

SOVIET FATES AND LOST ALTERNATIVES

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FROM STALINISM TO THE NEW COLD WAR



STEPHEN F. COHEN

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FOR NIKA

MAY HER ALTERNATIVES ALWAYS BE GOOD AND HER FATE HAPPY

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INTRODUCTION ALTERNATIVES AND FATES

History is not determined by fate. There is always an alternative.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

Most of our history is the lessons of missed opportunities.

YEGOR YAKOVLEV, GORBACHEV-ERA REFORMER

MANY writers, perhaps historians and novelists more than others, find themselves returning again and again to some big theme that captivated them early in life. For me, it has been political alternatives in history, roads taken and not taken, in Russia in particular. Though the chapters of this book treat diverse subjects and were researched and written over many years, several appearing in full or in part in other places, they do not stray far from that theme.¹

In the beginning, it had nothing to do with Russia. Growing up in a segregated small town in Kentucky, in the 1940s and 1950s, I accepted the world around me, as children do, as perfectly normal. But at the age of fifteen or sixteen, events in my life caused me, as Corinthians instructs, to put away childish things. I began to understand segregation was a terrible injustice and to wonder if there had been an alternative—though I did not yet use the word—in Kentucky’s history. After all, I knew my state had produced the Civil War presidents both of the Union and the Confederacy, Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.

A few years later, when I began studying Soviet Russia as an undergraduate at Indiana University, Robert C. Tucker, the professor

who became my mentor—and eventually my friend and colleague at Princeton—pressed me to settle on a more specific interest in the country. When I could not, he asked if I had any special historical or political interests apart from Russia. Still not far removed from home, I replied, “Whether or not there had been an alternative to segregation in Kentucky’s history.” Tucker then sent me on my intellectual way: “Good. The question of alternatives is a very big and understudied issue in Soviet history.” So it became, and has remained, for me.

I began with the faction in the Soviet leadership, headed by Nikolai Bukharin, who opposed Stalin and the emergence of Stalinism at the nation’s fateful turning point in 1928 and 1929. This led to my biography of Bukharin and, many years later, to the first chapter of this book. Having entered the field during the high point of Nikita Khrushchev’s anti-Stalinist reforms, I was then drawn to the alternative for the Soviet future his policies had represented in the 1960s. That interest eventually led me to the subject of my second chapter, the return of Stalin’s surviving victims after his death.

Khrushchev’s overthrow, in 1964, reaffirmed the belief of many of my colleagues that fundamental reforms in the rigidly authoritarian Soviet system were impossible, partly because they saw no alternative historical experiences or traditions to inspire or sustain them. Seeing a viable anti-Stalinist tradition connecting Bukharin’s opposition in the 1920s and Khrushchev’s political revivalism thirty years later, I disagreed. During the next two decades, my main project was identifying proreform forces and their ideas inside the murky bureaucratic realm of the ruling Communist Party.²

As a result, I was not surprised by the emergence of Mikhail Gorbachev as the Soviet leader in 1985. Historical and political alternatives were at the center of his increasingly radical reforms, from retrieving what he and his supporters believed were lost ideas from the Soviet 1920s to the first multicandidate elections in 1989. (Gorbachev was, as I will explain later on, a kind of heretic, and heretics by nature believe above all in alternatives.) Those historic developments are the focus and context of chapters 3 through 6, especially the two that argue the Soviet Union was reformable and that there had been an alternative to its breakup in 1991.

Even the concluding chapter on contemporary issues derives from “alternativism” and personal experience. Studying the Soviet Union

during much of the long Cold War, and living there for prolonged periods, I came to hope, and to think possible, that my country and the other one so large in my life would eventually cease to be adversaries. By 1989, first and foremost because of Gorbachev, though not him alone, that alternative seemed to have been realized. Why it turned out to be another missed opportunity is the subject of chapter 7.

Here I should explain briefly what I mean by historical alternatives. These are not the imaginary or hypothetical constructs of what-if, counterfactual history, though that is a legitimate intellectual exercise, or what some writers dismiss as a “non-existent subjunctive in history.” I am interested in alternative possibilities that actually existed at turning points in Soviet and post-Soviet history, ones grounded in realities of the time, represented by leaders, and with enough political support to have had a chance of being realized.³ We may disagree as to their chances but not that real people fought—and often died—for them.

No what-ifs or other fictions are needed to understand, for example, that the Bukharinist opposition to Stalin’s political and economic policies represented a different Soviet road forward, one with widespread support in the Communist Party and in society. Khrushchev’s reforms, which were embraced by young people, members of the intelligentsia, and even significant numbers of Party and state officials, had the potential for more far-reaching change in the Soviet system twenty years before it was actually initiated, when some observers thought it was too late. Gorbachev’s call for a full-scale Soviet reformation had broad elite and popular support, and although his personal popularity collapsed under the weight of the alternative he pursued, Boris Yeltsin initially claimed to represent the same cause.

One reason this book may not be well received by many of my colleagues is that they never believed there were any real alternatives in the seventy-four-year Soviet experience. During the forty-year Cold War, when the academic field was formed, they saw a “straight-line” history predetermined by one or more ineluctable factors—the ruling Party’s organization, its ideology, or Russia’s bleak traditions.⁴ But history written without defeated alternatives is neither a full account of the past nor a real explanation of what happened. It is only the story of the winners made to seem inevitable. Nonetheless, that view was so orthodox that the few American scholars who challenged it—we were known as “revisionists”—were sometimes accused of having dubious political motives.⁵

Not so coincidentally, something similar, though far worse, befell Soviet historians. For decades, those who wanted to write about historical alternatives to Stalinism, and implicitly to the latter-day system, were prevented from doing so by harsh censorship and even repression. Soviet authorities and unorthodox historians understood the importance of this “deviationism,” as such heresy was officially branded. Thus one of the prominent scholars persecuted for believing Bukharin had been right was banished as the “alternativist [Victor] Danilov,” as that historian of collectivization defiantly also characterized himself.⁶

Gorbachev’s historic reforms and the end of the Soviet Union brought “alternativism” (*alternativnost*), for reasons examined in chapter 6, to the forefront of Russian historical and political thinking. Since 1991, scholars and other intellectuals have been debating whether there were “unrealized alternatives” to the 1917 Revolution, Stalinism, the termination of Khrushchev’s initiatives, Gorbachev’s approach to reform, and the disappearance of the Soviet Union. Many of them are still searching for “a road that leads to the Temple.”⁷

In the United States, however, the “school of inevitability” has regained its dominant position. For reasons also examined in chapter 6, most American scholars, other intellectuals, and media commentators once again treat nearly seventy-five years of Soviet history as having been “closed to real alternatives.”⁸ As a result, interest in its “losers”—Bukharin, Khrushchev, and Gorbachev, among others—has fallen.

Those names are associated with a related theme of this book—fate, as it is understood in Russia. The words “fate” and “destiny” exist in most languages, but a nation’s experiences may instill in them different meaning. For Russians, who believe their history, during which “dozens of generations lived on the edge between life and death,” has been especially “accursed,” “fate” is not usually the triumphant “destiny,” as Americans often say, of a champion athlete. It is an ominous development, “some sinister Beethovenian knock . . . at the door,” a tragic outcome.⁹

On a personal level, Russians may ask, for instance, about the “fate” of a new friend’s parents or grandparents during Stalin’s terror, which victimized millions of people, or in World War II, when 27 million Soviet citizens perished. Generations also think and are thought of in terms of their collective “fate.” In modern times, they include the military officers of the 1930s made “comrades of a tragic fate” by Stalin’s

blood purge; the schoolboys who went to the front in 1941, only three of every hundred of whom ever returned; and the generation of the 1960s, known as “the children of Khrushchev,” who believed in the late 1980s “history is giving us another chance” to reform the Soviet system.¹⁰

Above all, Russians associate the “fate” of leaders with alternatives they represented at ramifying junctures in the nation’s history. The association sometimes suggests the fatalistic Russian proverb “You can’t escape fate,” but most often it refers to “fateful choices” of the kind historians have emphasized in historic events elsewhere.¹¹ And because the roads chosen and not chosen by Russia’s leaders have so often been unhappy ones for the nation,¹² they are connected thereafter with the “tragic fate” of those figures—foremost among them in Soviet history, Bukharin, Khrushchev, Gorbachev, and even Lenin. In the pages that follow, the fates of alternatives and leaders therefore remain joined.

In that connection, I should disclose my personal relationships with several people who appear in this book. I was born the year of Bukharin’s execution, but decades later developed a friendship with his widow, who figures prominently in the first chapter, and with other Gulag survivors who do so in the second chapter. I have had friendly relations with Gorbachev for more than twenty years; there is even an opinion (though not mine) that my biography of Bukharin once influenced him in a significant way.¹³ But still exploring alternatives, I also got to know Gorbachev’s main rival in the last Soviet leadership, Yegor Ligachev, the subject of the third chapter. And during the events covered in chapters 6 and 7, I was part of a small group that discussed them with the first President George Bush.

Critics may think these relationships have affected my objectivity. I prefer to think that I gained important insights from them while maintaining my scholarly distance. It is for readers to decide.

WORK on a book about many subjects and so long in the making requires considerable help along the way. My most important intellectual debt is still to Robert C. Tucker, who, in his ninety-first year, remains the pioneering alternativist he has always been. Thirty years of discussions with Russian friends and acquaintances, not all of them mentioned in the book, also enriched my knowledge and understanding of events in many ways. Early on, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation twice gave me financial support for a large project I promised to

INTRODUCTION: ALTERNATIVES AND FATES

complete long ago. This is the final installment, and again, belatedly, I acknowledge my gratitude.

At various stages, I benefited from the indispensable work of three excellent assistants—Yeugenia Shvets, Andrey Grigoryev, and then Arina Chesnokova. In addition to contributing to my research, they provided the necessary computer-era services my typewriter cannot perform. And most recently, I became indebted to Peter Dimock, my editor at Columbia University Press. Without his wise advice, encouragement, and forbearance, as I missed one deadline after another, this book would still be an unfinished manuscript.

Above all, I am again boundlessly grateful to my wife Katrina vanden Heuvel for all manner of support, help, and guidance. A Russian-speaking and very knowledgeable observer of that country, and my companion of many years in seeking to understand its past and present, she repeatedly took time from her duties as editor and publisher of *The Nation* to correct my memory, understanding, and style. Whatever remains uncorrected is despite her best efforts.

Last but very far from least is our beloved daughter, Nika. It is unusual, as I explained in a previous book, to thank a child for anything other than forgiving an author's absence, but it has been different with Nika. She has been with us during almost every stay in Russia, more than thirty, since her birth in 1991. As she grew and learned the language, her perceptions of what we experienced there challenged and sharpened my own. It is one reason this book is lovingly dedicated to Nika.

S. F. C.
New York City
March 2009

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

There are various ways of spelling Russian names in English. In the text, I have used the form most familiar or accessible to general readers, not the one used by most scholars. It means, for example, Yegor Yakovlev rather than Egor Iakovlev; Trotsky rather than Trotskii; and Tatyana Zaslavskaya rather than Tatiana Zaslavskaia. In the notes, however, wherever Russian-language sources are cited, I have used the Library of Congress system of transliteration (though without soft or hard signs) so that specialists will more easily recognize and locate them.



6 GORBACHEV'S LOST LEGACIES

Do I think I realized my goals, and in this respect am I happy? There's no simple answer to this question. . . . In general, I do not know of any happy reformers.

History will show who was right and who was wrong.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, 1993/2000

IN conventional political terms, Gorbachev failed, and did so catastrophically: the “democratic reformation” he tried to enact in the Soviet Union ended in the breakup of his state and country. But that is not the full story of his six and a half years as leader, during which Gorbachev had two unprecedented achievements. He led Russia (then Soviet Russia) closer to real democracy than it had ever been in its centuries-long history.¹ And, with the partners he found in American presidents Ronald Reagan and the first George Bush, he came closer to ending the decades-long Cold War than had anyone before him.

Nor is it reasonable to think that Gorbachev should have completed those undertakings. Few transformational leaders, even “event-making” and “historically fateful” ones, are able to see their missions to completion. This is especially true of leaders of great reformations, whose nature and duration generate more opposition and problems than their initiators (unless they are a Stalin) have power or time to overcome. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, to take a familiar example, a perestroika of American capitalism, continued to unfold and undergo setbacks long after his death. Most such leaders can only open political doors, leave behind

alternative paths that did not exist before, and hope, as Gorbachev often did publicly, that what they began would be “irreversible.”²

Historic opportunities to modernize Russia gradually and consensually and to end the Cold War were Gorbachev's legacies. That they were missed, or squandered, was the fault of elites and leaders who followed him, both in Moscow and Washington. Indeed, those possibilities were soon misrepresented and then half-forgotten. Despite the democratic breakthroughs under Gorbachev examined earlier, the role of “father of Russian democracy” was soon reassigned to his successor, Boris Yeltsin. Along with the Washington political establishment, leading American journalists now informed readers that it was Yeltsin who began “Russia's transition from totalitarianism,” who “set Russia on a course toward democracy,” and under whom its “first flickerings of democratic nationhood” occurred.³ Remarkably, many academic specialists concurred: “Democracy emerged in Russia after the collapse of Soviet Communism in 1991.”⁴ In effect, Gorbachev's model of evolutionary democratization was deleted from history and thus from politics.

How is this historical amnesia to be explained? In post-Soviet Russia, the primary cause was political expediency. Fearing a backlash at home against their role in the Soviet breakup and worried about Gorbachev's continuing popularity abroad, Yeltsin and his inner circle insisted that the new Russian president was the “undoubted father of Russian democracy” and Gorbachev merely a half-hearted reformer who tried to “save Communism.”⁵ Early on, even a few Russian supporters of Yeltsin understood that this was both untrue and dangerous for the country's future. Recalling Gorbachev's role as “liberator,” one wrote: “Miracles do not happen. People who are not capable of appreciating a great man cannot successfully lead a state.”⁶

In the West, and particularly in the United States, a more ideological politics inspired the revised history. Gorbachev's historic reforms, along with Washington's previous hope that they would succeed, were quickly obscured as the Soviet breakup and purported U.S. victory in the Cold War became defining moments in a new American triumphalist narrative. The entire history of the “defeated” Soviet enemy was now presented in the press as “Russia's seven decades as a rigid and ruthless police state,” a “wound inflicted on a nation . . . over most of a century,”

an experience “every bit as evil as we had thought—indeed more so.” Reagan’s condemnation of the Soviet Union as an “evil empire,” which he had happily rejected because of Gorbachev’s reforms only three years before, was reinstated. An influential columnist even declared that a “fascist Russia” would have been a “much better thing.”⁷

American scholars, some of them also inspired by “triumphalist belief,” reacted similarly. With few exceptions, they reverted to old Sovietological axioms that the system had always been unreformable and its fate predetermined. The view that there had been promising “roads not taken” in its history was again dismissed as an “improbable idea” based on “dubious assumptions.” Gorbachev’s “evolutionary middle path . . . was a chimera,” just as NEP had been, an attempt “to reform the unreformable,” and the Soviet Union therefore died from a “lack of alternatives.” Accordingly, most scholars no longer asked, even in light of the calamities that followed, if a reforming Soviet Union might have been the best hope for the post-Communist future of Russia or any of the other former republics.⁸ On the contrary, they insisted that everything Soviet “must be discarded” by “razing the entire edifice of political and economic relations,” an exhortation that translated into American cheerleading for Yeltsin’s extremist measures after 1991.⁹

The revised history of the Soviet Union also required a revised memory of its last leader. Once seen as the Soviet Union’s “No. 1 radical” and acclaimed for his “boldness,” Gorbachev was now dismissed as having been “irresolute and unproductive,” as well as insufficiently “radical.”¹⁰ The leader who said of himself while in power, “everything new in philosophy begins as heresy and in politics as the opinion of a minority,” and whose own Communist fundamentalists were “against me, hate me” because his policies were “heresy,” was recast as a man with “no deep convictions,” even as an “orthodox Communist.”¹¹ That persistent ideological response to Gorbachev’s belief in a “socialism with a human face” also promoted the assertion that Yeltsin had “introduced markets and democracy to Russia.”¹²

The notion that Gorbachev’s pro-democracy measures and other reforms had been insufficiently radical misunderstands a fateful difference between his approach and Yeltsin’s. From Peter the Great to Stalin, the dominant leadership method of transforming Russia had been a “revolution from above” that imposed wrenching changes on society through state coercion. Looking back, many reform-minded Russians rejected

those methods as “modernization through catastrophe” because of their extraordinary human and material costs and because they kept the Russian people as subjects of the state rather than freeing them to become democratic citizens. Yeltsin’s “shock-therapy” measures of the early 1990s, though his purpose was different, continued that baneful tradition.¹³

Gorbachev emphatically rejected the tradition. From the beginning, he was determined to “ensure that for the first time in its centuries-long history our country would go through a turning point without bloodshed.” Perestroika, he vowed, was a “historic chance to modernize the country through reforms, that is by peaceful means”—a process “revolutionary in content but evolutionary in methods and form.” Once initiated from above, it meant putting the “cause of perestroika in the hands of the people,” not the state, through “democratization of all spheres of Soviet life.” Readers already know the price Gorbachev paid for choosing a “democratic reformation”—itself a kind of leadership heresy—as an alternative to Russia’s history of imposed transformations.¹⁴

As political and social calamities unfolded under Yeltsin in the post-Soviet 1990s, Russian scholars and other intellectuals, unlike their American counterparts, began to rethink the consequences of the Soviet breakup. A growing number concluded that some form of Gorbachev’s perestroika, or “non-catastrophic evolution,” even without him, had been a chance to democratize and marketize Russia in ways less traumatic and costly, and thus more fruitful, than those adopted by Yeltsin. Russia’s historians (and politicians) will debate the issue for many years to come, but the fate of the country’s democratization suggests why some of them already believe that Gorbachev’s approach was a “lost alternative.”¹⁵

Consider briefly the “trajectory,” as specialists say,¹⁶ of four essential components of any democracy as they developed in Russia before and after the end of the Soviet Union in December 1991:

- Without a significant number of independent media, other elements of democracy, from fair elections and constraints on power to the administration of justice, cannot exist. In 1985 and 1986, Gorbachev introduced “glasnost,” his necessary initial reform, which meant a gradual diminishing of official censorship. By 1990 and 1991, the process had given rise to a plethora of independent publications and, more importantly at the time, to substantially uncensored state-owned national tele-

vision, radio, and newspapers. The latter development was attributable to Gorbachev's committed leadership, continued government funding of national media, and the absence of other forces that might seize those opinion-shaping instruments for their own purposes.

