

NATO LOOKS EAST

Edited by

Piotr Dutkiewicz

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NATO looks east / edited by Piotr Dutkiewicz and Robert J. Jackson.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-275-96059-5 (alk. paper)

1. North Atlantic Treaty Organization—Membership. 2. Europe,
Eastern—Military relations. 3. National security—Europe.

I. Dutkiewicz, Piotr. II. Jackson, Robert J., 1936-

UA646.3.N2445 1998

355'.031091821—dc21

98-6823

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data is available.

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 98-6823

ISBN: 0-275-96059-5

First published in 1998

Praeger Publishers, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881

An imprint of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America



The paper used in this book complies with the Permanent Paper Standard issued by the National Information Standards Organization (Z39.48-1984).

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CHAPTER FOUR

NATO, RUSSIA, AND EASTERN EUROPEAN SECURITY

Beyond the Interwar Analogy

Hall Gardner

In March 1997, Russian Communist party leader Gennady Zyuganov called the Clinton–Yeltsin summit in Helsinki a “crushing defeat.” He then compared the Helsinki accord—the American–Russian “agreement not to agree” over the issue of NATO enlargement into Central Europe—to the Versailles Treaty of 1919. The analogy implies that much as Germany had been humiliated following its defeat in World War I, so has Russia been humiliated in the sense that its leadership has been unable to protect and control its perceived vital geostrategic, military–technological, and political–economic interests. From Zyuganov’s standpoint, contemporary Russia will continue to remain in a period of sociopolitical and economic instability and crisis, a situation that can only be remedied by the rise of a strong neo-Communist/pan-nationalist movement that will attempt to regain former Soviet global power and status.

Yet despite its evident propagandistic elements intended to undermine Boris Yeltsin’s leadership, the analogy should not entirely be dismissed. The interwar analogy does possess a certain relevance, but only if the interwar period is *systematically* compared and contrasted with the contemporary crisis. Contemporary Russian fears of encirclement, socioeconomic collapse, and regional disaggregation can be compared and contrasted with fears of Weimar Germany. Moreover, interwar historical disputes continue to play a role in the contemporary debate. The 1920 Treaty of Trianon and other interwar pacts, such as the 1920 Latvian–Soviet Treaty of Riga, the 1920 Treaty of Tartu, and the 1921 Polish–Soviet Treaty of Riga remain relevant. The 1939 Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact continues to weigh heavily upon the contemporary debate, as does the Soviet seizure of formerly German Kaliningrad, the granting of German territory to Poland, and the division of Polish

territory between Ukraine and Belarus, among other salient geohistorical issues, such as Khrushchev's decision in 1954 to grant the Crimea to Ukraine.

In regard to efforts to secure the peace, the Locarno Treaty of 1924–1925 can be compared and contrasted with the security aspects of the Two Plus Four Agreement leading to German unification. The Easter Locarno proposed by French Foreign Minister Jean Louis Barthou in 1934 can be compared and contrasted with contemporary proposals for a comprehensive system of security for Central and Eastern Europe, involving interlocking international regimes. If new conceptions for Central and Eastern European security ultimately become actualized, then it is not impossible that NATO, the European Union (EU), the Western European Union (WEU), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Ukraine, and Russia (among other states) may all attempt to coordinate peacekeeping and other aspects of defense and security planning throughout the region.

History need not repeat itself in precisely the same manner. Russia need not choose the path of communist or pan-nationalist revanchism. Neither global conflict nor extraterritorial appeasement in the pre–World War II meaning of the term, is inevitable. At the same time, the United States and the EU (along with NATO) will need to engage Russia in a truly concerted Euro–Atlantic foreign policy aimed at implementing a comprehensive system of cooperative-collective security for Central and Eastern Europe in order to forestall such a possibility.

THE GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL CONSTELLATION AND THE INTERWAR ANALOGY

Following the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1991, the contemporary global constellation of power interrelationships increasingly looks like that of the interwar period in which the highly unstable Russian Federation appears to represent a hybrid between Weimar Germany (as a former amphibious state with global outreach) and czarist Russia (as a continentally based empire prior to the Russian Civil War and Bolshevik reconsolidation of the empire).¹ In many ways, American global strategy during the Cold War was able to achieve the late war aims of imperial Germany prior to its defeat in November 1918. At the Treaty of Brest–Litovsk in March 1918, imperial Germany forced Lenin to surrender the Baltic States, Finland, Poland, and Ukraine. Not too dissimilarly, American containment strategy was able to force the collapse of an overextended Soviet empire by 1989–1991, a fact which not only liberated Central and Eastern Europe, Ukraine, and Belarus, but also such key Central Asian republics as Kazakhstan. From this perspective, an imploded and *indecisively* defeated Russian Federation continues to play the role of the central geostrategic challenger somewhat similar to an *indecisively* defeated Weimar Germany. Moreover, following their imperial collapse, Weimar Germany (then) and Russia (now) attempted to reconsolidate their regimes and prevent potential disaggregation of their respective states.

In the interwar period, Weimar Germany opposed an encircling coalition of Britain and France on its western flank, aligned to the Little Entente (and possibly

linked to Poland and the Soviet Union) on its eastern flank. The new Russia has similarly opposed an encircling coalition of NATO and the EU/WEU linked to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary (and possibly, Ukraine in a Baltic–Black Sea Alliance) on its western flank, simultaneously aligned with Japan (and possibly China) on its eastern flank. Or alternatively, much as czarist Russia was confronted with an encirclement of imperial Germany linked to Ukraine, Japan, and Turkey, so has the new Russia been faced with the prospects of encirclement by a unified Germany, and expanding NATO/WEU, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ukraine, Turkey, and Japan.

