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MANAGING THE EASTERN CRISIS:
PREVENTING WAR IN
THE FORMER SOVIET EMPIRE

Stephen Van Evera

DEFENSE AND ARMS CONTROL STUDIES PROGRAM

Center for International Studies
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
292 Main Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
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Stephen Van Evera
Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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I. INTRODUCTION

The demise of the Soviet empire was an occasion for celebration, but now the world faces the cold dawn of the morning after. Much of the former Soviet empire is lapsing into deepening economic, social, and political crises. These crises, in turn, present two serious problems.

First, the disposition of the Soviet nuclear weapons complex poses an immediate, short-term problem. If this disposition is mismanaged, the vast Soviet nuclear arsenal could escape central control and fall into the wrong hands—perhaps many wrong hands, to include terrorist groups and terror-supporting states.

Second, the new freedom of the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union poses the task of organizing a peaceful transition to a stable international order in the region. If this transition is mismanaged the world faces the possibility of spreading violence throughout the area—a Yugoslavia on a grand scale, perhaps involving conflict between nuclear-armed adversaries. At best, without a durable peace the region will become a running sore on the international system: a place of recurrent crises, occasional small wars, and constant worry for nearby powers for many years. At worst the region could eventually spawn a major European war.

Of the two, the nuclear problem has clearer solutions, and policies already launched by the Bush Administration (under Congressional prodding) are a good first step.

The task of creating a peaceful Eastern international order is less urgent, but in the long run it presents more imposing problems and more difficult choices. I argue here that the United States has a major interest in preventing war in the East, and should devote the political and economic resources needed to accomplish this goal. This policy is advisable for obvious moral and humanitarian reasons, and also because an Eastern war could injure nearby states, including NATO states, and could even spread to engulf them. The United States is insulated by distance from these dangers, but even the U.S. has interests that could be injured by Eastern violence.

The West’s immediate goal should be to ensure that the East’s transition to a new order occurs without major violence. The details of the end-point are less important than ensuring that this end-point emerges peacefully, since a violent transition is far more likely to produce a final state that is prone to violence. Such a peaceful transition can best be encouraged by using the West’s economic leverage to encourage the emerging states of Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet Union to behave peacefully. This requires framing a common Western standard of peaceful conduct, and forging a common Western policy for its enforcement. The Western states should also consider eventually offering security guarantees to some emerging Eastern states. However, such a policy should be deferred until
after the Eastern states clarify their foreign policies. And even then, military commitments should be made with great caution, since they heighten the risk of Western entanglement in any Eastern wars that the West fails to prevent.

II. MANAGING SOVIET NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The territories of the former Soviet Union contain a vast nuclear complex, including some 27,000 thermonuclear weapons and an infrastructure for their production and maintenance. This complex employs some 900,000 people, including perhaps 2,000 people with intimate knowledge of nuclear weapons design, and 3,000-5,000 people with experience in plutonium production or uranium enrichment. The Soviet weapons are scattered across the former USSR; in late 1991 nuclear weapons were located in nine of the 15 former Soviet republics (Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Moldavia, and Georgia.) Elements of the weapons production complex are located in at least six republics.

Many Soviet weapons lack built-in physical safeguards to prevent unauthorized use, and could be detonated without access to special codes. Moreover, unauthorized owners with enough time and expertise could eventually detonate even safeguarded weapons by circumventing their safeguards. And, failing this, they could remove the fissionable material from the warheads and, with proper facilities, could refabricate this material into less powerful (but still devastating) atomic bombs.

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3 Campbell, Carter, Miller, and Zraket, Soviet Nuclear Fission, pp. 19-22.


5 Campbell, Carter, Miller, and Zraket, Soviet Nuclear Fission, pp. 13-16, 35.

6 Campbell, Carter, Miller, and Zraket, Soviet Nuclear Fission, pp. 15, 35.

7 The total Soviet stock of plutonium is large enough to produce over 14,000 atomic bombs, and the total Soviet stock of enriched uranium is sufficient to produce 50,000 atomic bombs. Campbell, Carter, Miller, and Zraket, Soviet Nuclear Fission, pp. 29-30.
The central state that built this complex has collapsed, and the economy of the entire country is in free-fall. Under these conditions the armed forces are an institution without a purpose, and cannot maintain their cohesion for long. The Soviet military's procedures for managing nuclear weapons were not designed to cope with such conditions, and may well fail during the months ahead. This raises the risk that weapons will be seized by new owners, or sold to new owners by impoverished Soviet officers.

The successor states to the former Soviet Union have patched together an arrangement to maintain central control over the Soviet nuclear establishment, under the auspices of the new Commonwealth of Independent States. The Commonwealth members have granted Russian president Boris Yeltsin operational command of the nuclear force. However, this arrangement is clearly temporary; the Commonwealth is not itself a state, and joint possession of the nuclear arsenal is not a viable long-term arrangement.

The Soviet nuclear force must be safely stowed away before this arrangement collapses. Otherwise two risks will appear. First, Soviet nuclear weapons, nuclear materials, and nuclear technicians may appear on the global arms market, available for purchase by the likes of Saddam Hussein, or Abu Nidal. Second, nuclear weapons will devolve to the control of former Soviet republics. All the former republics except Russia probably lack the technical capacity to provide secure custodianship of nuclear weapons; hence widespread proliferation to the republics would create long-term risks of nuclear accident, preemptive war, and seizure by or sale to terrorists.