A reverse process began after Yeltsin's victory in the failed August 1991 coup and his abolition of the Soviet Union in December. In both instances, he closed several opposition newspapers while reasserting Kremlin censorship over television. These were temporary measures, but more lasting control of the post-Soviet national media followed Yeltsin's armed destruction of the Russian parliament in 1993 and his "privatization" decrees, which made a small group of men, known as "oligarchs," owners of the nation's most valuable assets, including the media.

The 1996 presidential election, which Yeltsin was at risk of losing to the Communist Party candidate, marked the end of truly free and independent nationwide media in post-Soviet Russia. Though some pluralism and independent journalism remained, mainly because of internecine warfare among the media's oligarchic owners and a residual effect of Gorbachev's *glasnost*, they steadily declined. As a leading independent editor during both the Gorbachev and post-Soviet years later emphasized: "In 1996, the Russian authorities . . . and the largest business groups . . . jointly used the mass media, above all television, for the purpose of manipulating voter behavior, and with real success. Since that time, neither the authorities nor the oligarchs have let this weapon out of their hands."¹⁷

Other Russian journalists later compared their experiences during the Gorbachev years favorably to what followed under Yeltsin and Putin, but here is the judgment of a knowledgeable American head of an international monitoring organization, written in 2005: "During *glasnost*, courageous journalism pried open closed doors to history, sparked vigorous debates on multiparty democracy, and encouraged Soviet citizens to speak freely. . . . But in today's Russia, courageous journalists are endangered. . . . Reporting on basic public issues is increasingly restricted, and the public is kept in the dark about corruption, crime, and human rights abuses."¹⁸

• Russian elections naturally took the same "trajectory." The first ever national multicandidate balloting in Soviet history, for a Congress of People's Deputies, took place in March 1989. Though half of the deputies were chosen by institutions rather than popular vote, it was a his-

toric breakthrough in Gorbachev's democratization campaign and was soon followed by more important ones. Voting for a counterpart legislature of the Soviet Russian Republic in early 1990 remains the freest and fairest parliamentary election ever held in Russia.¹⁹ The same is true of the 1991 electoral campaign for the new presidency of that Soviet republic, in which a defiant Yeltsin defeated the Kremlin's candidate by a wide margin.

No further Russian parliamentary or presidential elections occurred until after the end of the Soviet Union, and when they did, each, while maintaining an innocuous degree of competition, was less free and fair than its predecessors. By 1996, Yeltsin's backers had developed enough "political technologies" for the "managed democracy" later associated with Vladimir Putin—overwhelming use of funds, control of the mass media, restrictions on independent candidates and parties, and falsified returns—to assure that effective power remained with whoever already ruled Russia. Even the referendum results said to have ratified Yeltsin's new constitution in 1993, unlike Gorbachev's 1991 referendum on the Union, were almost certainly falsified.²⁰

Most telling, Yeltsin's election as Soviet Russian president in 1991 was the first and the last time executive power was allowed to pass from the Kremlin to an opposition candidate. In 2000, Yeltsin transferred power to Putin by means of a "managed" election, and Putin made Dmitri Medvedev his successor as president in a similar way in 2008. Even an American specialist unsympathetic to Gorbachev's reforms concluded that "Gorbachev-era elections were less fixed and fraudulent than most post-Soviet parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia have been." A Russian commentator was more succinct: "The peak of electoral democracy in our country came toward the end of perestroika."²¹

•But no Gorbachev-era democratic achievement was more important, or decline more fateful, than the popularly elected Soviet legislatures he promoted in 1989 and 1990. Democracy is possible without an independent executive branch but not without a sovereign parliament or its equivalent, the one truly indispensable institution of representative government. From tsars to heads of the Soviet Communist Party, Russian authoritarianism had featured overwhelming executive power and nonexistent or doomed representative assemblies, from the Dumas of the late tsarist period to the popularity elected soviets and Constituent Assembly of 1917 and 1918.

In that context, the Soviet Congress elected in 1989 and its Russian Republic counterpart in 1990 — each chose a smaller Supreme Soviet to continue as a sitting parliament — were the most historic result of Gorbachev's prodemocracy policies. The first functioned as an increasingly independent constitutional convention, enacting legislation for the further democratization of the Soviet Union by separating the powers previously monopolized by tsars and commissars alike, while also empowering investigative commissions and emerging as a source of opposition to Gorbachev. The second did the same in the Russian Republic, most importantly by amending its constitution to institute an elected presidency for Yeltsin. Nonetheless, Gorbachev was so committed to real legislatures as an essential component of democratization that he agreed only reluctantly to his own executive presidency in 1990, worrying it might diminish their independence, and he then endured, however unhappily, their mounting criticism of his leadership.²²

Twenty years later, Russia's post-Soviet Parliament, renamed the Duma, had become a near replica of its weak and compliant tsarist-era predecessors, and the presidency a nearly all-powerful institution. Two turning points marked this fateful development. The first was in late 1991, when the Soviet Congress was permitted to play almost no role during the last months of the Soviet Union and then none at all in its dissolution. The second came in late 1993, when Yeltsin forcibly abolished the 1990 Russian Parliament and enacted a superpresidential constitution. Thereafter, each successive parliament, like each election, was less independent and influential, eventually becoming, in the eyes of its critics, a "decorative" or "imitation" legislature, like post-Soviet democracy itself.

- Finally, viable democracies require governing elites whose ranks are open, at least periodically, to representatives of other parties, nonofficial institutions, and civil society. Until the onset of perestroika, the self-appointed Soviet nomenklatura monopolized political power and even participation in politics. Breaking that monopoly by allowing the rise of new political actors from different backgrounds and professions — an academic economist and a law professor were elected the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad/St. Petersburg — was another democratic breakthrough of the Gorbachev years. By 1990, such people made up a significant minority in the Soviet Congress and a majority in the Soviet Russian Parliament.

After 1991, that development was also reversed. The post-Soviet ruling elite soon grew into a narrow group largely composed of the leader's personal entourage, financial oligarchs and their representatives, state bureaucrats, and people from military and security institutions. The growing number of military and security officers at the highest levels of government, for example, is usually attributed to Putin, a former KGB colonel, but it began soon after the Soviet breakup. Before 1992, under Gorbachev, they accounted for 4 percent of the ruling elite; this more than tripled to 17 percent under Yeltsin and then climbed to some 50 percent under Putin.²³

Civil society fared accordingly. Contrary to civil-society "promoters," it always exists, even in authoritarian systems, whether in the form of parties, trade unions, other nongovernmental organizations, or simply the everyday interactive activities of citizens. But in post-Soviet Russia, by the late 1990s, most of its political representatives had lapsed back into pre-perestroika passivity, sporadic actions, or impotence. The turnabout was caused by several factors, including exhaustion, disillusion, the state's reoccupation of political space, and the decimation of once large and professionalized Soviet middle classes, usually said to be a prerequisite of stable democracy, by Yeltsin's shock-therapy measures of the early 1990s. On the eve of the twentieth anniversary of perestroika, Gorbachev's partner in democratization, Aleksandr Yakovlev, spoke "a blasphemous thought: Never in the history of Russia has there been such a deep divide between the ruling elite and the people."²⁴ It was a considerable exaggeration, but an expression of the fate of what Gorbachev and he had begun.

In short, these four indicators document the downward trajectory of Russian democratization after the end of the Soviet Union. Other political developments were in the same direction. Constitutionalism and rule of law were the guidelines of Gorbachev's reforms. They did not always prevail but stand in sharp contrast to Yeltsin's methods, which destroyed an entire existing constitutional order in 1993, from its parliament and fledgling Constitutional Court to reanimated councils of local government. Yeltsin then ruled primarily by decree during the rest of the 1990s, issuing 2,300 in one year alone. There was also the rise and fall of official respect for human rights, always a sensitive indicator of the degree of democracy. On this subject we have a Western study published

in 2004: "Human rights violations have increased dramatically in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union."²⁵

The conclusion seems clear: Soviet democratization, however dictatorial the system's preceding history, was Russia's missed democratic opportunity, an evolutionary road not taken. In the context of American triumphalism and its political correctness, it is a heretical conclusion, but not in post-Soviet Russia. Even early Yeltsin supporters and Gorbachev critics later reconsidered the choices they had made in 1990 and 1991. Looking back, one concluded, "Gorbachev . . . gave us political freedoms, without costs or bloodshed—freedoms of the press, speech, assembly, and a multiparty system." Another pointed out, "How we used these freedoms is already our problem and responsibility, not his." And a third, who had lent his political support to Yeltsin's abolition of the Soviet Union, wondered aloud "how the country would have developed" had it continued to exist.²⁶

TWENTY years after the Soviet state ended, most Western observers agreed that a far-reaching process of "de-democratization" was under way in Russia. Explaining when and why it began again revealed fundamental differences between the thinking of Western specialists, particularly American ones, and Russians themselves.

Unlike Americans, a majority of Russians, as readers already know, regretted the end of the Soviet Union not because they pined for "Communism" but because they lost a familiar state and a secure way of life. Even an imprisoned post-Soviet oligarch, like so many of his fellow citizens, saw the event as a "tragedy," a view that produced the adage: "Those who do not regret the breakup of the USSR have no heart."²⁷ If only for that reason, Russian intellectuals and political figures were less constrained by ideology and politics than were Americans in examining the origins of de-democratization. A growing number joined Gorbachev partisans in believing that the end of perestroika, which had been abolished along with the Soviet Union, had been a "lost chance" for democracy and a "tragic mistake."²⁸

Most American commentators insisted on a different explanation and continue to do so. Having deleted Gorbachev's reforms from the Soviet Union's "evil" history and attributed democratization to Yeltsin, they blamed Putin for having "taken Russia in the opposite direction."

Political, media, and academic commentators who had been vocal cheerleaders for “Yeltsin-era democracy” initiated the explanation, but it became conventional wisdom: “The democratizing Russia that Putin inherited” fell victim to his “anti-democratic agenda” and “blueprint for dictatorship.”²⁹ Only a few American specialists disagreed, faulting Yeltsin rather than his successor for beginning the “rollback of democratic reforms.”³⁰

Wary perhaps of doubting “one of the great moments in history,”³¹ even fewer have asked if the “rollback” began earlier, with the Soviet breakup itself. The failure of journalists and policymakers to consider the possibility may be understandable. But not even established scholars who later regretted their “optimism” about Yeltsin’s leadership have rethought the end of the Soviet Union.³² They should do so because the way its breakup occurred—in circumstances about which standard Western accounts are largely silent or mythical—clearly boded ill for Russia’s future. (One myth is the “peaceful” and “bloodless” nature of the dissolution.³³ In reality, ethnic strife soon broke out in Central Asia and the Caucasus, killing or brutally displacing hundreds of thousands of citizens, a post-Soviet fallout still ongoing in the 2008 war in Georgia.)

Most generally, there were ominous parallels between the Soviet breakup and the collapse of tsarism in 1917. In both cases, the way the old order ended resulted in a near total destruction of Russian statehood that plunged the country into prolonged chaos, conflict, and misery. Russians call what ensued “*Smuta*,” a term full of dread derived from previous historical experiences and not expressed in the usual translation, “Time of Troubles.” (In this respect, the end of the Soviet Union may have had less to do with the specific nature of that system than with recurring breakdowns of the state in Russian history.)

The consequences of 1991 and 1917, despite important differences, were similar. Once again, hopes for evolutionary progress toward democracy, prosperity, and social justice were crushed; a small group of radicals imposed extreme measures on the nation; zealous struggles over property and territory tore apart the foundations of a vast multiethnic state, this time a nuclear one; and the victors destroyed long-standing economic and other essential structures to build entirely anew, “as though we had no past.”³⁴ Once again, elites acted in the name of an ideology and a better future but left society bitterly divided over yet

another “accursed question”—why it had happened.³⁵ And again the people paid the price, including catastrophic declines in life expectancy.

All of those recapitulations unfolded, amid mutual (and lasting) charges of betrayal, during the three months from August to December 1991 when the “dismantling of Union statehood” actually occurred. (Gorbachev felt betrayed by the August coup plotters and by Yeltsin, Yeltsin by his Belovezh partner Kravchuk, and millions of Russians by the Belovezh dissolution of the Soviet Union, leading a foreign correspondent to label post-Soviet Russia “the country of the broken word.”)³⁶ The period began and ended with the coups in Moscow and Belovezh and culminated in a revolution from above against the reforming Soviet system led by its own elites, analogous to, again allowing for important dissimilarities, Stalin’s abolition of NEP Russia in 1929. Looking back, Russians of different views would conclude it was during these months that political extremism and unfettered greed cost them a chance for democratic and economic progress.³⁷ Few thought it happened a decade later under Putin.

Certainly, it is hard to imagine a political act more extreme than abolishing a state of 280 million citizens, one laden with countless nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. And yet, Yeltsin did it, as even his sympathizers acknowledged, precipitously and in a way that was “neither legitimate nor democratic.”³⁸ A profound departure from Gorbachev’s commitment to gradualism, social consensus, and constitutionalism, this was a return to the country’s “neo-Bolshevik” and earlier traditions of imposed change, as many Russian, and even a few Western, writers have characterized it.³⁹ The ramifications were bound to endanger the democratization achieved during the preceding six years of perestroika.

Yeltsin and his appointees promised, for example, that their extreme measures were “extraordinary” ones, but, as had happened before in Russia, most recently under Stalin from 1929 through 1933, they grew into a system of rule.⁴⁰ (The next such measure, already being planned, was “shock therapy.”) Those initial steps had a further political logic. Having ended the Soviet state in a way that lacked legal or popular legitimacy, the Yeltsin ruling group soon became fearful of real democracy. In particular, a freely elected independent parliament and the possibility of relinquishing power in any manner raised the specter of “going on trial and to prison.”⁴¹

The economic consequences of Belovezh were no less portentous. Liquidating the Union without any preparatory stages shattered a highly integrated economy. In addition to abetting the destruction of a vast state, it was a major cause of the collapse of production across the former Soviet territories, which fell by nearly half in the 1990s. That in turn contributed to mass poverty and its attendant social pathologies, from declining longevity to massive corruption, which remained the “main fact” of Russian life even in the early twenty-first century.⁴²

The economic motivation behind elite support for Yeltsin in 1991, which I examined in chapter 5, was even more malignant. As a onetime Yeltsin supporter wrote thirteen years later, “Almost everything that happened in Russia after 1991 was determined to a significant extent by the divvying-up of the property of the former USSR.”⁴³ Here, too, there were foreboding historical precedents. Twice before in twentieth-century Russia, the nation’s fundamental property had been confiscated—the landlord’s vast estates and the bourgeoisie’s industrial and other large assets in the revolution of 1917 and 1918, and then the land of 25 million peasant farmers in Stalin’s collectivization drive in 1929 through 1933. The aftereffects of both episodes plagued the country for many years to come.⁴⁴

Soviet elites took much of the state’s enormous wealth, which for decades had been defined in law and ideology as the “property of all the people,” with no more regard for fair procedures or public opinion than there had been in 1917 and 1918. Indeed, an anti-Communist Russian intellectual thought that the “Bolshevik expropriation of private property looks simply like the height of piety against the background of the insane injustice of our absurd privatization.”⁴⁵ To maintain their dominant position and enrich themselves, Soviet elites wanted the most valuable state property distributed from above, without the participation of legislatures or any other representatives of society. They achieved that goal first by themselves, through “spontaneous privatization” on the eve of the Soviet dissolution, and then, after 1991, through decrees issued by Yeltsin. As a result, privatization was haunted from the beginning by a “‘dual illegitimacy’—in the eyes of the law . . . and in the eyes of the population.”⁴⁶

The political and economic consequences should have been easy to foresee. Fearful for their dubiously acquired assets and even for their lives and families (many were sent abroad to live), the property holders, who formed the core of the first post-Soviet ruling elite, were as

determined as Yeltsin to limit or reverse the parliamentary electoral democracy and media freedoms instituted by Gorbachev. In their place, they strove to create a kind of praetorian political system devoted to and corrupted by their wealth.