In counterreaction, and in an effort to preclude encirclement, contemporary Russia has sought a union with Belarus in an effort to pressure Ukraine and forestall NATO enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe. Concurrently, Moscow has attempted to forge a close entente with the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the form of a "neo-Rapallo Pact." In the interwar period, Weimar Germany forged an entente with Soviet Russia (the Rapallo Pact) and attempted to form a customs union with Austria (against the mandates of the Versailles Treaty) and concurrently pressured the Little Entente and Poland in the not-so-dissimilar effort to prevent the formation of encircling coalitions. Much as imperial Germany lost most of its amphibious overseas outreach (and place in the sun), Russia has lost much of its overseas Soviet empire but continues to possess remnants of a global empire. The Russian elite have yet to lose interest in rebuilding their global status, including efforts to sustain the former Soviet electronic monitoring station at Lourdes, Cuba, despite Helms–Burton legislation intended to place sanctions on states that deal with Cuba.

The key difference between the two eras results from the fact that the Russian Federation represents a Eurasian power with specifically Russian geostrategic interests, while Weimar Germany represented a Central European power with specifically German geostrategic interests. From this perspective, the Eastern European theater (primarily involving France, Weimar Germany, and Eastern Europe) was largely unrelated to the Far Eastern theater in the interwar period (even though interwar Soviet conflict with Japan did influence Moscow's policy toward Germany, France, and Eastern Europe). In the contemporary situation, however, the European and Asian theaters are more intimately connected due to the fact that Russia, as a potential central strategic challenger, links the two regions closer together.

The role of the United States to a certain extent parallels that of interwar Britain in regard to the European continent—although Washington has thus far played a more engaged role in European affairs than did Britain in the interwar period. On the one hand, unlike the interwar period in which both the United States and Britain steered clear of continental commitments, the United States (thus far) remains the primary guarantor of West European security, and potentially that of Central and Eastern Europe, but only on the assumption that it does not move into isolationism, or more accurately, selective interventionism. Unlike Britain and France which refused to intervene in the Spanish Civil War, for example, the United States (in a concerted effort alongside the Europeans and Russians) did finally engage itself

diplomatically and in support of NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) deployments following the 1995 Dayton peace accords.

On the other hand, Secretary of Defense William Cohen stated in early 1997 that American forces engaged in SFOR are to leave Bosnia for good in mid-1998. Ironically, American calls for NATO enlargement come at a time of general budget cuts in defense. NATO's own nuclear capacity has been reduced by 80 percent on land; investment in NATO infrastructure in Western Europe has been cut by 60 percent. Potential NATO expenditure must furthermore be regarded in light of the fact that the Clinton administration admits a \$40 billion shortfall on its own defense planning for two nearly simultaneous regional conflicts. Critics have argued that the strategy-resource gap may, in reality, be between \$50 and \$200 billion over the next six to ten years.²

Economic factors may thus not be conducive to continued U.S. global engagement. What is also disconcerting is not only the fact that American steps in the direction of selective interventionism tend to encourage Russian revanchism, but they weaken the prospect for European integration and the formation of a concerted American-European foreign and security policy. It was largely the American congressional refusal in 1919 to commit the United States to the defense of both Britain and France that helped to undermine a coordinated Anglo-French policy toward Weimar Germany, not to overlook the American congressional refusal to sign onto the League of Nations, which likewise prevented the formulation of a more concerted Anglo-French-American policy.

The flanking role of the expanding EU/WEU (backed by a unified Germany) in many ways parallels the role of interwar France which sought to secure its position in the Rhineland versus Weimar Germany, as well as seek out new spheres of influence and security throughout Eastern Europe. It has largely been Germany (backed by the United States) which has pressed for NATO enlargement into Central Europe in order to secure a buffer between itself and the potential for instability emanating from the East.

The dilemma, however, is that NATO really cannot enlarge without also readjusting itself to new political-military realities involving greater power and responsibility sharing with its own West European allies. NATO's efforts to forge a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) represents an effort to bring France and the EU/WEU into a more concerted relationship within the American-led alliance. At the same time, the expansion of the EU (and potentially WEU) to such states as Finland (or perhaps the Baltic States) creates the potential for tensions between NATO and EU/WEU. Much as was the case for the interwar period in which Britain and France could not coordinate strategy, it is not at all certain whether NATO will necessarily grant Article 5 security guarantees to those states which are not full members of the alliance; concurrently, the EU and WEU have yet to acquire the necessary assets to act on their own volition. The risk is that NATO itself could well become overextended by taking on too many commitments.

The PRC plays the role of the key *pivotal* flanking state (in MacKinder's original sense of the term). Just like Stalinist Russia before it, the PRC can threaten to

change allegiances or opt for neutrality; it can swing toward Russia or the United States if it so desires. Much as “democratic” anti-Communist Weimar Germany and “totalitarian” Soviet Russia forged the 1922 Rapallo Pact, both democratic anti-Communist Russia and the last major bastion of Communist totalitarianism, the PRC, have forged a close relationship. Much as Soviet Russia let Weimar Germany rebuild and test weaponry on Soviet territory, as well as train *Panzer* officers and pilots, for example, Russia and China have engaged in significant arms and nuclear technological cooperation and assistance, such as sales of the Su-27 Flanker fighter jet. Such a Sino-Russian, neo-Rapallo Pact is partly intended to check NATO enlargement, place pressure on Japan, and forestall a potential NATO-Japanese-Chinese encirclement.

The contemporary U.S.-Japanese alliance is best characterized by the Anglo-Japanese alliance (1902) before the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese war which threatened czarist Russia with encirclement. (However, in the contemporary era, Tokyo has largely played a civilian political-financial-economic role somewhat like that of the United States before both World Wars I and II. It is consequently the PRC, not Japan, that has engaged in a more assertive militaristic policy, most reminiscent of its late nineteenth century self-strengthening movement than China's subsequent collapse into warring states in the early twentieth century.)