For this reason the United States should pursue a short-term policy of

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9 Taking a more relaxed view of the situation is Stephen M. Meyer, "Hyping the Soviet Nuclear Peril," New York Times, December 12, 1991, p. A31. Meyer asserts that "the hyping of a new Soviet nuclear threat has gotten out of hand." However, even he concedes the possibility that tactical nuclear weapons will proliferate or that weapons components will be sold internationally. Also taking a relaxed view is Mark Kramer, "Warheads and Chaos: The Soviet Nuclear Threat in Perspective," The National Interest, No. 25 (Fall 1991), pp. 94-97. Kramer estimates the likelihood that even one nuclear weapon could pass to separatist control at "virtually zero" (p. 95.)
consolidating the force under secure central control in the republics where they are now located, and a medium-term policy of consolidating all weapons and materials under Russian control.¹⁰

Most of the republics have declared their willingness to cooperate with these objectives,¹¹ and the U.S. should promptly exploit their willingness before they change their minds.¹² The Congress and the Bush Administration have already moved in this direction; the Congress has appropriated $400 million to assist the republics with the consolidation and de-weaponization of their arsenals, and the Administration has pressed the republics to agree to consolidate and dismantle their arsenals.¹³ However, in the long run more measures will be required, and more money spent. Specifically, the U.S. will have to arrange for the final disposition of the dismantled weapons—buying their nuclear materials is one options—and for the economic wellbeing of former Soviet nuclear technicians, to dissuade them from offering their services to potential proliferators.¹⁴


¹¹ See Friedman, "Hurdles, Big and Small," who quotes a senior Bush administration official saying, with regard to managing the Soviet nuclear force, "What we have been hearing from the republics is 'Just tell us what to do, and we'll do it'."


¹³ The Congress deserves most of the credit for action taken so far. See Representative Les Aspin, "The Bush Foreign Policy: Winning the War But ... Forgetting the Peace," A White Paper, December 19, 1991, text available from Rep. Aspin. During the period late August-early November 1991 the Administration refused to support a Democratic Congressional proposal that authorized Pentagon funds for the dismantling of Soviet nuclear weapons (pp. 7-9); and it played no role in Congress' November 27 decision to appropriate $400 million for this purpose.

¹⁴ U.S. intelligence agencies reportedly believe that the devolution of Soviet nuclear technicians to new employers poses a greater danger than the possible loss of control over the weapons themselves. Sciolino, "U.S. Report Warns of Risk."
Finally, the solution to the nuclear crisis also depends on preserving peace in the region. If the Soviet transition turns violent, the risk of rapid disintegration of the Soviet military will be greater, and the republics will be more anxious to acquire nuclear weapons, since their security needs will be more acute. Hence America’s program for denuclearization also requires a more general strategy for establishing a secure and peaceful new regional order.

III. RUMORS OF WAR: THE RISK OF VIOLENCE IN THE EAST

So far, the Soviet empire’s collapse has occurred without major violence. However, history warns that the collapse of great empires often spawns conflict among the empire’s former subjects, and wars between outside powers as they collide in the former imperial zone. Thus the slow collapse of the Turkish empire during 1832-1914 was the catalyst for four great European crises, two great wars, and several smaller wars.\textsuperscript{15} The disintegration of the Austrian empire likewise helped spark the First World War; Austria struck Serbia in an effort to end Serbian subversion in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The dismantling of the European empires in Asia and Africa was often followed by great violence among the newly-independent peoples.\textsuperscript{16}

The demise of the Soviet empire entails risks of a similar outcome. These dangers arise from three specific sources: the unsettled nature of borders in Eastern Europe and the former USSR; the intermingling of nationalities in the region; and the intense conflicts among these nationalities. These dangers are magnified by the ongoing collapse of the former USSR’s economy: this collapse is bound to sharpen inter-communal conflicts, and it may bring to power fascist demagogues who pursue aggressive foreign policies.\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{16} During the post-1945 era five newly-independent places saw more than a million killed in local warfare (Cambodia, India-Pakistan-Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sudan, and Vietnam) and eight other places saw at least 100,000 killed (Angola, Burundi, Indonesia, Lebanon, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zaire). Casualty data on these wars is from William Eckhardt, "Wars and War-Related Deaths, 1945-1989," in Ruth Leger Sivard, \textit{World Military and Social Expenditure 1989}, 13th ed. (Washington, D.C.: World Priorities, 1989), p. 22.

\textsuperscript{17} Analysts differ on the gravity of the risks these conditions create. Taking a far more optimistic view than this author is Stephen Sestanovich, "The Revolution: A Case for
Many borders in the region lack legitimacy, especially those in the former USSR, which were arbitrarily established by Stalin. This sets the stage for border wars among the now-independent former Soviet republics.\textsuperscript{18}

The collapse of Moscow's power is also exposing a welter of intense national conflicts, made more dangerous by the intermingling of the conflicting peoples. A survey of Eastern Europe reveals more than a dozen minority group pockets that may seek independence or be claimed by other countries.\textsuperscript{19} In the former Soviet Union, nationalities are even more intermingled. The former USSR's population totals some 262 million people, comprising 104 nationalities. Of these, a total of 64 million (24 percent) either live outside their home republic, or are among the 89 small nationalities with no titular republic, and who are thus minorities in the Soviet Union's 15 successor states (assuming that the 15 republics are not further sub-divided).\textsuperscript{20} Of these 64 million, some 39 million (15 percent of total Soviet population) are members of nationalities that have a titular republic, but live outside it; these include 24 million Russians (17 percent of all Russians) and 15 million members of other nationalities (15 percent of all such nationalities). Another 25 million people (9 percent of the total Soviet population) are members of the 89 smaller nationalities without titular home

\textsuperscript{18} For a map of border conflicts in the former USSR see Graham Smith, ed., The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union (New York: Longman, 1990), appendix 1.