The role played in post-Soviet “de-democratization” by the “divvying-up of the property of the former USSR,” which was still under way during the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, is rarely noted in Western accounts. Its full history lies outside the framework of this book, but several milestones should be emphasized. “Privatization” of billions of dollars worth of state assets was a central issue in the struggle between Yeltsin and the parliament in 1993 and its destruction by tank fire in October. It was also a motive for the superpresidential constitution imposed on the country in December of that year, as well as the coalition between the Kremlin and the new oligarchs to keep Yeltsin in power by rigging the 1996 presidential election.

The endangered well-being and security of that Kremlin-oligarchical “Family,” as it became known, then inspired the “democratic transition” of power from Yeltsin to Putin in 1999 and 2000. With demands for social justice, criminal accountability, and impeachment growing in the country and in the new parliament, and Yeltsin in failing political and physical health, the oligarchs desperately needed a new protector in the Kremlin. (In late 1999, 90 percent of Russians surveyed did not trust Yeltsin and 53 percent wanted him put on trial.) The plan was to appoint his successor as prime minister, who would, according to the constitution, become acting president upon Yeltsin’s retirement until a new “election” was held.

Several candidates were rehearsed for the position before the forty-seven-year-old Putin, a career KGB officer and head of its successor agency, the FSB, was chosen. Though he later became a leader unlike the oligarchs had intended, the reason behind Putin’s selection was clear: as FSB chief, he had already demonstrated he was “willing to help” a previous patron escape criminal indictment. And, indeed, his first act upon becoming president was to grant Yeltsin, as agreed beforehand, lifetime immunity from prosecution. For the first time in Russia’s centuries of police repression, thus did a career secret policemen become its supreme leader.⁴⁷ (Yuri Andropov headed the KGB before becoming Soviet general secretary in 1982, but it had not been his original or primary profession.)

The economic consequences of the “divvying-up” were no less profound. Uncertain how long they could actually retain their immense property, the new oligarchs were initially more interested in stripping assets than investing in them. Capital flight soon far exceeded investment in the economy, which fell by 80 percent in the 1990s. This was a major cause of a depression worse than the West’s in the 1930s, with the GDP plummeting by half and real wages (when they were paid at all) by even more, and some 75 percent of Russians plunged into poverty. As a result, post-Soviet Russia lost many of its hard-gained twentieth-century achievements, becoming the first nation ever to undergo actual demodernization in peacetime.⁴⁸

Not surprisingly, as the new elite and its top bureaucrats were increasingly perceived as a rapacious “off-shore aristocracy,” popular hatred of them spread and grew more intense. In a 2005 survey, Russians rated them well below their Soviet-era counterparts in their concern for the nation’s welfare, their patriotism, and their morals. Having unfolded under the banner of “democratic reform,” all of these developments further discredited democracy, now termed “shit-ocracy,” in public opinion.⁴⁹ Twenty years after it began, the political and economic consequences of the “divvying-up of the property of the former USSR”—and the conviction that “property without power isn’t worth anything”⁵⁰—remain both the primary cause of Russia’s de-democratization and the primary obstacle to reversing it.

Considering all these ominous circumstances, why did so many Western commentators, from politicians and journalists to scholars, hail the breakup of the Soviet Union as a “breakthrough” to democracy and free-market capitalism and persist in these misconceptions?⁵¹ Where Russia was concerned, their reaction was again based on anti-Communist ideology, hopeful myths, and amnesia, not historical or contemporary realities. Alluding to that myopia on the part of people who had long sought the destruction of the Soviet state and then “exulted” in it, a Moscow philosopher remarked bitterly, “They were aiming at Communism but hitting Russia.”⁵²

Among the most ideological myths surrounding the end of the Soviet Union was that it “collapsed at the hands of its own people” and brought to power in Russia “Yeltsin and the democrats”—even “moral leaders”—who represented “the people.”⁵³ As I pointed out in the preceding chapter, no popular revolution, national election, or referendum

mandated or sanctioned the breakup, and so there is no empirical evidence for this supposition. Indeed, everything strongly suggests a different interpretation.

Even the most event-making leaders need supporters in order to carry out historic acts. Yeltsin abolished the Soviet Union in December 1991 with the backing of a self-interested alliance. All of its groups called themselves “democrats” and “reformers,” but the two most important ones were unlikely allies: the nomenklatura elites who were pursuing the “smell of property like a beast after prey,” in the revealing metaphor of Yeltsin’s own chief minister, and wanted property much more than any kind of democracy or free-market competition—many had opposed Gorbachev’s reforms—and the impatient, avowedly prodemocracy wing of the intelligentsia.⁵⁴ Traditional enemies in the prereform Soviet system, they colluded in 1991 largely because the intelligentsia’s radical economic ideas seemed to justify nomenklatura privatization.

But the most influential pro-Yeltsin intellectuals, who would play leading roles in his post-Soviet government, were neither coincidental fellow travelers nor real democrats, foremost among them Yegor Gaidar, Anatoly Chubais, and their “team” of shock therapists. Since the late 1980s, Chubais and others had insisted that market economics and large private property would have to be imposed on a recalcitrant Russian society by an “iron-hand” regime. This “great leap,” as they extolled it, would entail “tough and unpopular” policies resulting in “mass dissatisfaction” and thus would necessitate “anti-democratic measures.”⁵⁵ Like the property-seeking elites, they saw the new legislatures elected in Russia under Gorbachev, still called soviets, as a major obstacle. “Liberal admirers of Pinochet,” the general who had brutally imposed economic change on Chile in the 1970s and 1980s, they said of Yeltsin, now their leader, “Let him be a dictator!”⁵⁶

Little else could have been worse for Russia’s nascent democracy in 1992 than a Kremlin belief in the need for a Pinochet-like leader to implement market reforms, a role Gorbachev had refused to play, and a team of “reform” intellectuals to encourage it. From there it was only a step back to Russia’s authoritarian traditions and on to the overthrow of an elected parliament, privatization by decree, a Kremlin-appointed financial oligarchy, and corruption of the media and elections. A Russian law professor later summarized what happened: “The so-called democratic movement ceased to exist at the end of 1991. . . . Some of

its members took part in the divvying up of property and primitive accumulation of capital; others hired themselves out to the new property owners and served their interests politically.”⁵⁷

Certainly Chubais and his “democratic reformers” were there at each stage, planning and justifying the undoing of democratization, including the transition to Putin, while still yearning for a Russian Pinochet.⁵⁸ They became much more (or less) than intellectuals, serving as ministers in Yeltsin’s government, notably Chubais himself, Gaidar, Alfred Kokh, Boris Nemtsov, and a dozen or so others. (Their service and deeds, it should be emphasized, also had the enthusiastic support of American policymakers, media opinion makers, and academic specialists.)⁵⁹

Underlying the Pinochet syndrome among Yeltsin’s intellectual supporters was a profoundly antidemocratic contempt for the Russian people (*narod*). When election returns went against the “liberals,” they questioned the “psychological health of voters”; declared, “Russia! You’ve lost your mind!”; and concluded that “the people are the main problem with our democracy.” And when their policies ended in economic disaster, they pointed to the “rot in the national gene pool” and again blamed “the people,” who “deserved their miserable fate.”⁶⁰ When the Soviet Union ended, however, Russia’s future was not in the hands of the people, who had responded admirably to Gorbachev’s democratic reforms, but in those of the elites now in power.

Political and economic alternatives still existed in Russia after 1991. Other fateful struggles and decisions lay ahead. And none of the factors contributing to the end of the Soviet Union were inexorable or deterministic. But even if genuine democratic and market aspirations were among them, so were cravings for power, political coups, elite avarice, extremist ideas, widespread perceptions of illegitimacy, and anger over the “greatest betrayal of the twentieth century.”⁶¹ All of these factors continued to play a role after 1991, but it should already have been clear which would prevail—as should have been the fate of the democratic alternative Gorbachev bequeathed to Russia.

ON the occasion of Gorbachev’s seventieth birthday in 2001, a Soviet-era intellectual who had deserted him in 1990 and 1991 reevaluated his leadership. After acknowledging that Russia’s democratization was his achievement, she added another: “Gorbachev ended the ‘Cold War’,

and that fact in itself makes him one of the heroes of the twentieth century.”⁶² Though Gorbachev himself always credited the “key role” played by his “partners” Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, few nonpartisan historians of that process, or participants in it, deny he was the main “hero.”⁶³

Here, too, however, his legacy may have been lost. In August 2008, almost exactly twenty years after Gorbachev delivered a historic United Nations speech disavowing the Soviet ideological premise of the Cold War, Washington and Moscow were fighting a proxy hot war in the former Soviet republic of Georgia. Surrogate U.S.-Soviet military conflicts had been a regular feature of the Cold War, in the Third World and elsewhere, but this was a more direct confrontation by half. Washington was represented by Georgia’s military forces, which it had amply funded for several years, but Moscow’s own troops fought (and won) the war. Whatever the view from America, many Russians, Georgians, and South Ossetians, on whose territory it began, “perceived the conflict as a proxy battle between two global powers—Russia and the United States.”⁶⁴

The war caught most Western governments and observers “totally by surprise” primarily because they had failed to understand that a new (or renewed) cold war had been developing long before the U.S.-Russian conflict in the Caucasus.⁶⁵ In particular, American officials and specialists, almost without exception, had repeatedly denied that a new cold war was even possible. Some dismissed the possibility adamantly (in reply to a small number of critics, myself included, who warned of the mounting danger), presumably because they had formulated, implemented, or defended policies contributing to it. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, for example, announced officially that “talk about a new Cold War is hyperbolic nonsense.” And a *Washington Post* columnist denounced the “notion” as “the most dangerous misjudgment of all.”⁶⁶

Personal motives aside, most commentators apparently misunderstood the nature of cold war, assuming that the one following World War II was the only model. The essential meaning of cold war is a relationship between states in which exacerbating conflicts and confrontation are dominant in more areas than not and usually, though not always, short of military fighting. To take two disparate examples, the fifteen-year U.S. nonrecognition of Soviet Russia, from 1918 to 1933, was a kind of cold war, but without an arms race or other direct dangers to either side. The Sino-Soviet cold war, from the 1960s to the 1980s, on

the other hand, witnessed occasional military skirmishes along a long border. Cold-war relationships vary in form, causes, and content, the last U.S.-Soviet one being exceedingly dangerous because it included a nuclear arms race.

Other misconceptions underlay the assumption that a U.S.-Russian cold war was impossible after the end of the Soviet Union. Unlike before, it was widely argued, post-1991 conflicts between Washington and Moscow were not the product of different economic and political systems, were not ideological or global, and, in any event, post-Soviet Russia was too weak to wage another cold war.⁶⁷ (The “friendship” between President George W. Bush and President Putin was often cited as further evidence, even though Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev had professed the same personal relationship thirty years before.)

All of these assertions, which are still widespread in the United States, are misinformed. Russia’s “capitalism” is fundamentally unlike America’s, economically and politically. Exaggeration of ideology’s actual importance in the previous Cold War aside, ideological conflict, or a “values gap,” between U.S. “democracy promotion” and Russia’s “sovereign democracy”—“autocratic nationalism,” even “fascism,” as new American cold warriors label it—has been growing for several years, along with the number and prominence of ideologues on both sides. And this gap, we are told, “is greater today than at any time since Communism’s collapse.” Indeed, one of the Americans assures us, “Ideology matters again.”⁶⁸ Nor did the Cold War after World War II begin globally, but in Eastern Europe, as did the new one, which is rapidly spreading. As for Russia’s inability to fight it, that assumption was shattered by the 2008 war in Georgia in less than a week.⁶⁹

The tenacious fallacy of deniers of a new cold war is illustrated by their own accounts of the U.S.-Russian relationship, the “worst in a generation,” as it evolved during the first decade of the twenty-first century. Though couched in euphemisms, worsening relations could hardly be mistaken for anything other than a new cold war. Consider the following passages from a front-page *New York Times* “news analysis,” under the heading “No Cold War, But Big Chill,” published a week after the war in Georgia broke out:

“The cold war is over,” President Bush declared Friday, but a new era of enmity between the United States and Russia has emerged

nevertheless. . . . As much as Mr. Bush has argued that the old characterizations of the cold war are no longer germane, he drew a new line . . . between countries free and not free, and bluntly put Russia on the other side of it. . . . Tensions are manifest already, and both sides have done their part to inflame them. . . . The United Nations Security Council has reverted to a cold-war-like stalemate. . . . The Russian offensive—the first outside its territory since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991—has crystallized a realignment already taking place in Central and Eastern Europe. . . . The administration dropped its opposition to sending Patriot missiles, which would defend the Polish site [for U.S. missile defense]. . . . A senior Russian general promptly gave credence to Poland's worst fears by saying Friday that the country had just made itself a target of Russia's nuclear arsenal. . . . It may seem outdated to speak of blocs in Europe, but they are emerging just as clearly, if less ideologically, as those that existed on either side of the Iron Curtain. . . . In fact, the alienation between the United States and Russia has rarely, if ever, been deeper.⁷⁰

If so, what happened to the “end of the Cold War?” The next chapter proposes an answer, but this one must end where it began, by emphasizing yet another instance of historical amnesia and revisionism. In this case, it involves the crucial question: How and when did the Cold War end?

When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he was already determined to pursue not merely another relaxation of East-West tensions but an abolition of the forty-year Cold War.⁷¹ He was committed to doing so for three reasons: He believed that its most dangerous element, the U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms race, threatened human existence. He wanted the Soviet Union to become an integral part of the West, of a “Common European Home,” in which he included the United States. And without substantially reducing both the international tensions and economic costs of the Cold War, Gorbachev had little hope of mobilizing the political support and resources at home necessary for his perestroika reformation.

Gorbachev's anti-Cold War mission was informed by what he and his aides called “New Thinking.” Also decried as heresy by Communist Party fundamentalists, it brought about a “conceptual revolution” in

Soviet foreign policy.⁷² Those ideas, together with Gorbachev's remarkable leadership abilities and the essential participation of a U.S. president who also feared the potential consequences of nuclear weapons, Ronald Reagan, quickly transformed East-West relations.

In 1986, barely a year after Gorbachev's rise to power, the two leaders agreed in principle that all nuclear weapons should be abolished, an impossible goal but a vital pursuit. In 1987, they signed a treaty eliminating for the first time an entire category of those weapons, in effect putting the long arms race in reverse gear. In 1988, while joining Gorbachev in other important disarmament initiatives, Reagan absolved the Soviet "evil empire," saying of America's new partner, "That was another time, another era." And when he left office in January 1989, Reagan explained why there was a new era: "The Cold War is over."⁷³

Even if true, it had to be affirmed by Gorbachev and by Reagan's successor, the first President Bush. They did so emphatically in November and December 1989, first when Gorbachev refused to respond with military force, as his predecessors had done in similar situations, to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe; and then together at a Malta summit meeting, which they agreed marked the onset of a "brand new era in U.S.-Soviet relations."⁷⁴ Other formal ratifications soon followed, but ultimate evidence of a post-Cold War era, however brief, was provided in 1990 by two instances of unprecedented U.S.-Soviet cooperation: an agreement on German reunification and Moscow's support for the U.S.-led war to drive Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army, a Soviet client, out of Kuwait.