Moreover, the PRC's burgeoning dependence upon energy sources and claims to greater China (Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese Diaspora) appear somewhat similar to interwar Japan's dependence upon strategic raw materials (petroleum and scrap metal) and claims to a Greater Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. There appears to be a parallel between the American use of most-favored nation (MFN) status to gain strategic-economic leverage vis-à-vis the PRC; and American use of the 1911 U.S.-Japanese trade agreement in the (failed) effort to gain strategic-economic leverage over Japan.³

Soviet collapse has additionally resulted in the formation of an area of instability or of potential conflict (what has been deemed a “crush zone,” “arc of crisis,” “shatterbelt,” “gray zone,” “strategic void,” or a “no man's land”) that has extended from Finland and Baltic States to the Black Sea and deep into Central Asia. It is an area of far greater size than the area of potential conflict of the interwar period in that it extends into Central Asia and maintain links with continuing tensions in the Middle East. Soviet collapse has moreover opened up the latent revisionist or irredentist claims of many states which were originally crushed by the Bolshevik Revolution or by Stalin. Much like the collapse of the imperial German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires, the collapse of the Soviet bloc has generated both Russian and non-Russian diaspora. More than 25 million Russians have been left in fourteen non-Russian countries; more than 18 million citizens of fourteen other countries were left outside their respective homes; and more than 17 million people were left without their own statehood.⁴ This fact exacerbates the potential for Russian or non-Russian conflict.

Within this shatterbelt, the so-called Visegrad states (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) represent the contemporary equivalent to the interwar

Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania).⁵ The Little Entente was initially formed against Hungarian revisionism, but each of the states also opposed a restoration of the Austro–Hungarian dual monarchy. Czechoslovakia opposed Weimar Germany, Yugoslavia opposed Italy, and Romania opposed the Soviet Union. As a defensive unit, the Little Entente thus sought to counterbalance German, Italian, and Soviet power and influence.

In the contemporary era, the Visegrad states continue to represent a bloc that can counterbalance both German and Russian interests and pressures, but a bloc in which fissures are increasingly becoming apparent. There remain tensions between the Czech Republic and Poland in regard to policy toward Germany, Russia, and Ukraine, much as there were tensions among the interwar Little Entente and Germany, Russia, and Poland. Nazi German support for the Croatian *Ustashe* and Bulgaria, for example, was intended to undermine French influence in Yugoslavia and to pressure Romania to shift toward Germany in the interwar period. In the contemporary period, Slovakia appears to be moving toward Russia—if the former cannot be brought into a larger comprehensive security pact for the region. Much as the interwar Little Entente sought French supports, Central Eastern European states seek NATO membership not merely because of fears of Russian threats and subterfuge but to mitigate the potential for conflict among themselves, if not to counterbalance German pressure and influence.

Caught between NATO/German and Russian pincers, contemporary Ukraine has begun to play a role closest of interwar Poland as the key European pivotal state. Historical Russian–Ukrainian tensions go back at least to the 1654 Pereiaslav agreement, in which Ukraine ironically sought Russian assistance against Poland; yet the Pereiaslav agreement has subsequently been regarded by Moscow as permitting Russia to assert its hegemony over Ukraine.⁶ It is not entirely ironic that, despite its historical and interwar conflict with Poland, Kyiv and Warsaw have formed a strategic relationship in contemporary circumstances, largely in an effort to counterbalance Russia. A further irony is that it was the Soviet Union which helped to give Ukraine a stronger sense of national identity, celebrated in Khrushchev's 1954 decision to grant Ukraine control over the Crimea, a decision now opposed by the Russian parliament (Duma). Kyiv and Moscow continue to dispute the distribution of former Soviet assets, Russian–Ukrainian territorial boundaries, as well as the division of the Black Sea Fleet.

In general Kyiv has been looking in all directions—to NATO, the EU/WEU, Turkey, and China—for diplomatic and economic support as well as for access to alternative sources of energy to reduce dependence upon Russia. As an unstable yet pivotal state (much like Poland in the interwar period), Ukraine can either swing toward NATO, Russia, or less likely the PRC, if not break up. If the latter scenario should prove true, it is possible that eastern regions of Ukraine would likely look toward Russia; western regions would seek independence or look toward Poland (despite historical tensions), the EU, and NATO for support.

Moscow's claims to protect ethnic Russians in the near abroad, plus its apparent support for the boundaries defined by the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (as the

final act of the interwar period before the outbreak of global conflict) or boundaries unilaterally imposed by the Soviet Union after World War II, continues to play a destabilizing role in the contemporary era. Estonia has claimed some 800 square miles of territory, including three cities (base on the 1920 Treaty of Tartu), taken from it by Russia after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, for example. Latvian claims to the Arbene territory (based on the 1920 Latvian-Soviet Treaty of Riga) have led Russia to demand a revision of the Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) treaty and augment its military presence in the *Pskov oblast*.