\textsuperscript{19} Frontiers that may be disputed include the Romanian-Moldavian-Ukrainian, Romanian-Hungarian, Polish-Lithuanian, Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Byelorussian, Polish-Czechoslovakian, Hungarian-Czechoslovakian, Hungarian-Yugoslav (Serbian), Yugoslav (Serbian)-Albanian, Greek-Albanian, Greek-Turkish, and Greek-Yugoslav (Macedonian)-Bulgarian. Pockets of ethnic groups that have a nation-state but live outside it include Romanians in Soviet Moldavia; Hungarians in Romania and Czechoslovakia; Poles in the former USSR (Lithuania, Byelorussia, and Ukraine) and Czechoslovakia; Germans in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania; Turks in Bulgaria; Greeks in Albania; and Albanians in Yugoslavia (Serbia). Summaries include F. Stephen Larrabee, "Long Memories and Short Fuses: Change and Instability in the Balkans," International Security, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter 1990/91), pp. 58-91; Istvan Deak, "Uncovering Eastern Europe's Dark History," Orbis, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Winter 1989), pp. 51-65; and Barry James, "Central Europe Tinderboxes: Old Border Disputes," International Herald Tribune, January 1, 1990, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{20} All demographic figures are for 1979, and are calculated from John L. Scherer, ed., USSR Facts and Figures Annual, Vol. 5 (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1981), pp. 49-51.
republics, who will be minorities wherever they live.\textsuperscript{21}

The dismantled Soviet Union will thus be riddled with national conflicts. These will arise from nationalities' demands to annex territory other republics inhabited by their own members; from complaints against the oppression of national kin who live across accepted borders;\textsuperscript{22} and from demands by the small, stateless nationalities for autonomy or secession from the republics where they reside. If large numbers of people are expelled from their homes, these expellees may call for revenge or recovery of lost land and property,\textsuperscript{23} fuelling cross-border conflict. Border disputes may also arise among the republics because some nationalities may claim larger borders dating from their days of independent pre-colonial greatness.\textsuperscript{24}

Meanwhile the economy of the former Soviet Union is in free-fall, and will continue imploding at a rapid rate for some time to come. The old Soviet command economy was driven by coercion; that coercion has now been lifted, but it has not been replaced by the positive incentives, which only a free market can provide. In short, the "stick" is gone, but no "carrot" has replaced it; hence

\textsuperscript{21} This excludes the Kazakh residents of Kazakhstan, although a strict accounting based on the 1979 census should include them, because that census showed the Russians outnumbering them in Kazakhstan by 41 percent to 36 percent. However, data from 1989 indicates that Kazakhs again outnumber Russians in Kazakhstan, by 40 percent to 38 percent. See Alan P. Pollard, ed., \textit{USSR Facts & Figures Annual Vol. 15, 1991} (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1991), p. 501. In all other Russian republics the nationality after whom the republic is named was the majority or (in Kirghizia) a plurality in 1979, and all were a majority in 1989.

\textsuperscript{22} By mid-1990 the Soviet Union already had over 600,000 internal refugees who had fled from such oppression, and hundreds had died in communal violence. Francis X. Clines, "40 Reported Dead in Soviet Clashes," \textit{New York Times}, June 9, 1990, p. 1. By late 1991 that toll had risen to 3,000-4,000 deaths and nearly 2,000,000 refugees, according to U.S. State Department officials.

\textsuperscript{23} For example, it seems quite possible that millions of Russians will be expelled from non-Russian republics; if so, these expellees could form the core of a Russian nationalist movement that poisons Russian politics, just as the \textit{pied noire} poisoned French politics after the Algerian war.

\textsuperscript{24} In contrast, Western Europe is largely free of such problems; its borders are well-settled, and its populations are not significantly intermingled. The Polish-German boundary is the only Western frontier that has been seriously disputed, but this dispute was resolved by German acceptance of the current border during 1990. See Serge Schmemann, "Two Germanys Adopt Unity Treaty and Guarantee Poland's Borders," \textit{New York Times}, June 22, 1990, p. 1; and Thomas L. Friedman, "Two Germanys Vow to Accept Border With The Poles," \textit{New York Times}, July 18, 1990, p. 1.
the entire economy is freezing up. This freezing process will continue until free-market institutions are established—but marketization has barely begun, and will take years to accomplish. In the meantime tens of millions will face unemployment and poverty. Under such conditions, people will search for other groups to blame for their suffering, and be drawn to demagogues. As a result nationalist or fascist anti-democrats may win power, and inter-communal conflict will intensify.

If these conditions spawn an Eastern war, could it spread into Central or Western Europe? The risk of westward spread is less than in the past, because the nuclear revolution has dampened international competition. Specifically, it imposes a new caution on states and, for nuclear powers, it provides a new security: they now can worry less about the results of faraway wars, because they can secure themselves with their own deterrents. This reduces the security implications of events in the East for West European states, which lowers their impulse to intervene in Eastern wars. However, some nationalities in Eastern Europe (most notably the Poles) have ethnic kin in the West, and many Soviet nationalities (including the Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Ukrainians, Poles, Germans, Moldavians, Armenians, Azeris, Turkmenians, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, and Kazakhs) have ethnic kin just outside the former USSR, or farther afield in Western Europe and North America. If these peoples were threatened by violence, their co-nationals in other countries would understandably pressure their governments to intervene. As a result a war among the peoples of the former USSR could involve East European, Middle Eastern, or South Asian states, and a war in Eastern Europe or the Middle East could affect others farther west.

An Eastern war could affect the West in other ways as well. Large-scale fighting could generate millions of refugees needing humanitarian assistance or asylum. It could also produce vast environmental damage that could affect the West, especially if nuclear weapons were widely used, or if the former Soviet Union's many nuclear reactors were damaged or mismanaged in the chaos of war. Together these dangers create a general Western interest in ensuring that the Soviet transition occurs peacefully.

IV. PRESERVING PEACE: AMERICAN AND WESTERN POLICY OPTIONS

A. Six Peace Policies.

What can the United States and the other Western powers do to minimize the risk of war in the East? Six basic options have been, or might be, offered. These options are not, in all cases, mutually exclusive, and more than one could

25 The ability of Croatian pressure groups in Germany to influence German policy toward the Serbo-Croatian conflict during late 1991 is a chilling reminder of this possibility.
be pursued at once. I am partial to Option #5 (the use of economic leverage to induce peaceful conduct from Eastern states), although strong arguments can be made against it. I would also consider Option #2 (extend security guarantees to some Eastern states) as a possible long-term option, but would reject it for the short term.