Three elements of this history were crucial. First, even allowing for the "key" roles of Reagan and Bush, the Cold War would have continued unabated, possibly grown worse, had it not been for Gorbachev's initiatives. Second, objective historians and participants disagree about exactly when the Cold War ended, but they agree it occurred sometime between 1988 and 1990—that is, eighteen months to three years before the end of the Soviet Union in December 1991.⁷⁵ And third, the termination of the Cold War was negotiated in a way, as Bush initially confirmed, "so there were no losers, only winners" or, as future Secretary of State Rice wrote, with "no winners and no losers."⁷⁶

On the American side, however, those historical realities were soon rewritten. Immediately after December 1991, the end of the Cold War was conflated with and attributed to the end of the Soviet Union, and

both were recast for a new American triumphalist narrative. Bush himself wrote the first draft, declaring in his January 1992 state-of-the-union address, "America won the Cold War. . . . The Cold War didn't end—it was won." He repeated the claim, which was noted and bitterly rejected by Gorbachev's admirers in Moscow, throughout his campaign for reelection that year.⁷⁷

George F. Kennan, the iconic (but usually disregarded) authority on U.S.-Soviet relations, later dismissed the claim of a U.S. victory as "intrinsicly silly" and "simply childish,"⁷⁸ but virtually all American politicians and the mainstream media followed Bush's lead, as they continue to do today. So have leading scholars who should know better, two even claiming that Boris Yeltsin, who became president of the Soviet Russian Republic only in June 1991, well after the turning-point events of 1988 through 1990, had been the "catalyst for the Cold War's end."⁷⁹

The result was a "new history" written, in the words of a critic, "as seen from America, as experienced in America, and told in a way most agreeable to many Americans"—a "fairytale," another wrote, "with a happy ending."⁸⁰ When future historians search for the beginning of the new cold war, they may find it at the moment when Americans rewrote the end of the preceding one by deleting Gorbachev's legacy.



7 WHO LOST THE POST-SOVIET PEACE?

The Owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk.

HEGEL

IN the early 1990s, the U.S. government undertook a far-reaching crusade to transform post-Soviet Russia into “the kind of Russia we want.” Amply funded by Washington and private institutions, the missionary campaign mobilized many Americans who claimed to have the necessary expertise—economists and other academics, investors, think-tank specialists, and journalists—to prevent the new state from taking “a strange, ambivalent path of its own confused devising.”¹ When the crusade, with its legions of onsite “advisers,” contributed instead to economic ruin, creeping authoritarianism, and surging anti-Americanism, the media and other observers asked, “Who lost Russia?”

In one respect, the question, reminiscent of political accusations regarding China in the 1940s, was a false one. Russia, it now was rightly said, even by lapsed missionaries, “had never been ours to lose.” Accepting the tutelage of a foreign power and its ill-conceived advice had been the Kremlin’s own choice. But in a different and crucial respect, Russia had been America’s to lose—as a strategic partner in the post-Cold War relationship initiated from 1988 through 1991 by Mikhail Gorbachev, Ronald Reagan, and the first President Bush.

The question of who lost that historic opportunity is almost never asked in the United States.² One reason is the deficient memory described in the preceding chapter. As U.S.-Russian relations worsened in the first decade of this century, leading American officials, newspapers, and scholars issued amnesiac assurances that the relationship was nonetheless “far better” and the “foundation for a genuine partnership . . . far stronger” than in 1991.³ Evidently, the opportunity U.S. and Soviet leaders created in the years from 1988 through 1991 had already been forgotten.

A more dangerous factor, however, also contributed to the missed opportunity: a widespread American belief in the 1990s, particularly in Washington, that post-Soviet Russia, shorn of its superpower status, was “virtually irrelevant” and that the United States could therefore pursue its vital interests in “a world without Russia.”⁴ That folly has diminished, but it persists in the belief that a new cold war is impossible or would not matter because “the Russian phoenix won’t rise again.”⁵ In reality, Russia remains more important to America’s national security than any other country, both as the Soviet Union did and in a new, even graver way.

Despite its diminished status after the Soviet breakup, Russia alone still possesses weapons that can destroy the United States, a military complex nearly America’s equal in exporting arms, and the world’s largest oil and natural gas reserves, along with a disproportionate share of the planet’s other natural raw materials, from iron ore, nickel, and timber to diamonds and gold. With its highly educated and creative people, Russia also remains the world’s biggest territorial country, pivotally situated in both the West and the East, at the crossroads of colliding civilizations, with strategic capabilities from Europe, Latin America, Iran, and other Middle East nations to Afghanistan, China, North Korea, and India. All of this means that no vital American national security interest is attainable without Russia’s full cooperation, from preventing nuclear proliferation and international terrorism to guaranteeing regional stability and reliable flows of energy and other essential resources. More generally, a “world without Russia” would be globalization, on which the well-being of today’s nations is said to depend, without a large part of the globe.

But Russia is vital to American security also because it represents an unprecedented danger that did not exist during the forty-year Cold

War. As a result of the Soviet breakup in 1991, a state bearing every nuclear and other device of mass destruction virtually collapsed. During the 1990s, Russia's essential infrastructures—political, economic, and social—disintegrated. Moscow's hold on its vast territories was weakened by separatism, official corruption, and mafia-like crime. The worst peacetime depression in modern history brought economic losses more than twice those suffered by the nation in World War II. Most Russians were impoverished, death rates soared, and the population shrank. In August 1998, the financial system imploded. No one in authority anywhere had ever foreseen that one of the twentieth century's two superpowers would plunge, along with its arsenals of mass destruction, into such catastrophic circumstances.

Ten years later, on the eve of the 2008 international financial crisis, Russia seemed to have recovered. Its economy had grown annually by 6 to 8 percent, doubling the GDP, and its gold and foreign-currency reserves were nearly \$600 billion, the world's third largest. Its stock-market index had increased by 83 percent in a single year, and Moscow was booming with gentrified construction, frenzied consumption of Western luxury goods, five-star hotels, and fifty-six large casinos. Some of the new wealth had spread to the provinces and to the middle and lower classes, whose incomes were rising. But those advances, loudly touted by the Russian government and Western investment-fund promoters, were largely caused by unusually high prices for the country's oil and stood out mainly in comparison with the wasteland of 1998.

More fundamental realities indicated that Russia was still in an unprecedented condition of peacetime demodernization and depopulation. Investment in basic infrastructures remained barely a third of the 1990 level. The government claimed that less than 20 percent of its citizens now lived in poverty, but the actual figure was probably closer to 50 percent and included 60 to 75 percent of families with two or more children, pensioners, and rural dwellers, as well as large segments of the educated and professional classes, among them teachers, doctors, and military officers. The gap between rich and poor, according to Russian experts, had become "explosive."

Most indicative, and tragic, Russia continues to suffer wartime death and birth rates. Already with seven million fewer people than in 1992, its population is still declining by 700,000 or more each year. Deaths exceed births by three to two; male life expectancy is barely fifty-nine

years; and, at the other end of the life cycle, 2 to 3 million children are homeless. The country's health, a Western authority reports, "is a disaster," with old and new diseases, from tuberculosis to HIV infections, growing into epidemics. Nationalists may exaggerate in charging that "the Motherland is Dying," but even the founding head of Moscow's most pro-Western university warned in 2006 that Russia remained in "extremely deep crisis."⁶ And the financial crisis in 2008 and 2009 made everything even worse.

To the extent that Russia is a modern European country, the political system atop this bleak post-Soviet landscape is an anomaly. In 2009, its stability still rested heavily, if not entirely, on the personal popularity and authority of one man, Vladimir Putin, who admitted in 2006 that the state was "not yet stable."⁷ While Putin's favorable rating in opinion surveys reached an extraordinary 70 to 75 percent and he had managed to generate similar figures for his nominal successor as president, Dmitri Medvedev, the country's actual political institutions and other would-be leaders had almost no popular support.

This was even more the case of the country's top business and administrative elites. Having continued to "divvy up" the state assets they privatized in the 1990s and having again been favored by the state with enormous bailouts in 2008 and 2009, they were still widely despised by ordinary Russians, probably a majority of them. Lacking popular legitimacy, their possession of that immense property therefore remained a time bomb embedded in the political and economic system. (New oligarchs created by Putin's Kremlin have even fewer recognized property rights.) This lurking danger was another reason knowledgeable observers worried that a sudden development—a sharp fall in world oil prices (as happened in 2008), a repetition of the kind of ethnic violence or large-scale terrorism that had already occurred in post-Soviet Russia several times, or Putin's disappearance—might plunge the nation into an even more wrenching crisis. Indeed, an eminent Western scholar asked "whether Russia is stable enough to hold together."⁸

As long as catastrophic possibilities exist in that nation, so do the unprecedented threats to U.S. and international security. Experts differ as to which danger is the gravest—the proliferation of Russia's enormous stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials, all of which are sought by terrorist organizations; poorly maintained nuclear reactors on land and on decommissioned submarines; an impaired early-warning

system controlling nuclear missiles on hair-trigger alert; or a repetition of the first-ever civil war in a shattered superpower, the terror-ridden Chechen conflict. But no one should doubt that together they constitute a much greater constant threat than any the United States faced during the Soviet era. If nothing else, the widespread assumption that the danger of a nuclear apocalypse ended with the Soviet state is a myth.

Nor is a catastrophe involving weapons of mass destruction the only possible danger. Even fewer petrodollars may buy Russia longer-term stability, but this will possibly be on the basis of the growing authoritarianism and xenophobic nationalism witnessed in recent years not far from the center of power. Those ominous factors derive primarily not from Russia's lost superpower status (or Putin's KGB background), as the American media regularly assert, but from so many lost and damaged lives at home since 1991. Sometimes called the "Weimar scenario," this outcome is unlikely to be truly fascist, but it could lead to a Russia that both possesses weapons of mass destruction and large proportions of the world's energy resources and is headed by men much less accommodating than Putin and Medvedev and even more hostile to the West than was its Soviet predecessor.

And yet, despite all these ways that Russia can singularly endanger or enhance America's security, by 2009 Washington's relations with Moscow were, it was generally agreed, "the worst in a generation." U.S. and Russian warships were again probing the other nation's perceived zone of security; military officials talked in tones from the "darkest days of the cold war"; the foreign departments expelled the other's diplomats as they had during that era; and the legislatures issued threatening statements. No less indicative, enemy images of the other resurfaced in popular culture and journalism, as in a book subtitled *Spies, Murder, and the Dark Heart of the New Russia*. Even Winston Churchill's Cold War aphorism was revived to warn a well-intended West against a menacing Russia as "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma."⁹

What happened to the opportunity created from 1988 through 1991 for a post-Cold War relationship? In the United States, the overwhelmingly consensual answer is that Putin's Russia destroyed it. According to this explanation, Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin seized the opportunity in the 1990s, before Russia "changed from a relatively friendly democracy into a belligerent police state," to develop a U.S.-Russian strategic partnership, even friendship. After 2000, it was "betrayed"

by Putin's "autocracy" at home and "crude neo-imperialism" abroad, which included "militarily threatening [Russia's] neighbors," "America bashing," and other "serial misbehavior."¹⁰

Blaming the Kremlin for the lost post-Cold War opportunity is orthodoxy among U.S. policymakers, mainstream editorialists, and most influential academics. Some point to resurgent tsarist or Soviet traditions (that is, to the nature of Russia),¹¹ some to Putin, but all of them to Moscow alone, emphasizing with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, "It is simply not valid: to blame Russia's behavior on the United States."¹² Reiterating the consensus, a *New York Times* writer rejoiced, "People of all political persuasions now seem to get it about Russia." And, indeed, even a critic of U.S. policy ended an article, "Of course, Russia has been largely to blame."¹³

If this explanation is true, there would seem to be nothing Washington can do to prevent an even worse relationship with Moscow. But it is not true, or at least far from fully true. The new cold war and the squandering of the post-Soviet peace began not in Moscow but in Washington.

AFTER President George H. W. Bush's reelection defeat, formulating a long-term policy toward post-Soviet Russia fell to Bill Clinton, who became president in January 1993. The general approach adopted by the Clinton administration—its underlying assumptions, purposes, and implementation—has been Washington's policy ever since, through both terms of the second President George Bush. It was still in place when President Barack Obama took office in January 2009. Given Russia's singular potential for both essential cooperation and unprecedented dangers, the Clinton administration inherited a historic responsibility for, as pundits say, getting Russia policy right. It failed disastrously, though officials involved in those decisions have continued to defend them.¹⁴

It does not require a degree in international relations to understand that the first principle of policy toward post-Communist Russia should have been to heed the Hippocratic injunction: Do no harm! Do nothing to undermine its fragile stability, nothing to dissuade the Kremlin from giving first priority to repairing the nation's crumbling infrastructures, nothing to cause it to rely more heavily on its stockpiles of superpower weapons instead of reducing them, nothing to make Moscow less than

fully cooperative with the West in those and other vital pursuits. Everything else in that shattered country was of far less consequence.

Instead, beginning in the early 1990s, Washington simultaneously conducted, under Democrats and Republicans, two fundamentally different policies toward post-Soviet Russia—one decorative and outwardly reassuring, the other real and exceedingly reckless. The decorative policy, which was generally taken at face value in the United States, professed to have replaced America's previous Cold War intentions with a generous relationship of "strategic partnership and friendship." The public image of this approach featured happy-talk meetings between the American and Russian presidents, first "Bill and Boris" (Clinton and Yeltsin), then "George and Vladimir" (Putin).

The real U.S. policy was different—a relentless, winner-take-all exploitation of Russia's post-1991 weakness. Accompanied by broken American promises, condescending lectures, and demands for unilateral concessions, it was, and remains, disregarding official rhetoric, even more aggressive and uncompromising than was Washington's approach to Soviet Communist Russia. It is important to specify the defining elements of this actual policy as they unfolded—with fulsome support in both major American political parties, influential media, and liberal and conservative think tanks—since the early 1990s, if only because they are firmly lodged in Moscow's memory:

- A growing military encirclement of Russia, on and near its borders, by U.S. and NATO bases, which by August 2008 were already ensconced or being planned in at least half the fourteen other former Soviet republics, from the Baltics and Ukraine to Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the new states of Central Asia. The result is a reemerging iron curtain and the remilitarization of American-Russian relations, developments only belatedly noted, and almost always misexplained, in the United States. In the aftermath of the 2008 Georgian War, for example, a U.S. senator angrily declared, "We're not going to let Russia, so soon after the Iron Curtain fell, to again draw a dividing line across Europe." A *New York Times* editorial added that such a "redivision of Europe" could "not be tolerated."¹⁵ But it was the eastward expansion of the NATO military alliance, beginning in the 1990s, that imposed "new dividing lines in Europe," certainly in the eyes of Russia's political leaders, and threatened their country with "being pushed" behind a new "iron curtain."¹⁶

• A tacit (and closely related) U.S. denial that Russia has any legitimate security concerns outside its own territory, even in ethnically akin or contiguous former Soviet republics such as Ukraine, Belarus, and Georgia. Perhaps aware the denial is preposterous, U.S. officials occasionally concede that “even authoritarian regimes have legitimate security interests,” invariably followed, however, by “but” and the unmistakable implication that it is for Washington to decide what those “interests” might be.¹⁷ How else to explain, to take a bellwether example, the thinking of Richard Holbrooke, perennial Democratic would-be secretary of state and a “special envoy” under Obama? While roundly condemning the Kremlin for promoting a pro-Moscow government in neighboring Ukraine, where Russia has centuries of shared linguistic, marital, religious, economic, and security ties, Holbrooke declared that faraway Slav nation part of “our core zone of security.”¹⁸

• Even more, a presumption that Russia does not have full sovereignty within its own borders, as expressed by constant U.S. interventions in Moscow’s internal affairs since 1992. The ultimate expression of that missionary presumption was, of course, the American crusade of the 1990s, which featured Washington’s efforts to dictate the Kremlin’s domestic and foreign policies, along with swarms of onsite “advisers” determined to direct Russia’s “transition” from Communism. The grand crusade ended, or at least diminished, but endless U.S. sermons from afar continued, often couched in threats, on how Russia should and should not organize its political and economic systems, and so did active American support for Russian anti-Kremlin groups, some associated with hated Yeltsin-era oligarchs in exile.

By 2006, that interventionary impulse had grown even into suggestions that Putin be overthrown by the kind of U.S.-backed “color revolutions” carried out since 2003 in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. Thus, while mainstream editorial pages increasingly called the Russian president “thug,” “fascist,” and “Saddam Hussein,” one of the Carnegie Endowment’s several Washington crusaders assured policymakers of “Putin’s weakness” and vulnerability to “regime change.”¹⁹ (Do proponents of “democratic regime change” in Russia ever consider that it might mean destabilizing a nuclear state?) In that same vein, the more staid Council of Foreign Relations suggested that Washington reserve for itself the right to reject Russia’s future elections and its leaders as “illegitimate.”²⁰

•Underpinning these components of the real U.S. policy have been familiar Cold War double standards condemning Moscow for doing what Washington does—such as seeking allies and military bases in former Soviet republics, using its assets (oil and gas in Russia’s case) as aid to friendly governments, regulating foreign money in its political life, and recognizing secessionist territories after using force to abet them.