A significant yet accidental parallel is the fact that Soviet retrenchment has created a Baltic corridor to Kaliningrad, somewhat similar to the interwar Polish corridor that separated Germany from roughly the same region in eastern Prussia. Lithuania finds itself caught between conflicting Russian, Belarusian, and Polish claims. Kaliningrad represents a real catalyst for sparking conflict, particularly if Lithuania should refuse to grant Russia military transit rights. This highly unstable Russian military region is claimed (unofficially) by Germany, Poland, and even Lithuania. Bringing Kaliningrad into a key role in a new system of cooperative-collective security for Central and East European security will be crucial to regional (if not global) stability.⁷

In addition, the Nordic-Baltic geostrategic theaters increasingly appear to be linked. Finnish steps to enter the EU, its support for Estonian and Baltic State independence, plus perceived support of greater autonomy for Karelia (in dispute since the 1920 Treaty of Tartu) and Komi, Russia's loss of warm water Soviet ports and military facilities, as well as Russian threats against Finland if it should ally itself with NATO, risk the recrudescence of Russian-Finnish tensions.⁸

In the interwar period, the Baltic States feared a German-Soviet condominium and splintered into pro-Russian and pro-German factions. Contemporary Baltic States (which are not without political divisions) fear the possibility of a NATO-Russian partition should NATO accept Poland as a member but not draw the Baltic into the Atlantic Alliance. Though each of the Baltic States have subsequently downplayed their territorial claims (in part due to lack of NATO and EU support), Moscow (and Minsk) remain suspicious that these irredentist claims will resurface once NATO enlarges or once NATO or new NATO members form a tacit strategic alliance with these states.

Romanian-Ukrainian-Russian tensions are in part due to Soviet absorption of northern Bukovina and southern Bessarabia (now roughly corresponding to Moldova). At a NATO seminar held in Romania in mid-July 1994, Romanian President Ion Iliescu, for example, called for a condemnation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which he stated is responsible for blocking Romanian friendship treaties with both Ukraine and Russia. The Ukrainian ambassador to Romania, Leonyd Sanduleak, angrily rejected those Romanian claims, arguing that Ukrainian possession of these territories postdated the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.⁹

Other potential conflicts (not necessarily initiated by Russia) include potential Hungarian irredentist movements resulting from difficulties involving the assimilation of ethnic Hungarians into Serbia, Slovakia, and Romania after the partition

of Hungary in the 1920 Treaty of Trianon. (Roughly three million ethnic Hungarians reside outside of Hungary.) Tensions between Romania and prospective NATO member Hungary, over Transylvania in particular, may represent a potential spark of conflict. On the other hand, Hungary and Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine have all reached for agreements to mitigate these disputes, in part under the hope to join NATO. The problem raised here is the risk of NATO overextension should Romania be brought in as a full member of NATO along with Hungary, for example.

Conflict in the Balkans appears to better parallel conflict before World War I than Balkan tensions before World War II. Before World War II, Yugoslavia was relatively stable, but Nazi Germany gave support to the Croatian *Ustashe* movement in an effort to destabilize Serbian hegemony over the "Land of South Slavs" and to break up the French alliance with the Little Entente. The contemporary Balkans are not the powder keg of Europe, but continued conflict in that region could make it very difficult to sustain a long-term *détente* (leading to entente) between the United States, Europe, and Russia.

Much as was the case in regard to czarist Russian policy before World War I, democratic-nationalist Russia has given tacit diplomatic support to Serbia (largely in an attempt to prevent Belgrade's total isolation). Despite Bonn's diplomatic support for Slovenian and Croatian secession, contemporary German political-economic influence in the Balkans does *not* parallel pre-World War I Austro-German penetration of the Balkan region. There has been no annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as in 1908; at the same time, however, NATO actions have, in effect, attempted a somewhat similar policy of containment of pan-Serbian policy and politics as that pursued by pre-World War I Austria, which sought to contain Serbia in Bosnia-Herzegovina by means of support of Albanian independence from the Ottoman empire. NATO, for its part, has sought to forge a Croatian-Moslem alliance. Albania, however, collapsed into civil war in 1997.

Peninsular India plays the role of an amphibious power and land bridge from Central Asia to the Indian Ocean, to a certain extent paralleling amphibious Italy in the interwar period as a land bridge to the Mediterranean. Russia has attempted to forge a Eurasian alliance of the PRC, India, and Iran in order to stabilize political and ethnic tensions in Central Asia and the Far East (in part, in an effort to counter pan-Turkish influence), as well as to project power into the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and South China Sea.

In post-Cold War circumstances, Turkey has begun to expand its influence deep into Central Asia, tacitly supported by NATO. Russia, on the other hand, has strengthened its relationship with Kazakhstan, and other CIS states, and has tended to back Iran as the lesser evil to counterbalance Turkish influence. In supporting Iran, Russia hopes to contain Azerbaijan's influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia, not so ironically by supporting Iranian efforts to crack down on Azeri claims to Iranian territory. (Teheran has an interest in containing an oil rich Azerbaijan.) Moscow has argued that American supported states of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have also backed pan-Islamic movements. Moscow, Beijing, and

New Delhi—particularly since the Soviet withdrawal and defeat in Afghanistan—all have a common interest in containing the rise of pan-Turk, pan-Islamic independence movements in Central Asia and the Far East.

Pan-Islamic movements represent a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Moscow hopes to break up pan-Turk and other pan-Islamic movements that threaten the very stability of the Russian Federation and the CIS. On the other hand, much as imperial Germany and Nazi Germany attempted to support Ottoman interests against both Russia and Britain, Russia (and China) could seek to coopt anti-Western Islamic movements, or else attempt to deflect certain pan-Islamic movements *against* Western interests.

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA AND WEIMAR GERMANY

The analogy to the Versailles Treaty is not absolutely illuminating but it is not entirely inappropriate. Unlike World War I which was largely fought on European territory, the Cold War represented a quasiglobal conflict, largely fought *indirectly* through organized Communist parties inside Europe and surrogate forces outside of Europe. The Soviet Union was not quite defeated and humiliated in quite the same way as imperial Germany. There is evidently no formal “war guilt” clause (a clause intended to establish Germany’s financial liability for the conflict) in the March 1997 Helsinki “agreement to disagree” (or any other U.S.–Russian accords), but there has been a significant degree of informal democratic “triumphalism” expressed by American elites that has tended to place most of the blame for the Cold War on Soviet Russian totalitarianism.