1. **Unilateral Isolation (the "Yellowstone" Option).** Under this option the Western powers would stay out of Eastern Europe and the former USSR; if it burns, the West would let it burn (just as the U.S. Forest Service let Yellowstone Park burn during the summer of 1989.) The West might offer humanitarian assistance, but would not extend itself to prevent or control Eastern wars. This isolationist policy makes sense if the West has little interest in preserving peace in the East; insufficient leverage to bolster peace; insufficient wisdom to know how to use its leverage to promote peace; and/or insufficient wisdom to avoid entanglement in wars that it tries but fails to prevent.

However, the argument that the West has little interest in preventing Eastern wars seems wrong on its face: these interests, both practical and humanitarian, seem large. Moreover, as I note below, it seems likely that the West has the leverage and the wisdom to act effectively; and the West has ways to influence events in the East that raise little risk of military entanglement.

In the end the West may choose the Yellowstone option. It may be the wisest choice. However, if the West does choose it, it should do so after actively considering all alternatives, not by default; hence the following options should first be considered.

2. **Create a Bismarckian Defensive Alliance Network.** Under this option the West would deter war in the East by extending security guarantees over some Eastern states. This might be accomplished by extending unilateral security guarantees to these states, or by including Eastern states as full members in NATO.26 The model for such a solution is found in the defensive alliance network that Bismarck wove in the 1880s. Bismarck's purpose was to prevent war in central Europe. His method was to establish a network of defensive alliances that ensured that any aggressor would face many defenders. His network did, in fact, help to prevent war, by deterring aggressors and by calming the fears of status quo powers. A parallel defensive alliance network might be established today.

On balance, this method of peacekeeping seems ineffective and dangerous,

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at least for now. It would be ineffective because Western publics would be leery of direct Western involvement in Eastern wars; this would limit Western governments' ability to carry out their commitments. It would be dangerous because military commitments, once given, are hard to escape. Any Western program for preserving peace in the East should be chosen with an eye toward minimizing the risk that the West will be entangled in the wars that it fails to prevent. However, a Bismarckian scheme cannot avoid raising this risk.

This risk is magnified by the possibility that the newly-freed Eastern states may later embrace aggressive goals that now lie latent. The domestic politics of the Eastern states will remain turbulent for years to come, and their long-term foreign policy goals will be inchoate until this turbulence is over. After it ends, security guarantees for Eastern states will make more sense. In the meantime, though, the Western states risk adopting the latent expansionist goals of Eastern states if they guarantee Eastern states' security.

Nevertheless, the possibility of extending security guarantees to some Eastern states should not be dismissed out of hand. In the end, security guarantees of some sort may be required to persuade the emerging states of the former Soviet Union to surrender their inherited nuclear forces. If so, the West must choose between allowing proliferation to proceed, and offering the security guarantees required to stop it. Security guarantees can also keep peace more effectively than the economic tools I recommend below (Option #5), if they are applied forcefully, are married to a persuasive declaratory policy, and are strictly conditioned on good conduct by the recipient of the guarantee.

Certainly any Western security guarantees that are issued should be crafted with these concerns in mind, and strictly conditioned on the Eastern states' disavowal of aggressive aims or behavior. Otherwise NATO guarantees will encourage the emergence of aggressive programs, and NATO will risk being sucked into the wars these programs create.

3. Collective Security. Under this option the West would seek to establish a comprehensive collective security system, probably using the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as the foundation. This idea is

27 NATO also should make no guarantees to states that are unwilling to allow the peaceful secession by national minorities, since such refusal could spark a civil or international war that would entangle NATO. Noting the importance of this and other conditions (and recommending NATO security guarantees for Eastern states that accept them) is Hans Binnendijk, "NATO Can't Be Vague About Commitment to Eastern Europe," International Herald Tribune, November 8, 1991, p. 6.

similar to #2, the Bismarckian Defense Alliance Network; it differs only by committing all states to defend all others, while a Bismarckian system would only commit some states to defend some others.

However, a collective security solution is impractical and unnecessary. It is impractical for the reasons that have doomed collective security systems to failure in the past: collective action by large groups of state is unwieldy, and states are seldom willing to pay short-term costs merely to earn the right to claim reciprocal help from an unreliable community sometime in the distant future. It is unnecessary because the weight of the whole international community would not be necessary to defeat an Eastern aggressor; a group including only the several strongest Western powers could probably contain even Russia. Therefore, there is no need to organize a Rube Goldberg system that involves all the lesser states of the region in decisionmaking.

4. Institutionalized Consultation. Under this scheme Europe would rely for peacekeeping on the CSCE, which would serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, and for raising security issues on an ad-hoc basis.

Such a scheme would serve useful purposes. Europe needs institutionalized forums for East-West discussion, to ease Eastern access to Western ideas and experience, and to give the West an opportunity for constructive input while the Eastern states are building their political institutions. Such a forum can also serve to focus wide attention on brewing crises before they get out of hand. However, a consultative forum can not provide a reliable security program, and is worse than nothing if its existence lulls Westerners into believing that they have already done enough to preserve peace.

5. Use Economic Leverage to Promote Peaceful Conduct. Under this option the Western powers would condition their economic relations with states in Eastern Europe and the former USSR on their willingness to behave peacefully.

The logic supporting such a policy is straightforward: if what the West wants is peace in the East, then it should encourage the states of the East to behave peacefully, by offering appropriate economic incentives.

