate defense requirements and forgoing the replacement of destroyed weapons of mass destruction; (3) forgoing any use of fissionable and other components of destroyed nuclear weapons in new nuclear weapons; (4) facilitating US verification of weapons destruction carried out under section 212; (5) complying with all relevant arms control agreements; and (6) observing internationally recognized human rights, including the protection of minorities."

⁷⁷ Judith Miller, "U.S. Warns Russia of Need to Verify Treaty Compliance," *The New York Times*, April 8, 2002.

⁷⁸ The 2002 certification issue is more dramatic and “devastating” since much work has been affected, but according to a former Clinton administration official, “every year there is some lightning rod...[some] small piece of the overall CTR program...that affects the whole program, and you have big hearings on it and it starts to be unpacked and the complexity of it causes people to run screaming in the opposite direction and people try to demagogue on it.” Not surprisingly, CTR supporters are enormously sensitive to investigation and criticism. According to one author of the Cox Report, that came out in summer 2000, “one of the big criticisms [of the report] was that it didn’t talk about some of the achievements [in the US-Russia relationship], like Nunn-Lugar. We had Nunn-Lugar in there. We had the good parts of Nunn-Lugar in there, and the less good parts of Nunn-Lugar in there.” As a result of pressure from “interested parties,” he claimed, “we had to go through and word search ‘threat reduction.’ We had to cut it all out.” (Author’s interview, senior staff member, US Senate, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002.)

⁷⁹ Ellis, *Defense by Other Means*, p. 89.

⁸⁰ Author’s interview, former Clinton administration official, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002. This “room for interpretation” where certification is based “on statements by Russian leaders, rather than actual events or activities” worries many observers. Woolf, “Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs,” March 6, 2002, 97-1027 F, Congressional Research Service, p. 25.

⁸¹ Judith Miller, “U.S. to Help Reduce Threat of Russian Arms,” *The New York Times*, August 9, 2002.

⁸² “Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions,” Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 9, 2002, *Federal News Service*.

⁸³ Senator Biden questioning Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, “Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions,” Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 17, 2002.

⁸⁴ Judith Miller, “US to Help Reduce Threat of Russian Arms,” *The New York Times*, August 9, 2002.

⁸⁵ Author’s interview, Robert Einhorn, former assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, July 29, 2002; Talbott, *The Russia Hand*.

⁸⁶ Anton Khlopkov, “The Iranian Program for Nuclear Energy Development: The Past and the Future,” *Yaderny Kontrol*, Vol. 6, No. 3, summer 2001, p. 19.

⁸⁷ On the shift in US policy toward Iran, see George J. Tenet, February 6, 2002, “Worldwide Threat—Converging Dangers in a Post-9/11 World,”

testimony of director of Central Intelligence before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, available at www.cia.gov/cia/public_affairs/speeches/dci_speech_02062002.html.

⁸⁸ Press release from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 31, 2002.

⁸⁹ Lisa McAdams, "Iran: Russia Viewed as Biggest Supporter of Weapons Program," RFE/RL Newline, October 6, 2000; Eli J. Lake, "From Russia (To Iran) with Love: Nuclear proliferation will be the real test of Putin's friendship," *The Weekly Standard*, December 10, 2001; William Safire, "Testing Putin on Iran," *The New York Times*, May 23, 2002.

⁹⁰ Congressional testimony by John Lauder in McAdams, "Iran," RFE/RL Newline, October 6, 2000.

⁹¹ For a detailed account of how the Americans interacted with the Russians on the Iran issue by two former Clinton officials, see Robert J. Einhorn and Gary Samore, "Ending Russian Resistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb," *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 2, summer 2002, pp. 51-70. Quote is from p. 53.

⁹² Task force discussions, March 2002; author's interview, senior staff member, US Senate, Washington, DC, July 26, 2002. Einhorn and Samore argue, "US officials are convinced that, if Russia's leadership were determined to put an end to assistance, such assistance could be stopped, or at least slowed to a trickle." In other words, these experts believe it is a conscious economic policy to pursue this relationship in all its forms. Einhorn and Samore, "Ending Russian Resistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb," p. 61.

⁹³ Under President Clinton, this included deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott, national security adviser Sandy Berger, special adviser to the secretary of state for the Newly Independent States Steven Sestanovich, and assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation Robert Einhorn. In the Bush administration, these have included national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, under secretary of state for arms control John R. Bolton, and assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation John Wolf.

⁹⁴ Author's interview, Robert Einhorn, former assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, July 29, 2002.

⁹⁵ Senior US official quoted in Peter Baker, "Putin's Concessions to U.S. are Limited by the Bottom Line," *The Washington Post*, August 16, 2002, p. 15.

⁹⁶ Author's interview, Robert Einhorn, former assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, July 29, 2002.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Michael Dobbs, "How Politics Helped Define Threat," *The Washington Post*, January 14, 2002.

⁹⁹ Weldon cited in *ibid.* Critics argue that the Republicans "politicized" the intelligence process.

¹⁰⁰ Quotes come from *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Einhorn and Samore, "Ending Russian Resistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb," pp. 53-54; Talbott, *The Russia Hand*.

¹⁰² Senior Clinton administration officials as quoted in task force presentation, March 2002; the "two fronts" quote comes from Einhorn and Samore, "Ending Russian Resistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb," p. 54.

¹⁰³ Senior Clinton administration officials as quoted in task force presentation, March 2002.

¹⁰⁴ RASA since 2001 has been the CTR partner for the missile dismantlement program.

¹⁰⁵ Task force meeting, March 2002.

¹⁰⁶ Author's interview, Robert Einhorn, former assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, July 29, 2002.

¹⁰⁷ Scott Peterson, "Russia Rethinks Its Longtime Support for Iraq," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 2002, p. 1.

¹⁰⁸ Sestanovich, "Russia's Role in Iran and Iraq," *The New York Times*, June 3, 2002.

¹⁰⁹ The debate and dissension within the Republican camp has not been shaped at all by considerations of a Russian response. For an account of the dissension, see Todd S. Purdum and Patrick E. Tyler, "Top Republicans Break With Bush on Iraq Strategy," *The New York Times*, August 16, 2002.

¹¹⁰ Karen Elliott House and Andrew Higgins, "From the Kremlin: Putin Warns Bush Against Going It Alone When It Comes to Iraq," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 11, 2002.

¹¹¹ Task force meeting, March 2002.

¹¹² John Daniszewski and Paul Richter, "Sounding Out Russia on Hussein," *Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 2002. On joint management, author's interview, senior Senate staffer.

¹¹³ Michael Wines, "Tempted by Oil, Russia Draws Ever Closer to Iraq," *The New York Times*, February 3, 2002.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Daniszewski and Richter, "Sounding Out Russia on Hussein."

¹¹⁷ Samuel Charap, "Reading the Tea Leaves on Russia's Iraq Policy," RFE/RL Newslines, July 11, 2002.

¹¹⁸ Author's interview, Robert Einhorn.

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November 30, 2001

Topic: Cooperative Threat Reduction

Speaker: Kenneth Myers, Legislative Assistant for National Security and Foreign Affairs, Office of Senator Richard Lugar

March 22, 2002

Topic: The Russia Component in American Policy Toward Iran and Iraq

Speaker: Stephen R. Sestanovich, Senior Fellow, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Council on Foreign Relations

May 17, 2002

Topic: US Democracy Assistance to Russia

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