Much as Woodrow Wilson promised “open covenants, openly arrived at” at Versailles,¹⁰ NATO has claimed that the process of developing a new system of European security will be a transparent one with no surprises or secret agreements. Russia, however, has raised legitimate concerns that it, much like Weimar Germany, may ultimately be excluded from the process of formulating and implementing a new system of European security. Despite the fact that Russia was permitted to take the seat of the FSU in the U.N. Security Council, for example, Moscow fears that Washington will only permit consultation but not actual *power sharing* in areas that affect its perceived vital interests.

Unlike Germany after World War I, Russia has not been forced to disarm or enter arms reduction agreements against its will. In fact, Washington and Moscow worked in overt cooperation to secure the total nuclear disarmament of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, leading the latter states to eliminate their nuclear weapons by 1996 (though Ukraine does possess the technological capability to once again produce missiles and warheads if so desired). Russia has thus been permitted to sustain a monopoly of nuclear weaponry over the former Soviet bloc states.

At the same time, however, Moscow has continued to insist upon the principle of “parity.” The terms of START II (which has sought to eliminate multiple warhead missiles on land-based missiles) has been regarded as discriminatory by the

Russian parliament. START II appears to eliminate the strongest aspect of Moscow's nuclear deterrent in a situation in which Moscow has lost much of its integrated military command and no longer controls military facilities in the Baltic States and Ukraine. It is also dubious that Russia can finance the transformation of its nuclear-strategic deterrent from multiple warheads to single warheads unless Washington and Moscow carry out START III (which seeks to lower the ceiling of warheads between 2,000–2,500 by the year 2007), as promised at the March 1997 Clinton–Yeltsin summit. Much as Weimar and then Nazi Germany threatened to revise arms treaties (such as the 1932 Geneva disarmament conference), the new Russia has threatened to unilaterally revise the CFE Treaty and START II.

Once again unlike Weimar Germany, Russia does not owe heavy war reparations, but it does possess a heavy debt for its excessive Cold War expenditure (following its rivalry with a far more economically developed and technologically advanced United States, Europe, and Japan). Russian debts have not been relieved by G-7 and other bilateral aid and assistance. By mid-1996, foreign debts had reached between \$120–\$130 billion, investment had fallen by 14 percent, and capital flight exceeded \$35 billion (largely due to an unstable ruble).¹¹ Promised foreign investment had yet to be forthcoming. G-7 aid has yet to pick up the Russian economy. From this standpoint, G-7 assistance appears to parallel the 1924 Dawes Plan for the financing of Weimar German debts.

THE QUESTION OF RUSSIAN REVANCHIST MOVEMENTS

Russian efforts to repress a parliamentary *pronunciamento* led by former Vice President Alexander Rutskoi in September–October 1993 and to crush the Chechen secessionist movement (December 1994 to mid-1996) have represented ways to consolidate the Russian empire and sustain Russian territorial integrity.¹² These actions appear quite similar to efforts of the Weimar German Majority Socialist leadership to crush both Communist and secessionist movements immediately after imperial German defeat in 1918–1919, and can also be compared and contrasted to the failed Kapp putsch in 1920. The very action of repression also tended to strengthen the political role of the military in domestic affairs in both cases (and in the case of Russia, has helped to strengthen forces opposed to NATO enlargement). The efforts of Russian President Yeltsin to both coopt and repress revanchist movements, however, may or may not prove successful in the long term. As Yeltsin himself suggested at the March 1997 summit in Helsinki, the United States does not fear Russia that is presently led by Yeltsin, but it does fear what might come next.

“Weimar Russia” is accordingly plagued with the rise of a number of Greater Russian, pan-Slav, and National Bolshevik revanchist movements that have appeared to have organized more quickly than their National Socialist (or Communist internationalist) counterparts. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, for example, seeks to redivide Europe between Germany and Russia much along the lines of either a

Hitler–Stalin pact or the late eighteenth century division of Poland. His Liberal Democratic party has formed links with extreme nationalist movements in Europe, Belarus, and India, not to exclude Saddam Hussein in Iraq. He has argued that NATO actions in former Yugoslavia, and PFP maneuvers in Ukraine, represent schemes designed to invade Russia. At the same time, he has called for a U.S.–German–Russian alliance as he claims to prefer appeasement over confrontation. While Zhirinovskiy appears to be a far-right ideologue who has little chance to come to power, he has obtained significant financial backing, and his views may possess support among Russian military elites, Russian xenophobes, and the lumpen proletariat.

Though he lost the Russian presidential elections of June 1996, Communist party leader Gennady Zyuganov still possesses a significant following which could continue to grow in significance if socioeconomic conditions go into a tail-spin in the coming years. An increasingly pan-nationalist Russian Communist party (which contrasts with the ideology of Weimar German Communist internationalism) has proposed the formation of a political–military–economic union with all CIS states, and to support the estimated 22–25 million ethnic Russian diaspora. The Russian Communist party has argued that everything connected with the territory of the FSU falls within its vital interests. By declaring the dissolution of the USSR illegal in March 1996, the Russian Communist party potentially jeopardized all post-1991 Russian and CIS laws, agreements, and contracts inside and outside the CIS and helped to undermine general confidence in the new Russian government.