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29 On collective security and its shortcomings see Claude, Power and International Relations, pp. 94-204; and, on its shortcomings as a peacekeeping tool in contemporary Europe, see Charles L. Glaser, "European Security Structures: Alternatives to Collective Security," forthcoming in a volume edited by George W. Downs and Duncan Snidal. I am also grateful to Glaser for discussions on this subject; his insights have influenced my own thinking.

This would require that the Western powers first define a common standard of peaceful conduct. That standard could be framed several ways, but I think it should include seven main elements: (1) renunciation of the threat or use of force; (2) robust guarantees for both individual human rights and the rights of national minorities; 31 (3) acceptance of current national borders, or agreement to promptly settle contested borders though peaceful means; (4) willingness to adopt a democratic form of government; (5) willingness to portray history honestly in the schools, and to renounce the propagation of nationalist, chauvinist, or hate propaganda; (6) adoption of free market economic policies, and disavowal of protectionist or other beggar-thy-neighbor economic policies toward other Eastern states; and (7) cooperation with Western efforts to safely consolidate the Soviet nuclear force. 32 Then the Western powers should pursue a common economic

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31 Minority rights should be defined broadly, to include fair minority representation in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the central government. The definition of minority rights used in most international human rights agreements is more restrictive: it omits the right to share power in the national government, and includes only the right to political autonomy and the preservation of minority language, culture, and religion. See Edward Lawson, Encyclopedia of Human Rights (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1991), p. 1070.

Should minority rights be defined to include the right to secession and national independence? On this question the Western powers face a difficult decision. Some writers recommend that minority rights should sometimes be construed to include a right to secession (Vernon Van Dyke, "Collective Entities and Moral Rights: Problems in Liberal-Democratic Thought," Journal of Politics, Vol. 44, No. 1 [February 1982], pp. 21-40, at 36-37). However, universal recognition of this right would require massive redrawing of boundaries in the East, and would raise the question of Western recognition of scores of now-unrecognized independence movements worldwide. One solution is to recognize the right to secede in instances where the central government is unwilling to fully grant other minority rights, but to decline to recognize the right to secede if all other minority rights are fully recognized and robustly protected. In essence, the West would hold its possible recognition of a right to secede in reserve, to encourage governments to recognize other minority rights.

32 The argument for the first five conditions is straightforward: wars are fewer if states use less force; states that oppress their minorities may provoke nearby states to intervene to protect these minorities; states without settled borders will have more border conflicts with their neighbors; democratic states generally have relatively peaceful relations with other democratic states, and may have more peaceful relations with all states; and states whose schools teach false self-glorifying history, and whose public discourse is infected with nationalist propaganda, are more prone to aggressive foreign policies. The logic of the sixth condition is that the Eastern states must transit from command to market economies sooner or later; they will magnify the economic dislocations produced by marketization if they procrastinate this decision; these dislocations will be even more severe if the Eastern states fail to adopt cooperative economic policies toward one other; the resulting economic cataclysm will raise the risk of fascism, dictatorship, and war; and, therefore, early decisions to adopt radical market reforms and cooperative economic policies toward their neighbors will reduce the overall risk of war. On
policy toward the states of the East, offering the carrot of full membership in the Western economic system (and, perhaps, substantial economic aid), to states that behave "peacefully," while threatening the unpeaceful with the stick of exclusion and economic sanctions.\textsuperscript{33}

The rationale behind these seven conditions is that an effective code of "peaceful conduct" must require that states renounce the use of force against others (condition #1), but cannot stop there: it must also require that states refrain from policies that would provoke others to use force against them (conditions #2 and #3); avoid creating domestic conditions that would foster their own decisions to use force (conditions #4, #5, and #6); and refrain from policies endanger the worldwide non-proliferation regime (condition #7).\textsuperscript{34}

Such a policy has a fair chance of working because the West enters this situation with more leverage than usual,\textsuperscript{35} for two reasons. First, the impending

\textsuperscript{33} Of course, some Eastern states will embrace many of these standards without Western pressure. See, for example, Francis X. Clines, "Yeltsin Plan Wins a Quick Approval," \textit{New York Times}, November 2, 1991, p. 7, reporting the Yeltsin government's decision to implement the market reforms that it launched on January 2, 1992.


Thus the overall approach of the Bush Administration has closely resembled the Option #5 approach. However, the Administration approach is weaker than the one I recommend in three respects: (1) it omits condition #5 (the renunciation of nationalist propaganda); (2) it does not define minority rights, leaving Eastern governments free to adopt a restrictive definition that omits the right to fair representation in the national government; (3) the assistance it offers to cooperating governments is quite meager--far below the $4-5 billion I recommend below. The Administration also has not yet moved to forge a common Western policy toward the East that incorporates these standards.

\textsuperscript{35} The strength of Western leverage is already reflected in the respectful attention given to Secretary Baker's principles by the new governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Alma-Ata accord that established the Commonwealth recognized minority rights, nonuse of force, respect for existing borders, peaceful settlement of disputes, democratic principles, and the need to form a "common economic space." "Text of Accords." Republic leaders, including Kirghizian President Askar Akayev and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, have also endorsed Baker's principles: Nazarbayev stated that he keeps them in the
Eastern economic implosion will leave the Eastern states desperate for Western economic aid and for membership in the Western economy--far moreso than they would be in normal times. Hence the promise of Western economic help, and the threat of economic sanctions, will carry great extra weight. (It may be that Eastern leaders now exaggerate the value of economic relations with the West. If so, however, the West should exploit this misconception while it lasts, if this aids Western efforts to build a peaceful order.)

Second, the West has cultural leverage that should not be underestimated. The peoples of the East admire the people and culture of the West. Perhaps they exaggerate the West's virtues, and someday they may recognize that Western societies also have warts. Right now, however, they see Western societies as role models, they respect Western opinion, and they want Western approval. Hence the threat of chastisement and exclusion by the West is a sanction that carries real weight. The West also derives leverage from the unformed nature of Eastern political thought. The collapse of communism has left an intellectual void, leaving the East more than normally receptive to Western notions of appropriate political conduct.