More specifically, when NATO expanded to Russia’s front and back doorsteps, gobbling up former Soviet-bloc members and republics, it was “fighting terrorism” and “protecting new states”; when Moscow protested, it was engaging in “Cold-War thinking.” When Washington meddled in the electoral politics of Georgia and Ukraine, it was “promoting democracy”; when the Kremlin did so, it was “neo-imperialism.” When American bombers attacked Serbia on behalf of Kosovo, it was “defending human rights”; when Russian forces crossed into Georgia on behalf of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, it was “an affront to civilized standards and completely unacceptable.”²¹ And not to forget the historical background: When in the 1990s the U.S.-supported Yeltsin overthrew Russia’s elected parliament and constitutional order by force, gave its national wealth and television networks to Kremlin insiders, imposed a constitution without real constraints on executive power, and began to rig elections, it was “democratic reform.”²² When Putin continued that process, it was “authoritarianism.”

•Finally, the United States has been attempting, by exploiting Russia’s weakness, to acquire the nuclear superiority it could not achieve during the Soviet era. That is the essential meaning of two major steps taken by the Bush administration in 2002 and another in 2007 and 2008, all of them against Moscow’s strong wishes. One was the administration’s unilateral withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, freeing itself to try to create a system capable of destroying incoming missiles and thereby the capacity to launch a nuclear first strike without fear of retaliation. The second was pressuring the Kremlin to sign an ultimately empty nuclear weapons reduction agreement requiring no actual destruction of weapons and indeed allowing development of new ones; providing for no verification; and permitting unilateral withdrawal before the specified reductions were required. The third step was the decision to install missile defense components near Russia’s western flank, in Poland and the Czech Republic. Though Washington continues to

insist the system has no implications for Russia's security, independent U.S. specialists confirm the Kremlin's concern that it could undermine Moscow's ability to respond to a U.S. nuclear attack.²³

The history of these extraordinarily anti-Russian policies contradicts two American official and media axioms: that the "chill" in U.S.-Russian relations was caused by Putin's behavior at home and abroad after 2000 and that the Cold War ended with the Soviet Union. The first axiom is false, the second only half true: the Cold War ended in Moscow, but not in Washington.

Even at the time, it was far from certain that it would end in Washington. Declarations alone could not terminate decades of warfare attitudes. While President Bush was agreeing to end the Cold War from 1989 through 1991, a number of his top advisers, like many members of the U.S. political elite and media, were strongly resisting. (I witnessed that rift firsthand on the eve of the 1989 Malta summit, when I was asked to debate a pro-Cold War professor, in front of Bush and his clearly divided foreign-policy team, on the possibility of an unprecedented U.S.-Soviet strategic partnership. Many of the top-level officials present clearly shared my opponent's views, though the president did not.) Further evidence came with the Soviet breakup in December 1991. As I pointed out in chapter 6, U.S. officials, led by Bush himself, and the media immediately presented the purported "end of the Cold War" not as the mutual Soviet-American decision it had been but as a great American victory and Russian defeat.

That (now standard) triumphalist assertion was the primary reason the Cold War quickly revived—not in Moscow a decade later under Putin but in Washington in the early 1990s. It led the Clinton administration to make two fatefully unwise decisions. The most fundamental was to treat post-Communist Russia not as a strategic partner but as a defeated nation, analogous to Germany and Japan after World War II, which was expected to replicate America's domestic practices and bow to U.S. international interests. The approach was pursued, of course, behind the decorative facade of the Clinton-Yeltsin "partnership and friendship" and adorned with constant tributes to the Russian president's "heroic deeds" as the "father of Russian democracy."²⁴ (Why Yeltsin's Kremlin was the first ever to submit to foreign tutelage, causing

him to be perceived at home as “a puppet of the West,” is a different, and complex, story.)²⁵

But the real policy was clear from the aggressive winner-take-all advantages pursued by the Clinton administration and from remarks made later by its top officials. In his memoirs, for example, Strobe Talbott, Clinton’s “Russia hand,” recalls the president worrying how long they could “keep telling Ol’ Boris, ‘Okay, now here’s what you’ve got to do next—here’s some more shit for your face.’” And Talbott recalls how, as he and Clinton knew it would, “Yeltsin’s bluster in public had almost always given way to submissiveness in private.” Similarly, the administration’s top envoy admitted that bombing Serbia to separate Kosovo from Belgrade against Moscow’s protests, which had humiliated the Kremlin at home and elsewhere, had been possible because “the Russians were still flat on their backs.”²⁶

From that triumphalism came the still-ongoing intrusions into Moscow’s internal affairs and the abiding notion that Russia has few, if any, autonomous rights at home or abroad. Indeed, most of the follies of the next Bush administration began in the Clinton White House, including the pursuit of Caspian oil through military and political interventions in the Caucasus and Central Asia rather than cooperation with Moscow. Throughout the Clinton years, as two policy intellectuals close to the administration later recalled, there remained the presumption that “the USSR had lost the cold war,” though “the defeat of the enemy was not as complete in 1991 as in 1945.”²⁷

Clinton’s other fateful decision was to break the first Bush administration’s promise to Soviet Russia in 1990 and 1991, in return for Moscow’s agreeing to a reunited Germany as a NATO member, never to move that Western military alliance “one inch to the east.” Clinton instead began its expansion to Russia’s borders.²⁸ From that profound act of bad faith, followed by other broken strategic promises, came the dangerously provocative military encirclement of Russia and Moscow’s ever-growing belief that it had been “constantly deceived,” as Putin charged, by the United States. Thus, while U.S. officials, journalists, and even academics continued to insist that “the Cold War has indeed vanished” and that concerns about a new one are “hyperbolic nonsense” and “silly,” Russians across the political spectrum believed that in Washington “the Cold War did not end” and, still more, that “the U.S. is imposing a new Cold War on Russia.”²⁹

Developments during the incoming Bush administration only heightened the perception of U.S. aggression. By Bush's second term, Washington and the U.S. political establishment generally seemed to have declared an "anti-Russian fatwa," as a former Reagan appointee termed it.³⁰ Among its highlights were a fresh torrent of official and media denunciations of Moscow's domestic and foreign policies, another expansion of NATO taking in still more of Russia's neighbors, and calls by virtually all of the 2008 Democratic and Republican presidential candidates for "very harsh" measures against Putin's Kremlin. The Pentagon even revived discredited rumors that Russian intelligence had given Saddam Hussein information endangering U.S. troops in Iraq. And Secretary of State Rice, violating diplomatic protocol, echoed the regime-changers by urging Russians, "if necessary, to change their government."³¹

For its part, the White House finally ended the fictitious relationship. It deleted from its 2006 National Security Strategy the long-professed U.S.-Russian partnership, backtracked on agreements to help Moscow join the World Trade Organization, and adopted sanctions against Belarus, the Slav former republic most culturally akin to Russia and with whom the Kremlin was negotiating a new union state. For emphasis, in May 2006 it dispatched Vice President Dick Cheney to an anti-Russian conference in former Soviet Lithuania, now a NATO member, to denounce the Kremlin and make clear it was no longer "a strategic partner and a trusted friend," thereby ending fifteen years of official pretense.³²

More astonishing was the "task force report" on Russia by the influential Council on Foreign Relations, cochaired by a Democratic presidential aspirant, issued in March 2006.³³ The "nonpartisan" council's reputed moderation and balance were nowhere in evidence. An unrelenting exercise in double standards, the report blamed all the "disappointments" in U.S.-Russian relations solely on "Russia's wrong direction" under Putin—from meddling in the former Soviet republics and backing Iran to conflicts over NATO, energy politics, and the "rollback of Russian democracy."

Strongly implying that President Bush had been too soft on Putin, the council report flatly rejected partnership with Moscow as "not a realistic prospect." It called instead for "selective cooperation" and "selective opposition," depending on which suited U.S. interests, and, in effect, Soviet-era containment. It concluded by urging more Western intervention in Moscow's political affairs. An article in the council's influential

journal, *Foreign Affairs*, menacingly added that the United States was quickly “attaining nuclear primacy” and the ability “to destroy the long-range nuclear arsenals of Russia or China with a first strike.”³⁴

EVERY consequence of this bipartisan American cold war against post-Communist Russia undermined the historic opportunity for an essential partnership and exacerbated the lethal dangers inherent in the breakup of the Soviet state. The crusade to transform Russia during the 1990s, with its “shock” economic measures and resulting antidemocratic politics, further destabilized the country, fostering an oligarchic system that plundered the state’s wealth, deprived basic infrastructures of investment, impoverished the people, and nurtured dangerous forms of official and mafia-like corruption.

In the process, Yeltsin’s U.S.-backed measures discredited Western-style reform and generated mass anti-Americanism where there had been almost none, not even during the Cold War 1970s and early 1980s when I lived in Moscow. Indeed, America’s friends in Russia have diminished since the early 1990s in almost direct proportion to America’s growing need for Russia’s cooperation. By 2008, Washington’s policies had instilled “negative attitudes” toward the United States in two-thirds of Russians surveyed and eviscerated the once-influential pro-American faction in Kremlin and electoral politics, whose parties in effect no longer existed.³⁵

Military encirclement, the Bush administration’s striving for nuclear supremacy, and recurring U.S. intrusions into Russian politics had even worse consequences. They provoked the Kremlin into suspending its participation in arms agreements, undertaking its own conventional and nuclear buildup—which relied more rather than less on compromised mechanisms of control and maintenance—and continuing to invest inadequate sums, further reduced by the consequences of the Georgian War and the deepening financial crisis in 2009, in the country’s decaying economic base and human resources.

These same American policies also caused Moscow to cooperate less rather than more in existing U.S.-funded programs to reduce the multiple risks represented by Russia’s materials of mass destruction and to prevent accidental nuclear war. More generally, and not unrelated, they inspired a new Kremlin ideology of “emphasizing our sovereignty” that

is increasingly nationalistic, intolerant of foreign-funded NGOs as “fifth columns,” and reliant on anti-Western views of the “patriotic” Russian intelligentsia and the Orthodox Church. (In particular, the new doctrine of “sovereign democracy” was a direct response to the U.S. “democracy-promotion” crusade.)³⁶

Moscow’s reactions abroad were also the opposite of what Washington policymakers should want. Interpreting U.S.-backed “color revolutions” in Ukraine and Georgia as a quest for military outposts on Russia’s borders and along pipelines flowing with Caspian oil, the Kremlin opposed prodemocracy movements in former Soviet republics more than ever and supported the most authoritarian regimes in the region, from Belarus to Uzbekistan. Meanwhile, Moscow began forming a political, economic, and military “strategic partnership” with China and lending support to Iran and other anti-American governments in the Middle East. In addition, it threatened to install its own retaliatory system near Poland to counter U.S. missile-defense sites in that country and began considering the reintroduction of surface-to-air missiles in Belarus, which also borders NATO.

And all of that may be only the beginning of a new dark era. If American policy and Russia’s predictable countermeasures continue to develop into a full-scale cold war, several new factors could make it even more dangerous than was its predecessor. These post-Soviet factors contributed to the deterioration of relations between Washington and Moscow in the 1990s and have continued to do so ever since.

Above all, the growing presence of NATO and American bases and U.S.-backed governments in the former Soviet republics moved the “front lines” of the conflict, in the alarmed words of a Moscow newspaper, from the epicenter of the previous Cold War in Germany to Russia’s “near abroad.”³⁷ As a “hostile ring tightens around the Motherland,” Russians of different political persuasions begin to see a growing mortal threat. Putin’s political aide Vladislav Surkov, for example, expressed alarm over the “enemy . . . at the gates,” and even the Soviet-era dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn warned of a “complete encirclement of Russia and then the loss of its sovereignty.”³⁸ The risks of direct U.S.-Russian military conflict therefore became greater than ever, as the 2008 proxy war in Georgia showed.³⁹

Making the geopolitical factor worse were radically different American and Russian self-perceptions. By the mid-1960s, the U.S.-Soviet

Cold War had acquired a significant degree of stability because the two superpowers, perceiving a stalemate, began to settle for “parity” and to develop détente as a way of managing the dangers. Since 1991, however, the United States, now the self-proclaimed “only superpower,” or “indispensable nation” as the Clinton administration boasted, has had a far more expansive view of its international entitlements and possibilities. Moscow, on the other hand, has felt weaker and less secure than it did before 1991. That asymmetry, along with conflicting understandings of how the Cold War ended, has made the new cold-war relationship between the two still fully armed nuclear states less predictable, again as the Georgian War demonstrated.

Another new factor in the deteriorating relationship has come from feelings of betrayal on both sides. Though they choose not to recall it, American officials, journalists, and academic specialists effusively welcomed Putin in 2000 as Yeltsin’s rightful heir—as a man with a “commitment to building a strong democracy” and to continuing “Russia’s turn to the West.”⁴⁰ Having misunderstood both Yeltsin and his successor, they felt deceived by Putin’s subsequent policies.

Thus, Americans who had once been pro-Kremlin “democracy promoters,” to take an important example, now saw Putin as “surly, preening, and occasionally vulgar” and turned into implacable cold warriors.⁴¹ Two characteristic *Washington Post* commentaries said it all: the second President Bush had a “well-intentioned Russia policy,” but “a Russian autocrat . . . betrayed the American’s faith.” Another added, “We have been played for fools,” while a *New York Times* columnist complained bitterly that the West had been “suckered by Mr. Putin. He is not a sober version of Boris Yeltsin.”⁴²

Meanwhile, Putin’s Kremlin was reacting to a decade of U.S. tutelage and broken promises (as well as Yeltsin’s boozy compliance), as the new leader made clear as early as 2002: “The era of Russian geo-political concessions [is] coming to an end.”⁴³ Disregarded, Putin gave an unusually candid explanation of Moscow’s newly independent foreign policy at a high-level international forum in Munich in 2007. His speech was a landmark in the “sovereignization” of Kremlin thinking and policy.

Asking his Western audience “not to be angry with me,” Putin stated “what I really think about” Washington’s “one master, one sovereign” approach to Russia and U.S. moves “to impose new dividing lines and

walls on us.” He ended on a conciliatory but unapologetic note: “We are open to cooperation.” In response, he was widely accused of declaring a “Second Cold War.” In the eyes of the Russian leadership, however, nothing changed, and in November 2008, Putin’s successor, Medvedev, repeated the general contents of his predecessor’s Munich speech, while adding the threat to target U.S. missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic.⁴⁴

Still worse, if a *second* Cold War had begun, it lacked the substantive negotiations and cooperation of détente that restrained the previous one. Behind the facade of “candid discussions,” according to well-informed Russians in 2008, “real dialogue does not exist.”⁴⁵ This was alarmingly true in regard to nuclear weapons. The Bush administration’s jettisoning of the ABM treaty and real reductions, its decision to try to build an antimissile shield with sites near Russia, and its talk of preemptive war and first nuclear strikes had all but abolished the U.S.-Soviet agreements that kept the nuclear peace for nearly fifty years.⁴⁶ In short, as nuclear dangers grew and a new arms race developed, efforts to curtail or even discuss them ended.

Finally, by the early 1990s, anti-Cold War forces that had played an important political role in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, had ceased to exist.⁴⁷ Cold War lobbies, old and new, therefore operated virtually unopposed, some of them funded by anti-Kremlin oligarchs in exile. Support for the new U.S. cold-war policies was fully bipartisan, from Clinton to Bush, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to her successor Condoleezza Rice, the presidential candidate Barack Obama in 2008 to his Republican opponent John McCain. There was scarcely more opposition at lower levels. Once robust pro-détente public groups, particularly anti-arms-race movements, had been largely demobilized by official, media, and academic myths that “the Cold War is over” and with it lethal dangers in Russia.