The sudden dismissal of former National Security Secretary Alexander Lebed by President Boris Yeltsin in October 1996 does not preclude the possibility that Lebed or another Russian pan-nationalist will be able to seize power once Yeltsin leaves office. Lebed's failed effort to seize control over the Russian Security Council apparatus appeared to be based on the means Joseph Stalin used to come to absolute power. Lebed has particularly been concerned with the financial–economic aspects of power, billions of dollars in illegal capital flight, and the failure of the Yeltsin government to fund the Russian military adequately to achieve necessary reforms despite accusations of waste, redundancy, and corruption within the military itself. At the same time, despite lack of press attention, Lebed still appears to have a substantial following within the Russian military which has appeared to have formed a state within a state, particularly in reaction to the breakup of the Soviet integrated military command. The influence of the Russian military on Russian politics has thus resulted in wavering policies (increasingly moving toward a hard line) reminiscent of Weimar "politics of the diagonal."

Lebed's heroes include Chilean General Augusto Pinochet (implying an authoritarian, yet obedient pro-Western regime), French President Charles De Gaulle (implying a pro-Western nuclear ally yet with different interests), and Napoleon I (implying a revanchist movement). Should Lebed (or another pan-nationalist) come to power, the preferred model will dubiously be that of Pinochet. Would

such a leader choose De Gaulle or Napoleon I? Or will Russian revanchist movements, in effect, cancel themselves out, permitting a pro-Western government to play these movements against each other? Or will the very efforts to achieve a centralized dictatorship provoke the contrary—the disaggregation of the Russian Federation itself? Or will one of these revanchist movements ultimately gain ascendancy as was the case in Weimar Germany?

WEIMAR GERMANY AND CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA

In many ways, the policies pursued in the Weimar German foreign ministry of Gustav Stresemann mimic those of the national-democratic Yeltsin regime. In essence, Stresemann sought to balance Weimar German relations between the East and the West.¹³ He gave highest priority, however, to British–German cooperation at the same time that he sought to prevent any Anglo–French cooperation in which Germany was not a part. He hoped that Britain could use its influence on France to prevent the formation of a renewed dual alliance of France and Russia. Concurrently, the German–Soviet Rapallo Pact (pursued by General Hans von Seeckt) likewise sought to block a Franco–Soviet alliance. The German–Soviet relationship was intended to pressure Poland (and revise Polish borders) and prevent a Franco–Polish alliance. Both Germany and the Soviet Union had a common interest in reducing Poland’s newfound status and territories (while France sought to boost Poland’s status). In essence, while German pan-nationalists wanted to pursue both Western and Eastern interests simultaneously, Stresemann wanted to resolve the Western question first and then look to a resolution of the eastern question. Concurrently, Stresemann could not abandon his links to the Soviet Union without being accused of having sold out German revisionist claims and of accepting the Treaty of Versailles.

Russian President Yeltsin has sought U.S.–Russian cooperation as his primary foreign policy option, but he has also sought to block a unilateral NATO expansion into Central Europe which does not take into account Russian interests and which does not accept conjoint NATO–Russian security guarantees for Central and East European states. At the same time, Yeltsin has strengthened ties with China to prevent a NATO–EU/WEU–Japanese encirclement. Accordingly, Russian Eurasian strategists seek to tilt toward the east as a means to pressure the United States, Europe, and Japan, and in part to sustain links with their former Communist ally. Much as the case for Weimar Germany in regard to Stalin’s Soviet Union, it has been difficult for Yeltsin to drop the Russian version of the “China card” without being accused of having sold out to American interests.¹⁴

For domestic consumption, Stresemann argued that the Locarno Pact was a means to ultimately restore Germany as a great power within Germany’s 1914 frontiers. Moreover, Weimar Germany hoped to use the League of Nations to sanction revisionist claims. Germany was able to weaken the League’s system of sanctions: Berlin was not obliged to transit other League members across German

territory in the application of sanctions and it was not obliged to participate in sanctions. German pan-nationalists pushed for a more aggressive minorities policy in support of the German diaspora, but Stresemann did not want to anger the League. By 1928, however, it became nearly impossible to contain the demand for a more active minorities policy in support of German nationalities outside Germany.

In the contemporary situation, despite its professed support for the OSCE process, Yeltsin's Russia has threatened to use force to protect the Russian diaspora. Moscow, for example, has protested citizenship and language laws passed by former Soviet bloc states (such as Estonia and Latvia) that are regarded as discriminatory against ethnic Russians. Russian pan-nationalists have been pushing for a more extreme policy.

Foreign Minister Stresemann saw Weimar Germany's future linked to economic growth; he saw it necessary to accept the U.S.-proffered Dawes Plan (which Hitler derided as "interest slavery"). From Stresemann's point of view, it was only once Germany had become economically stable could it pursue its revisionist claims. As a liberal imperialist power, Germany sought to flume local and limited crises against Belgium and Poland and to impel the latter states to adopt pro-German policies—much as Russia has used thus far relatively limited economic pressures against the Baltic States and Ukraine.

In 1931, Germany threatened an Austro-German customs union at the same time that interwar France called for a European union. This latter fact in many ways parallels contemporary calls for European integration (without Russian participation). These efforts have been countered by Russian demands to integrate Belarus into a union and to place other CIS states (including Ukraine) under Russian hegemony if possible. In essence, Weimar Germany hoped to rebuild itself through closer integration with the West, including the building of a secret alliance with the Soviet Union. In much the same way, the new Russia has sought G-7 assistance to help rebuild its economy, combined with a closer entente with the PRC. Moscow also intends to reassert its primacy or hegemony over former Soviet bloc states though it has been unable to coordinate monetary policy with Belarus, for example.

By 1932, under the brief leadership of Franz Von Papen, who sought a German-French-British-Italian-Polish entente against the Soviet Union, Berlin changed tact (moving closer to Foreign Minister's Stresemann's original pro-Western position) and discussed the possibility of a regional customs union involving Germany, France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, plus the replacement of U.S. capital investment in Germany with that of France. Von Papen, however, was opposed by Barons von Neurath and von Bulow who sought stronger relations with Britain and Italy *against* France and Poland.