Two basic variants of this option should be considered: an expensive ("large aid") variant and a less expensive ("little or no aid") variant. In the expensive variant the West would offer an economic aid package of perhaps $15-$20 billion per year for several years, focused on providing the resources needed to transit from command to market economies, and conditioned on Eastern compliance with the above-noted seven-point peaceful-conduct standard. The less expensive

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36 To put the matter in Kuhnian terms: the East's dominant political paradigm has been shattered, leaving it for the moment highly receptive to Western paradigms. See Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2nd ed., enl. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

37 This variant follows the "Grand Bargain" proposed by Graham Allison and Robert Blackwill, except my variant would attach more conditions to Western aid than would the Grand Bargain proposal. See Graham Allison and Robert Blackwill, "America's Stake in the Soviet Future," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 70, No. 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 77-97. They suggest an aid package offer of $15-20 billion per year for three years, with costs to be spread among the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. They would condition aid on full market reforms and democratic reforms. Also recommending sizable economic aid to the former Soviet Union is Anders Aslund and Richard Layard, "Help Russia Now," New York Times, December 5, 1991, p. A33, suggesting an aid package of $17 billion for next year, including a once-only $5 billion currency stabilization fund, $6 billion in food aid, and $6 billion to finance imports
variant would keep aid to a minimum, offering only free access to Western capital, markets, and technology in exchange for peaceful Eastern conduct.

The first variant is far superior, if Western publics will accept the cost (as they probably will if Western leaders provide leadership.) It would give the West greater leverage over Eastern policies—a major benefit, since Eastern compliance with Western wishes will vary directly with the power of Western leverage. It would also ease the economic pain of marketization, thus lowering the risk of anti-democratic reaction and fascism. These rewards are surely worth the price, which is a pittance relative to the cosmic stakes at issue. However, even the second variant could give the West substantial leverage, because the emerging Eastern states will place a high value on membership in the Western economic system. In short, the West should use large carrots in its carrot-and-stick policy, but even small carrots can produce significant results.38

Both variants have the virtue, missing from Options #2 and #3, of minimizing the risk of the West’s entanglement in wars that it fails to prevent. If Options #2 and #3 fail, they fail catastrophically; Option #5 fails gracefully—if war occurs, the Western powers simply impose sanctions on the state or states most responsible, and wait for sanctions to produce results.

6. Pursue a general European settlement with Russia. Under this option the Western powers would seek an understanding with Russia on the size and nature of spheres of influence in the new Europe. This proposal makes sense only if Russia wants a special Russian sphere of influence—which it may not, preferring instead status as a normal state with full membership in the Western club. However, if Russia wants a special sphere, and the West is willing to grant it, the Western powers might consider discussing the "rules of the game" for that sphere before a Western-Russian competition for influence in that sphere develops. For example, the West might offer to promise not to incorporate

required to restart the economy.

38 The Western powers should also offer to help the Eastern powers devise specific policies to implement these seven principles, and offer active assistance with peacemaking if conflicts nevertheless emerge. Specifically, Western governments and institutions should offer to share Western ideas and experience on the building of democratic institutions; the development of political and legal institutions that protect and empower minorities; the development of market economic institutions; and the best means to organize the control nationalism in education. (On this last point, accounts of the West European experience include Paul M. Kennedy, "The Decline of Nationalistic History in the West, 1900-1970," Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 8, No. 1 (January 1973), pp. 77-100; and E.H. Dance, History the Betrayer (London: Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 126-150.) Finally, if serious conflicts emerge despite the West’s preventive efforts, the West should offer active mediation, just as the Nixon-Ford, Carter, and Bush administrations have actively mediated the Arab-Israeli conflict.
Russia's neighbors into alliances hostile to Russia in exchange for Russian non-interference in their domestic affairs—in essence, an agreement to neutralize, or "Finlandize," Russia's newly free neighbors. The logic of such a policy is that Russia is far stronger than its neighbors, and a realistic Western policy toward Russia therefore requires special accommodation to Russian fears and desires. Moreover, it is dangerous to leave large issues between powerful states unsettled; instead, these issues should be resolved before they become serious disputes.

Such a policy would reduce the risk of a Russian-Western collision on Russia's periphery, and also might gain greater freedom for Russia's neighbors. Absent a neutralization agreement these neighbors may find themselves subject to periodic Russian intervention, much as the Caribbean and Central American states have experienced periodic American intervention since 1898.

However, such a policy has four drawbacks, which together make it inappropriate, at least for now. First, such a policy would have the appearance of a new Yalta—a sellout of the newly-won freedom of Russia's new neighbors—and would generate a commensurate domestic backlash in the United States. Such opposition would be shortsighted if alternatives would leave the Eastern states under informal Russian dominion (externally enforced neutrality being far better than subjugation), but it nevertheless seems likely. Second, this policy assumes Russian regional ambitions, and Russian mistrust of the West, that are not yet manifest; but Western diplomacy that assumes these ambitious may bring them forward. Third, this policy would tie the West's hands if it ever chose to pursue Option #2, which could require Western alliances with Russia's neighbors. Finally, a settlement is worse than none if it would not stand the test of time—as it may not if the parties to it are unsure of their own future intentions and desires. Russian post-communist politics are still taking shape, and may remain unsettled for years to come; hence the current Russian government may be unable to speak for Russia's future governments. This makes Russia an unreliable partner for a general settlement, since future Russian governments may renounce its agreements. If so, a settlement is unwise, because broken agreements sow mistrust and bitterness, and are therefore worse than no agreement at all.