Also absent (or silent) were the kinds of American academic specialists and other intellectuals who had protested Cold War excesses. Meanwhile, a legion of new intellectual cold warriors emerged, particularly in Washington’s liberal and conservative think tanks. Congressional and media favorites, their anti-Kremlin zeal also went largely unchallenged. There were notable exceptions—also bipartisan, from Reaganites who resented the squandering of what they regarded as their hero’s greatest

achievement to contributors to *The Nation* magazine—but “anathematizing Russia,” as an alarmed Gorbachev lamented, had become a chilling kind of political correctness.⁴⁸

Those new factors have been enough to make another cold war exceedingly dangerous, but they were made even worse by the “pluralist” American mainstream press. In the 1970s and 1980s, editorial pages (and television broadcasts) provided an important forum for debate by regularly featuring opposing views on U.S.-Soviet relations. After the end of the Soviet Union, however, they increasingly favored one opinion to the exclusion of others. In the 1990s, the outlook of pro-Yeltsin crusaders was favored, so much so that the situation reminded a senior American historian of the “fellow-traveling of the 1930s” though the “ideological positions are reversed.” After 2000, in a political turnabout, equally impassioned Kremlin bashers were given a near monopoly on interpreting relations between Washington and Moscow and developments inside Russia.⁴⁹

By 2004, the reporting, “news analysis,” and editorial-page commentaries of the most influential U.S. newspapers had filled with the Manichean perspectives of the Cold War era—along with accusations that the Kremlin, sometimes Putin personally, was responsible for the deaths of Russian oppositionists, from crusading journalists in Moscow to a KGB defector in London, even though the charges were politically illogical and the evidence nonexistent. Putin’s Kremlin was, leading papers told readers, if not the headquarters of “a fascist Russia,” then run by “thugs masquerading as a government.”⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, when the Putin-Medvedev leadership reacted with force to Georgia’s military assault on South Ossetia in August 2008, it was widely compared with Soviet invasions of Eastern European countries and even Hitler’s annexations of the late 1930s.

Readers who lived through the U.S.-Soviet Cold War might have thought someone had hit a replay button. A *Wall Street Journal* editor declared it “time we start thinking of Vladimir Putin’s Russia as an enemy of the United States”; a *Washington Post* columnist announced “2004 as the year when a new iron curtain descended across Europe”; and outside contributors to the *Post* demanded a policy of “rolling back the corrupting influence of Russian power in regions beyond its borders.” Once again, readers would have had to search for even a suggestion that anyone was responsible for these ominous echoes other than

the Kremlin, which, a *New York Times* reporter explained, had “dusted off cold war vocabulary.”⁵¹

The *Post*’s incessant demonizing of Putin put it in the forefront of the new American cold war, but the *Times*, the *Journal* (the two other newspapers regarded as authoritative by the U.S. political class), and other media were not far behind. Less staid dailies followed their coverage to its logical conclusion, reporting a new “contest between two contrasting cultures. To the east: state control over the political, legal, and economic system . . . dominated by Slavophile nationalism and nostalgia for the Soviet era. To the west: an open society, with democracy, the rule of law, and free market capitalism. It is a contest from which only one side can emerge the victor, a duel to the death—perhaps literally.”⁵²

In international relations, as President Reagan liked to point out, “it takes two to tango.” For several years, however, Putin’s policy toward the United States was primarily “reactive” and his preference “not to return to the Cold War era” the main reason relations did not worsen more quickly.⁵³ “Someone is still fighting the cold war,” a British academic wrote in 2006, “but it isn’t Russia.”⁵⁴ In Moscow, however, a struggle was already underway over how Russia should respond to the new U.S. “aggression.”

Misled by the decline of democracy and repeating a common misperception of policymaking in the Soviet system, even usually informed American commentators assumed that “In Russia, there’s no real politics. All the politics takes place in the brain of Vladimir Putin.”⁵⁵ In reality, factional disputes over Kremlin decisions never ended in high political circles, those over foreign policy being the most intense. In that political realm, where he was viewed as the “most pro-Western leader,” Putin was soon being accused of continuing Gorbachev-Yeltsin “policies of national capitulation” and of “appeasing” Washington to the point of “betraying the interests of the Motherland.”⁵⁶

At issue was the future of Russia. The overriding priority of Putin and his allies, including Medvedev, was the modernization of the country’s disintegrating economic and social foundations, a long-term project requiring cooperation with the West. For the “hawks,” as they were again called,⁵⁷ that foreign policy was “naive,” an “illusion,” because “hatred of Russia” in the West, where “Russia has no friends,” had not begun or ended with the Cold War. It was a permanent “geo-political jihad” against Russia now spearheaded by the U.S.-led NATO expansion.⁵⁸

Cooperating with the West, in particular the United States, which was “ready to resort to any kind of deceit, any lie, in relations with us,” therefore “would be criminal, like calling for cooperation with Hitler after World War II was declared.”⁵⁹ Instead, proponents of a “more hard-line” (*bole zhestkogo*) policy, whose supporters numbered high-level military and security officers as well as influential ultranationalist ideologues, saw Russia’s security and future in its own vast Eurasian space and further East, where it would find real “strategic partners.” For them, the nation’s natural resources and military-industrial complex were enough for economic development and a “fortress” against the West’s encroaching military power.⁶⁰

By 2006, even centrists in the dispute had become “very critical of Russia’s foreign policy.” They, too, had concluded that the forty-year Cold War had not been an “aberration” and that “the idea of becoming a strategic partner of the United States has failed,” as hard-liners said it would. They also began calling on Putin to “stop being much too accommodating and compliant.” The main cause of their turnabout was, of course, U.S. policy, as a result of which “we have surrendered everything” but “without gaining anything for Russia.”⁶¹ As happened decades before, a symbiotic axis had formed between American and Russian cold warriors.⁶²

As a result, the Kremlin was now ready, if necessary, to wage another cold war regardless of the costs and unprecedented dangers it might entail. That was the emphatic message sent by the Putin-Medvedev leadership’s military response in Georgia in August 2008 and its declared readiness to target U.S. missiles in Eastern Europe with its own. Knowledgeable Russian observers believed that by then Putin and Medvedev were at grave risk of appearing “defeatist” and therefore no longer had a choice. Whatever the case, as Medvedev explained, “We have made our choice.”⁶³

THE new cold war began in Washington, and the first steps to end it will also have to be taken there. Almost twenty years of U.S. policy have left the Kremlin and Russia’s larger political class “tired of playing the dupe. Russia has made so many advances to the West. . . . It is now America’s turn to persuade Moscow of its good intentions, not the other way around.” Nor will the Kremlin settle any longer for “illusions of

partnership” or accept blame for the new cold war and arms race it now sees unfolding. “It is not our fault,” Putin declared in 2008, “we did not start it.”⁶⁴

It is a mistake to think these opinions are held only by Russia’s increasingly nationalistic elites. Pro-American policy intellectuals, who based their hopes (and careers) on a U.S.-Russian partnership, now share the Kremlin’s “eye-for-an-eye” determination: “What is allowed for [the United States] will be allowed for Russia.”⁶⁵ At the same time, their despair, and whom they blame, is also unmistakable: “The foundations of U.S. policy toward Russia must be revised.”⁶⁶

For U.S. policy to actually change, the bipartisan fallacies that have underlain it since the early 1990s will have to be acknowledged and rejected. All of them sprang from unbridled triumphalism. It was Washington’s decision to treat post-Soviet Russia as a vanquished nation that squandered the historic opportunity for an essential partnership in world affairs—the legacy of Gorbachev, Reagan, and George H. W. Bush—and established the premise that Moscow’s “direction” at home and abroad should be determined by the U.S. government. Applied to a country with Russia’s size, cultural traditions, and long history as a great power—and whose political class did not think it had been vanquished in the Cold War⁶⁷—the premise was inherently self-defeating and in time certain to provoke a resentful backlash.

That folly produced two others. One assumed that the United States had the right, wisdom, and power to remake post-Communist Russia in its own image. A conceit as large as its disregard for Russia’s traditions and contemporary realities, it led to the counterproductive crusade of the 1990s, whose missionary attitudes persist. Crusaders still long for the Yeltsin years when “Russian authorities granted Western governments huge opportunities to intervene in the sovereign affairs of Russia.” One proposes a new crusade to correct Russia’s memory of its Stalinist past; another, direct U.S. support for a secessionist movement in Russian Tatarstan; while the *Washington Post* continues to insist the White House “champion” the Kremlin’s opponents at home.⁶⁸ Putin’s response was not surprising: “Why do you believe that you have the right to interfere in our affairs?”⁶⁹

The other triumphalist assumption was that Russia should be “a junior partner of the United States” in foreign policy, “see the world the way we do,” and not expect to “be treated as an equal.”⁷⁰ This, too, has

persisted, as expressed in recurring complaints that Putin has “deeply disappointed” by not being a “loyal ally to America” or “doing much for the U.S. national interest,” and by his general “unhelpfulness in foreign affairs.”⁷¹ Behind these complaints was, of course, the corollary presumption that Russia should have no interests abroad except those determined by Washington.

The policy outgrowth of this American thinking practically guaranteed the onset of a new cold war. The most consequential position has been Washington’s demand, in effect, that Moscow vacate its traditional spheres of political, military, and energy security in former Soviet republics so the United States and NATO can occupy them. (The Kremlin has even been expected, it seems, to subsidize the defection of those new states by continuing to supply them with energy at discounted rates.) With this, Washington has been telling Russia that it not only has no Monroe Doctrine–like rights in its own backyard but no legitimate security rights at all.

No less remarkable has been the U.S. reaction to Moscow’s growing alarm over NATO’s expansion to Russia’s former Soviet-bloc allies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics on its borders. The Russian protests have invariably been dismissed as “gratuitously hostile,” “laughable,” or “bizarre and paranoid.”⁷² But what would be Washington’s reaction, the Kremlin might wonder, if Russian bases multiplied on U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico along with devices in Cuba and Venezuela that might neutralize America’s defense against that threat? Would Washington be satisfied with Moscow’s assurances, to reverse the names of the countries, “This is not an encirclement of America. This is not a . . . strategy going against American interests?”⁷³

The Kremlin hardly needs such a counterfactual exercise in order to be alarmed. Declarations on leading U.S. editorial pages have been enough. One in the *Wall Street Journal*, for example, explained NATO expansion as “a strategy that will permanently guarantee Western overall interests in the [former Soviet] South Caucasus and Central Asia. Such interests include: direct access to energy resources . . . and forward bases for allied operations.” A *Washington Post* columnist spelled out the larger mission: “The West wants to finish the job begun with the fall of the Berlin Wall and continue its march to the east.” Meanwhile, a former Clinton official warned in another paper, “Washington will hold

the Kremlin accountable for the ominous security threats that are developing between NATO's eastern border and Russia."⁷⁴

Nor was this kind of aggressive American triumphalism merely a fleeting reaction to the end of the Soviet Union in 1991. A decade later, the tragedy of September 11 gave Washington a second chance for a real partnership with Russia. At a meeting on June 16, 2001, President Bush famously sensed in Putin's "soul" a partner for America. And so it seemed to most commentators after September 11, when Putin's Kremlin did more than any NATO government to assist the U.S. war effort against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and to save American lives, by giving it valuable intelligence, a Moscow-trained Afghan combat force, and unhindered access to crucial air bases in former Soviet Central Asia.⁷⁵

The Kremlin understandably believed that in return Washington would at last give it the equitable relationship it had expected in the early 1990s. Instead, it got U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty; Washington's claim to permanent bases in Central Asia (as well as Georgia) and independent access to Caspian oil and gas; the invasion of Iraq, which the Putin leadership strongly opposed; a second round of NATO expansion taking in several former Soviet republics and bloc members; and a growing indictment of Moscow's domestic and foreign conduct. Not even September 11 was enough to end Washington's winner-take-all principles. Americans may have forgotten their government's indifference to Putin's strategic wartime aid, but Russians have not. Many still remember it as another "illusory" hope for partnership with the United States, or as President Medvedev recalled in 2008, another "missed . . . historic chance."⁷⁶

Why have Democratic and Republican administrations alike believed they could act in such relentlessly anti-Russian ways without endangering U.S. national security? The answer is another fallacy—the belief that Russia, diminished and weakened by its loss of the Soviet Union, had no alternative to either bending to America's will or being "a weak, isolated power."⁷⁷ Even apart from the continued presence of Soviet-era weapons in Russia, this was a grave misconception. Because of its extraordinary material and human attributes, Russia, as its intellectuals say, has always been "destined to be a great power." This was still true of the enfeebled, crisis-ridden Russia of the 1990s. The only question was what kind of political state would rise from its knees. The answer,

as should have been obvious at the time, depended significantly on how Russia was treated during its agony, particularly by the United States.⁷⁸ (Russia's backlash against its treatment in the 1990s was associated with Putin, but it would have come regardless of him.)

Even before 2000, when world energy prices began to refill its coffers, the Kremlin had alternatives to the humiliating role scripted by Washington. Above all, Russia could forge strategic alliances with eager anti-U.S. and non-NATO governments in the East and elsewhere, becoming an arsenal of conventional weapons and nuclear knowledge for states from China and India to Iran and Venezuela, as the "Kremlin hawks" were urging. (To illustrate that possibility, Medvedev's first trips abroad after becoming president in 2008 were to Kazakhstan and China.) Indeed, a prominent Russian analyst thought his country had already "left the Western orbit" in 2006, though it had not yet actually done so. When President Obama took office in 2009, Putin and Medvedev were still proposing "a partnership," though for how long was uncertain.⁷⁹

Still more, even a diminished Russia can fight, perhaps win, a cold war on its new front lines across the vast former Soviet territories.⁸⁰ Along with considerable military capabilities, it has the advantages of geographic proximity, essential markets, energy pipelines, and corporate ownership, as well as kinship, language, and common experiences. These give Moscow an array of soft and hard power to use, if it chooses, against neighboring states considering a new patron in faraway Washington, as it demonstrated in Georgia. The Kremlin's advantages are even greater in Ukraine, Washington's next preferred candidate for NATO membership. That country's economy is heavily dependent on Russia for energy—a fact of life underscored in January 2009 when the Kremlin halted gas supplies in response to Kiev's failure to pay for them in full—and many of its citizens for employment. Politically, Moscow has widespread support in Ukraine's large ethnic Russian provinces and could encourage separatist movements there even more consequentially than it did in Georgia.

There are other problems for Washington in former Soviet republics. In the U.S.-Russian struggle in Central Asia over Caspian oil and gas, even apart from the "gas OPEC" Moscow formed with fifteen other exporting states in December 2008, Washington, as a triumphalist theorist acknowledged, "is at a severe disadvantage."⁸¹ The United States has already lost its military base in Uzbekistan and may eventually lose the

only remaining one it has in the region, in Kyrgyzstan. The new pipeline it backed to bypass Russia runs through Georgia, whose security and stability now depend considerably on Moscow. Washington's friend in oil-rich Azerbaijan is an anachronistic dynastic ruler whose pro-American commitments were shaken by the Kremlin's show of force in Georgia. And Kazakhstan, whose enormous energy reserves have made it a particular U.S. target, has its own large Russian population and has moved back toward Moscow.

Nor is the Kremlin powerless in direct dealings with the West. It can mount more than enough warheads and related devices to defeat any missile shield and illusion of "nuclear primacy." It can shut U.S. businesses out of multi-billion-dollar deals in Russia and, as it has reminded the European Union, which gets 25 percent of its gas from Russia, in time "redirect supplies" to hungry markets in the East.⁸² And Moscow could deploy its resources, international connections, and UN Security Council veto against vital U.S. interests, among them energy, nuclear proliferation, Iran, Afghanistan, and possibly even withdrawal from Iraq. More generally, as one of Washington's best-informed specialists warned, "Russia does not yet have the power or the inclination to lead a global anti-American coalition. But it can help to shape the evolution of the international system in ways that would damage the United States. . . . [It] could tip the balance in unpredictable and destructive ways."⁸³

Contrary to exaggerated American accusations, the Kremlin had not, as of early 2009, resorted to such measures in any significant way, though the previous year's military action in Georgia and then January's gas embargo against Ukraine, and the attendant disruption of Europe's supplies, left no doubt about its resolve. If Washington continues to abase and encroach upon Russia, its leadership is unlikely to see any "sovereign" reason why it should not retaliate. Certainly nothing Moscow has gotten from the United States since 1992—and it has gotten nothing of substance except ill-advised loans in the 1990s that burdened the country with debt—"compensates for," even a Western security specialist has pointed out, "the geopolitical harm the United States is doing to Russia."⁸⁴

None of these looming dangers have dissuaded American crusaders, however, from insisting that they are worth the risk in order to democratize Russia. Readers may instinctively sympathize with that goal, and, having observed firsthand the struggle for democracy in both Soviet and

post-Soviet Russia for more than thirty years, I hope to live to see it accomplished. But the tenacious idea that the United States can directly promote that country's democratization is also based on dangerous fallacies.

To begin with "strategic" ones, the common assertion that a non-democratic Russia can never be an essential or reliable U.S. ally because its interests will differ ignores the Soviet-American cooperation that maintained the nuclear peace and provided other safeguards in perilous circumstances for four decades, as well as Washington's alliances with various authoritarian regimes over the years. It also disregards Palmerston's axiom that nations have "no eternal allies," only "perpetual" interests, which rightly assumes that not even partners always have identical interests.