Once Hitler came to power, he sought to impel Britain to accept *parity* with Germany but through the threat of force. In essence, in the period 1933–1935, Hitler sought an alliance with Great Britain *against* both France and the Soviet Union. Hitler initially regarded German rearmament as making Berlin more "alliance worthy."¹⁵ Then, in the period 1935–1937, Hitler sought to forge a worldwide

quadrilateral of Britain, Germany, Italy, and Japan—once again against a Franco-Soviet encirclement. By 1937, however, Hitler determined that Britain had become his major enemy due to British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden's continued support for collective security—the attempt to incorporate France and the Soviet Union into the British alliance system. The shift of British strategy from collective security to appeasement, however, only temporarily swayed Hitler toward Britain.

BEYOND THE INTERWAR ANALOGY: A CONTEMPORARY BARTHOUS PLAN

Prior to these events, French Foreign Minister Jean Louis Barthou belatedly attempted in 1934 to forge a system of collective European security—or an eastern Locarno—designed to address issues not dealt with by the original Locarno Pact of 1924–1925. The latter had hoped to guarantee Weimar German borders with France, Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; it likewise demilitarized the Rhineland. (The Locarno Pact has its contemporary parallel in the Two Plus Four Agreement over German unification, resulting in a non-nuclear eastern Germany. An Eastern Locarno that would seek to stabilize the region between Germany and Russia by means of bilateral, multilateral, and international accords has yet to be completed.)

The belated Eastern Locarno was accordingly intended to deal with disputes among Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and the Baltic States, in addition to providing stronger security provisions for Poland and the Little Entente. The finalized Barthou Plan was to have three essential elements. First, there was to be an East European pact of mutual assistance between Germany, the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Second, there was to be a convention linking France, Germany, and the Soviet Union in order to tie the mutual assistance pact to the original 1925 Locarno Treaty. The Eastern Locarno was also to bring the Soviet Union, and possibly Germany, into the League of Nations. Needless to say, Barthou's assassination (along with that of King Alexander of Yugoslavia) by Croatian *Ustashe* helped to weaken the Little Entente and blocked the implementation of a collective security agreement.

Whether Barthou's plan could have been successful is, of course, subject to debate. Certainly the rise of Adolf Hitler—plus the lack of a countervailing Soviet alliance—worked to doom the plan. Moreover, neither Britain nor Italy wanted to guarantee the pact nor commit themselves to a defense of Eastern Europe. However, Britain did push France to involve Germany in the plan. (The fact that the United States had refused to commit itself to the League of Nations, or to an alliance with Britain and France in 1919, meant that Britain in turn refused to back the French or engage itself emphatically in continental affairs.) Poland was hesitant and opted for a nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany; Warsaw was suspicious of Soviet intentions and refused to participate in any security obligations toward either Lithuania (having seized Vilnius in 1920) or toward Czechoslovakia, which it regarded as pro-Soviet. Poland also conditioned its acceptance of the Barthou plan on the German position. Berlin, however, argued that it wanted to

achieve parity before it would recognize the pact and then predictably denounced the Barthou plan as a form of *Einkreisung*.

On the other hand, had efforts to forge Eastern Locarno been implemented prior to the rise of Hitler, perhaps tensions between Weimar Germany and its eastern neighbors, including the Soviet Union, could have been mitigated. Efforts to achieve a more concerted strategy may well have helped to stem the rise of the Nazi movement—in part as Weimar Germany's claims to geopolitical and military parity as a major power (with *legitimate* security concerns and political-economic interests in Eastern Europe) could have been granted and as the threat emanating from Soviet Russia could have at least been dampened.

The failure of the Eastern Locarno in 1934–1935 should not detract from the possibility that a somewhat similar plan can be implemented in a geopolitical climate in which the United States has not yet moved into selective interventionism and in which neither a pro-Western Russia nor a unified Germany has yet to be taken over by revisionist movements. In many ways, NATO's efforts to achieve various tracks appear to take the form of the Barthou plan, but it is still not clear if these proposals will obtain Russian acceptance in the long term. Much as was the case for the Barthou plan through the eyes of Nazi Germany, Moscow may, in the not-so-distant future, not only oppose NATO enlargement but *any* system of cooperative system of security as a form of encirclement—if *legitimate* Russian security interests are not ultimately taken into account and if reciprocal or conjoint security guarantees (with NATO and the WEU) cannot ultimately be formulated.¹⁶

NATO's efforts to draw in key Central European states (most likely Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary) as full-fledged members appear to parallel French links to the Little Entente. NATO efforts to formulate a NATO–Russian Charter, leading to a joint NATO–Russian Council, appear to parallel the Barthou Plan's efforts to forge a convention linking Paris, Berlin, and Moscow. An enhanced PfP initiative, combined with the formation of an Atlantic Partnership Council, appears to parallel the East European pact of mutual assistance. The purpose of the Atlantic Partnership Council is to link the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) with the PfP initiative and to coordinate interlocking peacekeeping activities through Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) with the United Nations and OSCE so as to reduce the potential gap between new NATO members and those states not selected to join NATO on the first round. NATO's efforts to achieve a NATO–Ukrainian agreement appear to parallel efforts to bring Poland into the Eastern Locarno. NATO's efforts to formulate and implement an ESDI represent an effort to coordinate American, French, and European strategy and defense policy—something Britain and France could not achieve in the interwar period largely due to the refusal of the American Congress to grant security guarantees to both France and Britain after World War I.