Summary. I would pursue Option #5 because the West has a strategic and humanitarian interest in preserving peace in the East; the West has considerable economic and cultural leverage; the preservation of peace depends most directly on peaceful conduct by the emerging Eastern states; and other means of peacekeeping will be insufficient or ineffective by themselves, and would entail greater risk of Western entanglement in Eastern wars. I would also consider Option #2 as a possibility for the longer term.

B. Shortcomings of Option #5: Dilemmas and Counter-arguments.
Thirteen dilemmas and counter-arguments could be raised against Option
Together they constitute good reason for caution, but I believe they leave the *prima facie* case for Option #5 undefeated.

**Charge #1:** "A policy of reliance on economic leverage would rest on an incredible threat. It entails a Western threat to impose economic sanctions on Eastern states; but if the West executes this threat it would worsen an economic implosion that, we fear, could itself cause fascism, dictatorship, and war. In short, the West would be threatening to cut off its nose to spite its face; hence its threat may not be credible."

Response: this is a real dilemma, but a familiar problem with policies that involve negative sanctions—they often have some counter-productive effects. The answer lies in convincing the world that Western leaders believe that the overall policy makes sense, even if it has harmful effects in some instances.

**Charge #2:** "The U.S. lacks the expertise to manage the post-Soviet transition. This transition presents a problem of enormous complexity. The American foreign policy community has never before attempted such an intellectually demanding project. The American post-war reconstructions of Germany and Japan supply hopeful precedents, but they required long preparation and massive resources, and were conducted in relatively homogeneous societies under politically simpler circumstances. The former Soviet Union is a more complex society that Americans know little about. The myopic Kremlinological focus of the Soviet Studies profession has left the U.S. with few objective and reliable experts on the Soviet nationalities—too few to give confidence that the American state could craft appropriate policies. Social engineering is hard enough in our own society; it would be folly to attempt to engineer a society that we understand so poorly."

Response: there is much truth in this argument. However, it does not argue for inaction, unless we assume that American ignorance is so deep that by acting the U.S. is likely to cause more trouble than it solves.

**Charge #3:** "American policy will be captured and distorted by ethnic special interests. If so, the U.S. will be unable to pursue the evenhanded policies that would be required for effective peacekeeping; hence the U.S. should pursue disengagement from the East."

Response: history certainly suggests this possibility; witness the important role played by domestic special interests in shaping U.S. policy toward the Greek-Turkish conflict, Central America, East Asia during the 1940s and 1950s (the China Lobby) and the Middle East. However, this problem argues in favor of Option #5, as well as against it. If America's relevant ethnic special interests prove strong enough to influence U.S. policy, they are likely to propel the U.S. into Eastern politics in any case. The enunciation of general principles to guide U.S. policy would help insulate policy from such special interest capture, by creating a general standard for action. In fact, the real choice is less likely to be
between principled action and no action, but rather is a three-way choice between principled action, no action, and unprincipled, special-interest-favoring action. A statement of principles would help head off unprincipled action.

**Charge #4:** "Economic leverage will be insufficient to influence the wilder nationalist leaders, but the West must influence these leaders to preserve peace." This is a variant of the general argument that "economic sanctions seldom work." It also takes the form of "Look at Yugoslavia. Western pressure failed there!"

Response: as noted above, I think the power of Western economic and cultural leverage will be at zenith during this crisis. Thus simple extrapolation from the past failures of economic sanctions suggests unduly pessimistic conclusions. And the Yugoslav example shows how not to intervene, not that successful intervention is impossible. Western efforts to prevent war in Yugoslavia were ineffective largely because these efforts came late and lacked coherence. The European Community emerged as Europe’s peacekeeping agency only at the last minute, and the EC states sent contradictory messages, with Germany working against the other EC states. Moreover, their main message--"don’t use force"--was incomplete. Europe also should have asked Belgrade and Zagreb to adopt policies that would have diminished others’ impulse to use force against them (i.e. Europe should have pressed Belgrade to establish a fair secession procedure that would allow Croatia to gain freedom, while also pressing Croatia to grant its Serb minority the right to full political equality or national freedom. Such noises were eventually made, but far too late.)

Moreover, the charge that economic sanctions never work is historically overstated, and not fully applicable. Sanctions have proved an unreliable instrument, but they have worked on occasion. Moreover, scholars have measured sanctions’ effectiveness by assessing their ability to persuade states to stop or reverse policies already adopted—not to deter states from adopting policies not yet begun. In short, analysts have asked if sanctions work for compellence (which is difficult, because it involves forcing opposing elites to climb down from established positions), not deterrence (which is easier, since it requires no climb-down). Option #5, however, would use threat of sanctions for deterrence, not compellence. The Western powers would publicly detail the Eastern policies that would activate Western sanctions, before Eastern governments adopted these policies. This would give Eastern governments ample time to take Western

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reactions into account before they publicly took policy positions or made policy commitments. In short, it is misleading to assess the probable success of Option #5 by recalling the past failures of sanctions to compel: Option #5 should produce better results than these failures suggest.

**Charge #5:** "A clear standard of peaceful conduct cannot be devised. What, in particular, does it mean to protect 'minority rights'? What is a 'minority,' and what does adequate protection consist of? Can tiny groups claim minority rights? Can all minorities claim a right to secede? If not, what minorities have that right? Moreover, the Americans are the wrong people to answer these questions. The U.S. brings little wisdom to this problem: America had a poor record of protecting minority rights before the 1960s, and the American political system is still no model for the protection of minority rights."

Response: these are knotty problems, but are hardly insoluble. European political models for protecting minorities—e.g. Switzerland and Belgium—indeed more appropriate than American models, and should receive focus.

**Charge #6:** "The West would be arrogant to presume the right to manage the East's transition. What gives Westerners the right to lecture Easterners on minority rights, or the need to control nationalism? The Western powers have often abused their own minorities, and have indulged their own nationalisms."