Consider one crucial example that has both united and divided Moscow and Washington in recent years. No less than the White House, the Kremlin does not want to be faced with a nuclear-armed Iran, but its interests in that country are inescapably more complex. As a Eurasian nation with some 20 million Muslim citizens of its own and with Iran one of its few neighbors that is not a candidate for NATO membership, Russia cannot risk being drawn into what it fears is America's emerging "holy alliance" against the Islamic world, whether in Iran, Iraq, or anywhere else.⁸⁵ Its predicament is not unique. "You can't have a foreign policy that goes against your geography," as a former Soviet republic tried to explain to its new suitor in Washington.⁸⁶

Nor is disregarding Russia's imperative interests the worst strategic folly of democracy promoters. Since 2000, their frustration over the country's "de-democratization" and their hatred of Putin, whom they blame, has grown, as I noted earlier, into calls for "regime change" in that already fragile nation. They seem indifferent to what it might actually mean—if not political chaos, even civil war, certainly not a "regime" of their anointed Russian "democrats," who lack any meaningful popular support in the country, but of forces much more repressive, nationalistic, and uncompromising than those represented by Putin. As for Russia's vast stockpiles of devices of mass destruction in such destabilized circumstances, one of the "democrats" assured an American supporter: "When this regime collapses, be aware that we are here."⁸⁷ Neither seemed concerned by the consequences of "collapse" for those stockpiles.

There is another profound fallacy of “democracy promotion” in Russia: it is inherently counterproductive, intrusive U.S. actions having only discredited the cause since 1992.⁸⁸ Praising the despised Yeltsin and his shock-therapy “democrats” while condemning the popular Putin further associated democracy with Russia’s social pain and humiliations of the 1990s. Ostracizing Belarus’s leader while demonstratively embracing dictators in Caspian Sea states related democracy to America’s need for oil.⁸⁹ Linking “democratic revolutions” in Georgia and Ukraine to NATO membership equated them with U.S. military expansionism. Focusing on the victimization of billionaire Mikhail Khodorkovsky but never on grassroots protests against Russia’s poverty and other social injustices, together with Washington’s role in the Yeltsin-era “privatization” schemes and other misdeeds of the 1990s, suggested that democracy is only for oligarchs.⁹⁰

Still worse, American crusaders, by insisting on their indispensable role, are suggesting (wrongly) that Russians are incapable of democracy on their own, a “kind of racism” in the view of a former British ambassador to Moscow.⁹¹ Journalists, embittered by the failure of projects they backed in the 1990s, have gone further. Some express doubt “whether even today Russia can be considered a civilized country,” while others flatly inform readers, “Russia is not a normal country.” Features previously attributed to Communism, from “brutish instincts” and “murder and mayhem” to “autocratic” politics, are now said to be “embedded in Russia’s DNA.”⁹²

Such demeaning commentaries, reported in the Moscow media, have reinforced dark Russian suspicions of American intentions. Many ranking and ordinary citizens now believe that Washington’s real purpose since the end of the Soviet Union has been to seize control of their country’s energy resources and nuclear weapons and use encircling NATO satellite states to “de-sovereignize” Russia, turning it into a “vassal of the West.” Indeed, U.S. policy has fostered the belief that the long American Cold War was never really aimed at Soviet Communism but at Russia and that a new cold war would also be so motivated.⁹³

Dispelling these perceptions of Russia is a necessary step toward ending the new cold war before it is too late. It means, of course, abandoning the triumphalist fallacies that inspired them, including the conceit that the U.S. “victory” in the Cold War meant “the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to the American way and “settled

fundamental issues once and for all” in Washington’s favor. Two U.S. policies have been especially responsible, as even Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tacitly acknowledged.⁹⁴ One is expressed in missionary intrusions into Russia’s internal affairs, the other in flagrant double standards regarding its national security. Defenders of those policies often insist “there is no alternative,” but there is, and it is not the “declinism” they allege.⁹⁵

The alternative to the triumphalist conceit that Moscow’s “direction” at home should be determined in Washington was adumbrated by George Kennan, the esteemed diplomat and scholar, forty years before the Soviet Union ended. In 1951, anticipating the waning of Communist rule, he warned:

Let us not hover nervously over the people who come after, applying litmus paper daily to their political complexions to find out whether they answer to our concept of “democratic.” Give them time; let them be Russians; let them work out their internal problems in their own manner. . . . The ways by which peoples advance toward dignity and enlightenment in government are things that constitute the deepest and most intimate processes of national life. There is nothing less understandable to foreigners, nothing in which foreign interference can do less good.⁹⁶

The ineluctable lesson of the Cold War, of both its duration and its end, is that Russia can “advance toward dignity and enlightenment in government” only when its relations with the outside world, particularly the United States, are improving, not worsening. In increasingly cold-war circumstances, its ruling circles, where such initiatives must be taken and opposition overcome, will never risk “letting go.” That is why Gorbachev’s anti-Cold War and prodemocracy policies were inseparable. Twenty-five years later, support for democratic reform, though considerably diminished, still exists among Russia’s people and even its elites.⁹⁷ If Washington really wants to “promote democracy,” it must have a Russia policy that gives it a chance, not the one pursued since the early 1990s. America must also have, a Moscow democrat adds, a “moral authority” that it now lacks.⁹⁸

Alternatives to “double standards in the policy of the United States,” as the Kremlin now views them,⁹⁹ may be more contentious, but they

have to begin with a recognition of Russia's legitimate security concerns about threats in regions along its own borders. In 2008, the Putin-Medvedev leadership made clear, in words and in deeds in Georgia, that it would no longer bow to the prospect of Western military bases in Moscow's "sphere of strategic interests."¹⁰⁰ The Kremlin's new resolve was immediately denounced by the Bush administration as "archaic" and "paranoid," but a Moscow admirer of U.S. history replied, "Every great nation has its own Monroe Doctrine. Do the Americans really think that they are entitled to one and the Russians are not?"¹⁰¹

In this regard, NATO expansion was for Russia the "original sin."¹⁰² As the military alliance continued "its march to the east," taking in former Soviet-bloc countries and republics along the way, it finally convinced Moscow that U.S. policy was not "strategic partnership" but a quest for domination. The Kremlin no longer believed, as the Yeltsin leadership may have, repeated Western assurances that NATO's move eastward was "not directed at Russia." For that, too, it had only to read counterassurances by leading American commentators that the West's Cold War military force would not "lose its original purpose: to contain the Russian bear" and "guarantee overall Western interests."¹⁰³

In the end, the expansion of NATO confirmed Kennan's foreboding that it would be "the most fateful error of the entire post-Cold War era."¹⁰⁴ It massively violated an essential principle on which Gorbachev and Reagan had agreed: Russian and American national security would either be mutual, in actions and perceptions, or it would not exist for either because one side's military buildup or threatening move invariably provokes the other to do the same. Putin's reaction was therefore to be expected: "The emergence of a powerful military bloc at our borders will be seen as a direct threat to Russia's security."¹⁰⁵

As a result, NATO's expansion, contrary to assurances by its American promoters, has undermined everyone's security. When it became convinced that Washington was seeking "military-strategic superiority," the Kremlin was compelled "to act in response."¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, NATO membership, or simply the promise of it, discouraged small states on Russia's borders, from the Baltics to Georgia, from negotiating disputes with their giant neighbor. Certain the United States and NATO would protect them, they were satisfied instead to let the problems fester and grow, even to "poke the Russian bear." The Kremlin may have overreacted, but it had resolved to no longer "permit the red lines of its

national strategic interests to be crossed, especially in surrounding regions.”¹⁰⁷ The U.S.-Russian proxy war in Georgia was the result.

The situation will grow even worse if Washington continues its campaign to bring Ukraine into NATO. Its state having originated in Kiev, Moscow thinks of Ukraine as “the cradle of Russia.”¹⁰⁸ Nor is this unilateral or merely sentiment. Of all the former Soviet republics, Russia and a large part of Ukraine, along with Belarus, are the most intricately and intimately related—by geography, history, language, religion, marriage, economics, energy pipelines, and security. In Moscow’s view, Ukraine entering NATO would be “hammering the final nail into the coffin of Russia as an independent great power.”¹⁰⁹ (This is, of course, one motive behind the U.S. campaign to incorporate Ukraine into the Western military alliance.)

“No Russian leader can remain in power,” according to a Moscow specialist admired in Washington, “if he ‘loses’ Ukraine to the United states as a member of NATO.”¹¹⁰ And yet American cold warriors seem determined to make this happen, declaring Ukraine a “strategic country,” part of “our core zone of security,” and “the great prize.”¹¹¹ If they succeed, the Kremlin has publicly warned that the West’s “relations with Russia will be spoiled once and for all” and “the price will be high.” Privately, it is said that it would be seen as a “declaration of war.”¹¹² If so, nuclear-armed Russia and America would be closer to self-inflicted catastrophe than ever before.

Zealous NATO expansionists insist the United States cannot “surrender” Ukraine back to Moscow as a “satellite nation,” but here, too, there is an alternative. It is nonaligned status for both Ukraine and Georgia along the lines that enabled Finland to be neutral, peaceful, and prosperous after World War II.¹¹³ This would mean Russia accepting the full political independence of those nations, including the results of their elections, in return for a promise of no further NATO member states and no NATO or U.S. military bases at all on its borders, including in the three Baltic nations already in the alliance. Whether the compromise is done informally or by treaty matters less than the benefits to all parties. A “red” front line in U.S.-Russian relations would be rolled back along with the new cold war itself. And the politics and economics of Georgia and Ukraine could turn to the real needs of their long-suffering peoples.

The alternative to this solution might well be a geopolitical splintering of Ukraine into two countries, one aligned with Russia, the other with the West. (Some two-thirds of its citizens surveyed have repeatedly opposed NATO membership, with less than 20 percent in favor.) Such a development would reinstitutionalize the Cold War division of Europe in even more unpredictable ways. Adjacent to Russia, it would represent a constant threat of new U.S.-Russian proxy wars more dangerous than the one in Georgia.

That possibility was foreshadowed by a little-known event in late May and early June 2006, at a port in Ukraine's ethnic Russian region of Crimea. A U.S. naval ship suddenly appeared, and a contingent of marines went ashore to prepare for a NATO-Ukraine military exercise. Angry crowds of local citizens blockaded the port and confronted the marines, shouting "No to NATO in Ukraine!" An eyewitness account conveyed their mood: "American soldiers . . . Do you want a new Vietnam here? You will get it, and your mothers will cry!" Meanwhile, "Loudspeakers blasted a throaty rendition of 'Holy War,' the song that sent Russian soldiers off to battle during World War II."¹¹⁴

PRESIDENT Barack Obama took office twenty years from the day outgoing President Ronald Reagan declared, in January 1989, "The Cold War is over."¹¹⁵ In the interim, not only was that historic opportunity squandered, but relations between the United States and post-Soviet Russia fell to an all-time low and were growing worse. As a result, so was America's national security, which remained more dependent on its former superpower adversary than on any other country.

Above all else, Russia's stability and thus control over its innumerable devices of mass destruction, including safeguards against accidental nuclear launches, remained far from adequate. Despite billions of dollars of oil revenue, the nation was still an "infrastructural nightmare" and a "fragile state," as even U.S. hardliners acknowledged, though without any apparent concern about that unprecedented danger.¹¹⁶ By 2009, the global financial crisis and plunge in world oil prices had shattered illusions that Russia's economy was an "island of stability" based on "a dynamic stable society." Mounting corporate debt, bankruptcies, unemployment numbers, poverty rates, unpaid wages, and

signs of social unrest, along with the state's rapidly diminishing financial reserves, seemed to remind even Putin of "the shocks of 1991 and 1998."¹¹⁷

There were also bleaker perspectives. An experienced American observer thought the new Russian system had become "even more rickety than its tsarist and Soviet predecessors" and "could fold every bit as easily as they did." Two years before the 2008 crisis, Russian sociologists were already reporting "unpredictably explosive situations" in the country.¹¹⁸ And some historians warned that the "dual power" of Putin and Medvedev was inherently destabilizing, as such arrangements had repeatedly been in the country's history. Those prognoses were exaggerated, but they echoed warnings by top Clinton officials in the late 1990s that the destabilization of nuclear Russia would put America "at greater risk than it [has] ever been."¹¹⁹ This was still true a decade later.

The disintegration of U.S.-Russian cooperation, essential to virtually every important American concern from nuclear proliferation and international terrorism to the war in Afghanistan and other regional crises, was almost as alarming. By early 2009, "real dialogue [did] not exist" because, according to Russia's foreign minister, there had actually been "more mutual trust and respect during . . . the Cold War." (A well-informed Russian reported that there was now even more mistrust in Moscow than in Washington.)¹²⁰ In the aftermath of the Georgian proxy war, both sides demanded that the other make a fateful choice. The Bush administration insisted that "Russia faces a decision: to be a fully integrated and responsible partner" or "an isolated and antagonistic nation." The Kremlin replied that U.S. leaders had to finally decide "what kind of relations they want with Moscow."¹²¹

Still worse, with "missile madness" spurring a new arms race and "hawks" ascending in Washington and Moscow,¹²² each side threatened to violate the other's "red lines." In November 2008, Russian warships appeared in the Caribbean and the Panama Canal, and President Medvedev, in Venezuela and Cuba. The Bush administration took a more extreme step. It called for accelerated NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine, even though neither qualified by the alliance's criteria; most U.S. allies were opposed; a real war with Russia had just been averted in Georgia; and Ukraine's leadership may have colluded with Tbilisi in provoking that event. Alarmed by the brinkmanship, a respected Moscow analyst could no longer "rule out military conflict in the post-Soviet

space between NATO and Russia”—or that Moscow might “be obliged to have recourse to nuclear weapons.”¹²³

Clearly, Washington urgently needed a fundamentally new approach to Russia, but officials and other commentators did not think so—even with the United States bogged down in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and crippled by economic crisis. Their response to increasingly dangerous relations with Moscow made Hegel’s bleak axiom “The Owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk” seem naively optimistic. The great German philosopher believed that although we are unable to comprehend historic developments until they unfold, we do then understand them.¹²⁴

In this case, however, there was no American understanding. In late 2008, a European foreign minister warned that the continent was “already in a new cold war,” and another respected Moscow analyst proclaimed that U.S.-Russian relations were “in some respects even worse.” But wielders of influence in Washington still insisted, “No serious observer thinks we face a new Cold War.”¹²⁵ Myopia was leading to more reckless American proposals. Several suggested that another “implosion” of the Russian nuclear state would be a positive development or at least, according to Secretary of State Rice, its “infrastructural nightmare” cause only for “calm.” Another advocated building an even more provocative missile-defense facility—this one in the former Soviet republic of Lithuania. Yet another urged bringing Finland, a longstanding model of successful neutrality, into NATO.¹²⁶

Not even American public figures and publications reputed to be the most thoughtful on foreign policy seemed capable of rethinking Russia. An admired former congressman was as triumphalist as his colleagues, predicating U.S. policy on “the health of Russian democracy.”¹²⁷ The most influential newspaper, the *New York Times*, still excluding alternative views, continued to feature misleading articles indicting Putin for everything from the “new cold war” and fighting in Georgia to neo-Stalinism in Russia.¹²⁸ (The most important policy journal, *Foreign Affairs*, was scarcely different, while the *Washington Post*’s editorial pages continued to read like a bygone *Pravda* on the Potomac.) Broadcasts by the major television networks were no less one-sided in their coverage. Exasperated, two leading academic authorities on U.S.-Russian relations finally expressed their “concern that the American public is simply not hearing the other side.”¹²⁹

The inability of the political elite to reconsider its two-decade policy toward post-Soviet Russia, which had been a disaster from the outset, was not out of character. Its limited capacity for introspection, independent thinking, and civic courage was also expressed in its acquiescence in the disastrous Iraq War. (A few prominent figures did profess to rethink Russia policy, but most of them again blamed Moscow alone for bad relations or proposed no fundamental changes in the U.S. approach.)¹³⁰ A British resident in Washington was astonished that so few members of the political and media elites openly opposed Russia policy, though some did so privately. He attributed their conformism to being “intimidated” by the prevailing consensus and to careerism, adding: “This is the way that most of the Washington think-tank world works.”¹³¹

The role of intimidation should not be underestimated. In another characteristic sign of a new American cold war, the few outspoken critics of Washington’s policy have been the target of defamatory attacks, even in purportedly liberal publications, for “once again taking the Russian side.” Among the charges familiar from the previous Cold War are “appeasement” and “willful blindness,” “cheerleaders of Russian President Putin” and “Putin apologists,” and “freedom-hater.”¹³² Even Henry Kissinger was labeled “naive” for suggesting that the Kremlin was motivated primarily by its “quest for a reliable strategic partner” in Washington.¹³³

The actual alternative to Washington’s twenty-year failed policy is nothing like what the new cold warriors allege. It begins with America’s real national security priorities, which remain twofold: a stable Russia relying less, not more, on its nuclear weapons; and, as a *Boston Globe* columnist reminded readers, “an unprecedented strategic partnership between Moscow and Washington.”¹³⁴ Those priorities should have excluded any number of U.S. follies, such as Clinton’s myopic notion that “Yeltsin drunk is better than most of the alternatives sober” as the custodian of a nuclear state¹³⁵ and Bush’s reckless promotion of tail-wagging-the-dog client states on its borders. (Even after the U.S.-Russian proxy war in August 2008, both Washington and Tbilisi continued to act recklessly toward Moscow. The Bush administration threatened to rearm Georgia and signed bilateral security agreements with both Tbilisi and Kiev, while Georgia’s president staged events, including a purported Russian attempt to assassinate himself and the president of Poland,

designed to further embroil the United States in his conflicts with the Kremlin.)