Even though efforts prior to World War II failed to establish a collective security regime (the 1924 Dawes Plan, the 1925 Locarno Pact, plus the belated Barthou Plan designed to forge an Eastern Locarno), this does not mean that contemporary efforts (the Two Plus Four Agreement over German reunification and

G-7 aid package to the new Russia) will necessarily fail—assuming an Eastern Locarno for Central and Eastern Europe can soon be implemented. Moreover, the fact that Czechoslovakia and Poland were unable to form a common strategy during the interwar period does not mean that Ukraine and other Central and Eastern European states will necessarily fail to forge a common strategy in support of cooperative-collective security in today's circumstances.¹⁷ An additional aspect of a neo-Eastern Locarno plan would be to bring Germany (and Japan) onto the U.N. Security Council as well as to strengthen the political-security role of the OSCE.

Once the prospects for collective security did fail in the interwar period, the British elite turned toward an appeasement of Nazi German revanchist claims. The failure of appeasement then meant war. In today's circumstances, there is hopefully still time to implement a new Eastern Locarno before regional disputes and mutual imprecations among NATO, EU/WEU, and Russia degenerate into open hostility. On the one hand, the American congressional failure to ratify any new system of security involving NATO or NATO enlargement will increase the risk of undermining NATO's credibility and legitimacy. On the other hand, failure to implement an Eastern Locarno that thoroughly incorporates legitimate Russian security concerns may soon result in a choice between a new partition of Europe or even more overt forms of extraterritorial appeasement—if not the burgeoning threat of global conflict.

NOTES

1. The interwar analogy and the defeat of France after the Seven Years War are far more relevant to the contemporary crisis than analogies to the defeat of Napoleonic France or Nazi Germany. Both France in 1815 and Germany in 1945 were decisively defeated and both were then integrated on a step-by-step basis into the international system. Perhaps more like France in 1763 after the Seven Years War and like imperial Germany in 1918 after World War I, Russia has not been decisively defeated in the Cold War and has yet to be well integrated into the international system. Accordingly, both French and German foreign policy actions (and revolutions) after the indecisive defeat of their respective empires can provide valuable insights into the possible—but not absolutely inevitable—behavior of Russia after its indecisive defeat during the Cold War. I intend to develop closely the relevance of the analogy to the Seven Years War in a later book.

2. Andrew Krepinevich, "Train Wreck Coming," *National Review*, 31 July 1995, 42–43; Dov S. Zakheim, "A Top-Down Plan for the Pentagon," *Orbis*, Spring 1995, 177; James Kitfield, "Fit to Fight?" *National Journal*, 16 May 1996, 582.

3. For an interesting analysis of the unintended bureaucratic origins of the total embargo on oil exports to Japan, see Scott D. Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War," in *The Origin and the Prevention of Major Wars*, eds. Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 334–337. Much as Washington unintentionally cut off oil exports to Tokyo, a parallel crisis could possibly result from intentionally or unintentionally cutting off MFN status to Beijing.

4. Paul Goble, "Ten Issues in Search of a Policy," *Current History*, October 1993, 305–308.

5. This point corrects the analogy made to the interwar Little Entente made in my book, *Surviving the Millennium: American Global Strategy, Collapse of the Soviet Empire, and the Question of Peace* (Westport and London: Praeger, 1994), 50. The book had already gone to print before I could make some necessary changes.

6. On history of the Ukraine, see Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

7. See my argument in Hall Gardner, *Dangerous Crossroads: Europe, Russia, and the Future of NATO* (Westport and London: Praeger, 1977), Chapter 11.

8. As it is dubious that the Baltic States and Finland, among other states, will enter NATO as full members, I have suggested the deployment of Euro-Atlantic war-preventive forces in these regions, under the command of the Atlantic Partnership Council, and deployed under a general UN or OSCE mandate. See my argument in Hall Gardner, *Dangerous Crossroads*, Chapter 11.

9. "Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, 18 July 1994. For background to same issue raised in 1991 by Romania, see Roman Sochanyk, "The Politics of State Building: Center-Periphery Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46, 1 (1994), 63.

10. Woodrow Wilson later told the U.S. Senate that this statement was not meant to exclude confidential diplomatic negotiations.

11. See Igor Birman, "Gloomy Prospects for the Russian Economy," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, 5 (1996); *OMRI Daily Digest*, 9 July 1996.

12. In 1918, Caucasian Muslims under Unzun Haji formed an Islamic theocratic state based on Shari'a law—a fact that helps to explain the brutal vehemence of Russian actions in Chechnya.

13. For a study of the interwar period, see Marshall Lee and Wolfgang Michalka, *German Foreign Policy: 1917–33* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

14. Whereas the interwar German-Soviet Rapallo Pact was aimed at Poland, the contemporary Russian-PRC pact is aimed at checking Mongolian independence and containing Central Asian pan-Islamic, pan-Turkish movement and other forces seeking independence from Russia and the PRC as well as India. It also seeks to deflect Chinese ambitions away from Russia and toward U.S. and Japanese maritime interests. In the contemporary situation, as long as the newly unified Germany remains within the EU and NATO, Bonn will not seek out a separate Rapallo Pact or neo-Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Russia. On the other hand, EU expansion, coupled with the possibility of NATO membership for selected states in Central Europe, could lead to a de facto partition between those states that enter NATO and those that do not—if Russia does take countermeasures as it has threatened.

15. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler argued that imperial Germany "should have renounced colonies and sea power, and spared English industry our competition" and that imperial Germany should have concentrated "all the state's instruments of power on the land army" essentially against France and Russia as a means to impel England into an alliance. Adolph Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), 140–141.

16. See my critique of NATO enlargement proposals in Hall Gardner, *Dangerous Crossroads*, Chapter 9.

17. See Jan Karski's argument that Poland should have supported the League of Nations "encouraging rather than rejecting collective security"—a point that needs reaffirmation in contemporary circumstances. See Jan Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: 1919–1945* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), 316.