Response: this is true, but it provides no reason for inaction. Instead the Western powers should admit their failings, and accept the duty to live up to their own standards. It might do the West good to listen to Eastern criticisms, and to agree to lift its own performance in this area.

**Charge #7:** "The goals of preventing and isolating conflict in the East are contradictory. An activist Western policy is more likely to entangle the West in un-preventable conflicts than to prevent them."

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Response: a policy of economic engagement leaves ample room for disengagement if it fails to prevent war. Entanglement could well arise from military guarantees and troops on the ground, but Option #5 avoids these.

Charge #8: "The collapse of past empires sparked war mainly because outsiders came in and fought each other over the carcass of the dying empire. Therefore, instead of intervening in Eastern affairs the Western powers should reach a mutual agreement that all will stay out." In other words, what's needed is a "Yellowstone" regime for the western powers, agreed to by all.

Response: this argument rests on a misreading of history. Much of the violence attending the collapse of past empires occurred among the newly-freed peoples, and arose with little stimulus from outsiders. The bloody histories of post-colonial India-Pakistan-Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, Uganda, Burundi, Sudan, and Lebanon illustrate the danger.

Charge #9: "Western publics won't support this policy if it proves expensive."

Response: This is probably true, but the policy will not cost much. Even the expensive variant of Option #5 is fairly cheap; the American share of a "large aid" $15-20 billion aid package would be perhaps $4-5 billion for several years, or roughly equal to the aid the U.S. already gives Israel, and a tiny fraction (2-3 percent) the size of the defense budget. The costs of the "little or no aid" variant are even smaller: they are embodied in the opportunity cost of lost commerce with the East if sanctions against the East prove necessary, and will be zero if Western persuasion succeeds without sanctions.

Charge #10: "No general prescription applies to all the Eastern states; e.g. in some democracy may promote peace, but in others democracy will produce further fissuring and secession, hence civil war. This is especially true in the more ethnically heterogeneous states, where minorities would use their political freedoms to reach for national freedom. In such states only an authoritarian government can preserve peace: democracy is a recipe for chaos."

Response: democracy may empower small groups to seek independence, perhaps bringing even more states into being, and raising the risk of war among them. The West should judge these on a case-by-case basis. In doing this, it should recognize that in some cases a policy favoring the independence of secessionist sub-minorities may produce the most durable peace.

Charge #11: "A great war in the East isn't likely, so an active policy to avert it is premature. So far Eastern Europe has seen no major violence outside Yugoslavia, and strife within the former USSR has produced only 3,000-4,000

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42 Sooner or later, one way or another, the Eastern states will join the Western economic world. The "little or no aid" variant of option #5 merely suggests that the Western states not throw away their leverage by granting that membership unconditionally.
deaths and 2,000,000 refugees. The future probably holds more of the same-- occasional violence, but no bloodbath."

Response: The task of national security policy is to address unlikely-but-disastrous contingencies. A Soviet invasion of Western Europe was never likely, but NATO was wise to spend vast sums to make it even less likely. A general war in the East seems unlikely today, but it cannot be ruled out, nor can we rule out the westward spread of such a war. The fact that the odds are against such a war is no argument against taking steps to avert it. Moreover, a successful effort to avert war probably must begin before the war is in sight. If the West waits until the risks are manifest it may be too late to act effectively.

Charge #12: "The West lacks an agency or instrument for taking unified action toward the East. The Western powers can have an effect only if they act in unison. This requires a coordinating institution. The Group of Seven (G7) states--the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan--form the logical action group, but the G7 has no secretariat or staff. Through what agency, then, would the Western powers act? And if no existing organization is appropriate, could a new agency be established in time to be effective?"

Response: there is no agency appropriate for Western action. The Coordinating Committee on Export Controls (COCOM) has the most appropriate membership, but the wrong staff. However, an ad hoc approach may work. To handle the matter President Bush should appoint a special policy czar--a person with an international reputation and appropriate expertise--to coordinate this policy within the U.S. government and among the G7 governments.43

Charge #13: "If the West acts and fails the peoples of the East will blame the West for their suffering."

Response: Great powers risk blame for bad results whenever they act. That’s life in the big city of international politics, and no excuse for inaction.

C. American Policy Options: Summary.

The United States should pursue an active policy of peacekeeping toward the former Soviet empire, but should use largely non-military means to achieve its goals. It should avoid extending the boundaries of NATO eastward for the time being; this might be appropriate after the states of the East have stabilized their domestic politics and clarified their foreign policy goals, but not today.

43 President Bush has designated Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger to coordinate all American assistance programs to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Thomas L. Friedman, "Baker Presents Steps to Aid Transition by Soviets," New York Times, December 13, 1991, p. 1. However, Eagleburger has other pressing responsibilities; hence it may be appropriate to designate another coordinator who could give the problem full attention.
American military forces have a role to play in this policy, but that role is indirect. The American military presence in Western Europe casts a sobering shadow over the East, and lends force to American policy statements by symbolizing American interest in the general region. This is one of several reasons why that presence should continue. However, the U.S. should not adopt strategies that could require deploying American military forces in the Eastern region.

V. CONCLUSION

For the fourth time since Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo the Western powers face the task of designing a new political order following a decisive great war. Their decisions will shape the world for decades to come, and will match the importance of those that shaped the peace settlements of 1815, 1919, and 1945: if wise, these decisions can lay the foundation for a durable peace; if not they may sow the seeds of a new war, as the errors of 1919 sowed the seeds of World War II. This is not a time for normal policymaking, or for letting small considerations shape decisions. The West's leaders should stand ready to invest the intellectual and financial resources needed to produce a stable settlement—even if these prove substantial—and to run political risks to bring that settlement about.

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Stephen Van Evera teaches international relations in the political science department at MIT. From 1984-1987 he was managing editor of the journal *International Security*. He has published articles on the causes of war, American foreign policy, American defense policy, and is writing a book on the causes and prevention of war.