With a clear understanding that America's road to national security runs through Moscow, the overriding goal now is to replace the new cold war, before it is too late, with, as one U.S. official understood, "a virtuous cycle of cooperation."¹³⁶ It cannot be the "selective cooperation" espoused by proponents of the failed triumphalist policy, according to which Washington expects Moscow's assistance on behalf of America's vital interests while denying that Russia has any comparable ones.¹³⁷ It will be either a fully reciprocal partnership or none at all. Achieving the "virtuous" kind requires at least four fundamental changes in American thinking.

First, triumphalism must be replaced, in words and in deeds, as the underlying principle of U.S. policy by the original premise that ended the Cold War in the years from 1988 through 1991—that there were no losers but instead a historic chance for the two great powers, both with legitimate security interests abroad and full sovereignty at home, to escape the perils and heavy costs of their forty-year confrontation. This also means recognizing that there are no longer any "superpowers." Post-Soviet Russia does not claim to be one, and if America really was a superpower today it would not have been so easily attacked on September 11, so unable to gain military victory in either Iraq or Afghanistan, so burdened with economic crisis and debt, or so lacking in the "soft" power of goodwill in the world.¹³⁸

Second, the "Blame Russia First syndrome," which is both unfair and a source of constant antagonism, has to end.¹³⁹ No U.S. leader can go as far as I have in this book in holding Washington primarily responsible for the new cold war. But an acknowledgment that a mutual opportunity was missed and that both sides bear responsibility would be enough for a new beginning. It would, for example, assuage an abiding Russian grievance against the United States. "We do not want to aggravate the situation," President Medvedev tried to explain, "but we want to be respected."¹⁴⁰

The third fundamental change follows from the previous two and is the most crucial. NATO expansion toward Russia, which has failed on all counts, must stop. It has served only to undermine the security of all parties involved; generate a militarized U.S.-Russian relationship where

there should be a diplomatic one; bring the two nations closer to war than ever before; and all but exclude the possibility of further nuclear arms reductions. By encircling Russia with military bases, along with facilities that have the potential to deprive Moscow of its hard-achieved defense capabilities, NATO's encroachment has also caused even pro-Western Russians to feel "our fate is not in our hands."¹⁴¹ A nation fearing for its future will never wager on a partner that threatens it.

Finally, a new policy is not possible until the White House and Congress tell the American people the truth about our relationship with post-Soviet Russia. It was never a strategic partnership, only the pretence of one in Washington and the cause of bitter disappointment and mistrust in Moscow. Whether U.S. leaders call the actual relationship a new cold war, as I have, or simply "the worst in a generation" matters less than candidly acknowledging its unprecedented dangers. Two other common practices are also misleading. America does not need meaningless claims about a "friend" in the Kremlin; it needs a real partner there. And constant assurances that the Soviet Union no longer exists, while post-Soviet failures and perils mount, as the Bush administration made a habit of, is no substitute for a national security policy. (It is instead an ideological kind of decision making that repeatedly makes its leading officials seem profoundly uninformed about Russia and surprised by Moscow's actions.)¹⁴²

Not long ago, these fundamental principles were considered mainstream, little more than common sense. Now they are regarded as heresy by an American political establishment that abandoned them. A defender of Reagan's anti-Cold War initiatives has warned that critics seeking to change Washington's subsequent approach to Russia "will have to enter the fray with light hearts and thick skins and the courage of their convictions."¹⁴³ Considering the attacks they have experienced and the powerful forces with deeply vested interests in the wrong-headed policy, from officials, editorialists, and academic specialists to military-defense firms profiting from NATO's enlargement, critics will also need a determined leader.

As I finish this book, in early 2009, the best and possibly last hope is the new American president, Barack Obama. Grassroots movements can play a role, but Russia policy has always been decided by the White House, for better and worse, from Roosevelt and Truman to Nixon,

Reagan, Clinton, and Bush. President Obama—young, with few ties to the failed policies, elected with a mandate for reform at home incompatible with the economic and political costs of the new cold war, and having emphasized Moscow’s weapons of mass destruction as the “greatest threat” to America’s security and the need to “reset U.S.-Russia relations” and “initiate a new era of American diplomacy”¹⁴⁴—would seem the ideal agent of a new thinking about Russia.

But the prospects for this urgently needed alternative may not be good. Obama’s own party expressed its rare dissent from Bush’s Russia policy by accusing him of having “been too soft on Vladimir Putin,” having “given Putin a blank check,” even of having thereby “lost Russia.”¹⁴⁵ The Democrats’ alternative was a more cold-war approach. During his presidential campaign, Obama differed only slightly on Washington’s relations with Moscow from his orthodox Democratic and Republican rivals, and his main Russia adviser was a Yeltsin-era missionary crusader and now neo-cold warrior.¹⁴⁶

In this regard, the foreign-policy team Obama assembled as president seemed no better. His vice president, Joseph Biden, was a longtime zealous proponent of the triumphalist policy, including NATO expansion and the U.S. projects in Georgia and Ukraine, and of “direct confrontation” with the Kremlin. Accepting his nomination, Biden rededicated himself to those pursuits.¹⁴⁷ Obama’s secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton, was the spouse of the president who originated that general policy and staffed her department with people who had implemented it. Robert Gates, Obama’s secretary of defense, had a longer governmental involvement in the failed policy than anyone else in Washington. The new national security adviser, General James L. Jones, was a former NATO commander and an enthusiastic advocate of its expansion. Even Obama’s chief economic adviser, Lawrence Summers, had been an architect of the Clinton administration’s shock-therapy crusade in Russia in the 1990s.

None of those people had ever publicly expressed any rethinking of their triumphalism or doubts about its failures and increasingly dangerous consequences. None openly rejected U.S. hardliners’ clamorous warnings to Obama that Moscow was trying to “intimidate” and “test” him and that any “kowtowing” or “capitulation” on his part would only whet the Kremlin’s “imperialist” appetite. Among those appointees, or

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anywhere around Obama, there appeared to be no heretical thinkers on Russia, and certainly none of the critics who had warned against the bipartisan policy from the beginning.¹⁴⁸

Hope may die last, but historical memory must also persist. Twenty-five years earlier, at another exceedingly dangerous juncture in relations between the White House and the Kremlin, a leader emerged from the Soviet Communist Party system, a much more dogmatic, rigid, and menacing battleground than Washington, espousing what he called “New Thinking.” With only a few other heretics at his side, and at considerable risk to his position and even his life, Mikhail Gorbachev followed those ideas and their vision to the end of the forty-year Cold War.

A quarter of a century later, Kremlin leaders of a different generation are still clinging to hope for “a partnership between the U.S. and Russia,” despite growing opposition in their own political establishment.¹⁴⁹ This time, however, the United States and its new president will have to take the initiative. Is American democracy any less capable of such an alternative than was the Soviet Communist system?

ABOUT THE NOTES

IN composite notes, sources are given in the order they are cited in the text unless otherwise indicated. The notes themselves have been shortened in several ways. In most cases, subtitles of books are omitted and main titles abridged after the first citation in each chapter. The titles of most articles are also omitted, along with the traditional soft and hard signs in transliterations. And most newspapers, magazines, journals, and other periodicals are referred to throughout by initials or in shortened form, as follows:

<i>AF</i>	<i>Argumenty i fakty</i>
<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>APSR</i>	<i>American Political Science Review</i>
<i>BG</i>	<i>Boston Globe</i>
<i>CDPSP</i>	<i>Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press</i>
<i>CDSP</i>	<i>Current Digest of the Soviet Press</i>
<i>Chronicle</i>	<i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>
<i>CSM</i>	<i>Christian Science Monitor</i>
<i>EAS</i>	<i>Europe-Asia Studies</i>
<i>FA</i>	<i>Foreign Affairs</i>
<i>FBIS</i>	<i>Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report: Soviet Union</i>

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FT	<i>Financial Times</i>
IA	<i>Istoricheskii arkhiv</i>
IHT	<i>International Herald Tribune</i>
JCWS	<i>Journal of Cold War Studies</i>
JMH	<i>Journal of Modern History</i>
JOD	<i>Journal of Democracy</i>
JRL	<i>Johnson's Russia List</i>
JRL Supplement	<i>Johnson's Russia List Research and Analytical Supplement</i>
KO	<i>Knizhnoe obozrenie</i>
KP	<i>Komsomolskaia pravda</i>
KZ	<i>Krasnaia zvezda</i>
LAT	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>
LG	<i>Literaturnaia gazeta</i>
LR	<i>Literaturnaia Rossiia</i>
MG	<i>Molodaia gvardiia</i>
MK	<i>Moskovskii komsomolets</i>
MN	<i>Moskovskie novosti</i>
MP	<i>Moskovskaia pravda</i>
MT	<i>Moscow Times</i>
NG	<i>Nezavisimaia gazeta</i>
NI	<i>Novye izvestiia</i>
NM	<i>Novyi mir</i>
NNI	<i>Novaia i noveishaia istoriia</i>
<i>Novaia</i>	<i>Novaia gazeta</i>
NR	<i>New Republic</i>
NS	<i>Nash sovremennik</i>
NT	<i>New Times</i>
NV	<i>Novoe vremia</i>
NY	<i>New Yorker</i>
NYRB	<i>New York Review of Books</i>
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
OG	<i>Obshchaia gazeta</i>
OI	<i>Otechestvenaia istoriia</i>
ONS	<i>Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost</i>
PC	<i>Problems of Communism</i>
PG	<i>Parlamentskaia gazeta</i>
PK	<i>Politicheskii klass</i>
PPC	<i>Problems of Post-Communism</i>
PSA	<i>Post-Soviet Affairs</i>
PZH	<i>Politicheskii zhurnal</i>

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<i>Report</i>	<i>Radio Liberty Report on the USSR</i>
<i>RFE/RL</i>	<i>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline</i>
<i>RG</i>	<i>Rossiiskaia gazeta</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Russian Review</i>
<i>RT</i>	<i>Rabochaia tribuna</i>
<i>SEER</i>	<i>Slavic and East European Review</i>
<i>SI</i>	<i>Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia</i>
<i>SK</i>	<i>Sovetskaia kultura</i>
<i>SM</i>	<i>Svobodnaia mysl</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Sovetskaia Rossiia</i>
<i>SS</i>	<i>Soviet Studies</i>
<i>VA</i>	<i>Vestnik analitiki</i>
<i>VE</i>	<i>Voprosy ekonomiki</i>
<i>VEK XX</i>	<i>Vek XX i mir</i>
<i>VF</i>	<i>Voprosy filosofii</i>
<i>VI KPSS</i>	<i>Voprosi istorii KPSS</i>
<i>VI</i>	<i>Voprosy istorii</i>
<i>VN</i>	<i>Vremia novostei</i>
<i>VRAN</i>	<i>Vestnik rossiiskoi akademii nauk</i>
<i>WP</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
<i>WPJ</i>	<i>World Policy Journal</i>
<i>WS</i>	<i>Weekly Standard</i>
<i>WSJ</i>	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>

NOTES

INTRODUCTION: ALTERNATIVES AND FATES

1. Shorter and somewhat different versions of chapters 1, 2, and 3 appeared, respectively, as an introduction to Nikolai Bukharin, *How It All Began: The Prison Novel* (Columbia University Press, 1998); a contribution to *Political Violence*, ed. Paul Hollander in honor of Robert Conquest (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); and the introduction to *Inside Gorbachev's Kremlin: The Memoirs of Yegor Ligachev* (Pantheon Books, 1993). Chapter 4 was published as an article in *Slavic Review* (Fall 2004). A preliminary, skeletal version of chapter 7 appeared in *The Nation*, July 10, 2006. In each of these instances, I retained the right to use all or parts of the text for this book, which I already had in mind; I thank the publishers for that agreement. Chapters 5 and 6 have not been previously published in any form.
2. See Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* (New York, 1985), chaps. 4–5; and several of the columns I wrote for a broader readership during those years, collected in Stephen F. Cohen, *Sovieticus: American Perceptions and Soviet Realities*, exp. ed. (New York, 1986). On the assumption that some of the same ideas circulated inside the Soviet political establishment, I also studied the uncensored writings of dissidents known as

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- samizdat, including those in a volume I edited, *An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union* (New York, 1982).
3. For a similar formulation, see Martin Bunzel in *AHR* (June 2004): 845–58. For examples of what-if history, see Alexander Demandt, *History That Never Happened*, 3rd ed. (Jefferson, N.C., 1993); Robert Cowley, ed., *What Ifs? of American History* (New York, 2003); and Philip E. Tetlock, Richard Ned Lebow, and Geoffrey Parker, eds., *Unmaking the West: “What-If?” Scenarios That Rewrite World History* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 2006), which examines “imaginary people in an imaginary world” (3).
 4. See Cohen, *Rethinking*, chaps. 1–2.
 5. See my “revisionist” book, *Rethinking*, esp. chap. 1; and for a different personal experience and kind of revisionism, Sheila Fitzpatrick in *Slavic Review* (Fall 2008): 682–704.
 6. Interview with Viktor Danilov in *Kritika* (Spring 2008): 370. Gorbachev was, of course, also an alternativist, as he reiterated in the words quoted at the top of this introduction, from an interview in *NG*, Nov. 6, 1997.
 7. An often quoted line from the famous perestroika-era film *Pokaianie* (Repentance).
 8. Donald J. Raleigh, *Experiencing Russia’s Civil War* (Princeton, N.J., 2002), 418. “School of inevitability” is a Russian term, but it applies as well to the American case. See, e.g., Dmitrii Oleinikov in Karl Aimermakher and Genadii Bordiugov, eds., *Istoriki chitaiut uchebniki istorii* (Moscow, 2002), 148.
 9. For “the edge,” see Aleksandr Tsipko in *VA*, no. 2 (2008): 14; and for the “knock,” see the emigre Russian journalist and scholar Alexander Yanov in *International Journal of Sociology* (Summer–Fall 1976): 85.
 10. Mikhail Shatrov in *Ogonek*, no. 4 (1987): 5. Some said more categorically, “a final chance” (Aleksandr Tsipko in *Megapolis-Express*, Jan. 3, 1991). For the officers, see Iu. V. Rubtsov in *OI*, no. 4 (2005): 187.
 11. See, e.g., Ian Kershaw, *Fateful Choices* (New York, 2007); and Nelson D. Lankford, *Cry Havoc! The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861* (New York, 2007).
 12. This is what Yegor Yakovlev, quoted at the top of the introduction, had in mind in speaking of “the lessons of missed opportunities” (*MN*, Jan. 6, 1991). The tradition continues. A Russian prime minister of the 1990s, Viktor Chernomyrdin, famously explained, “We wanted things to be better, but they turned out as they always do.”
 13. Gorbachev told me about his favorable reaction to the book, which he read in a Russian translation published in the United States in 1980, and its influence on his ideological policy is recorded in the memoirs of his aide

Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years With Gorbachev* (University Park, Penn., 2000), 138–39; and, similarly, in the remarks of another aide, Ivan Frolov, reported in Angus Roxburgh, *The Second Russian Revolution* (London, 1991), 68. Extravagant conclusions have been drawn from that small fact. The scholar Anthony D'Agostino (www.h-diplo@h-net.msu.edu, July 17, 2004) wrote, for example, that by misleading Gorbachev into believing there was a Bukharinist alternative to Stalinism, “Stephen Cohen’s biography of Bukharin probably caused the fall of Soviet power in a more direct sense than any wire-pulling by Reagan or Bush” (www.h-diplo@h-net.msu.edu, July 17, 2004). Similarly, see the Russian historian Valerii Solovei in *PK*, no. 24 (Dec. 2006), Internet version, who remarks, “One can joke that Cohen bears a certain responsibility for perestroika.” For our actual, more mundane relationship, see Gorbachev’s foreword to a small book about me by Russian friends and colleagues, *Stiven Koen i Sovetskii Soiuz/Rossia* (Moscow, 2008), 9–12.

1. BUKHARIN'S FATE

1. Some sections of this essay borrow from my previous writings on Bukharin and his times: Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888–1938* (New York, 1973 and 1980); *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* (New York, 1985), chap. 3; and my introduction to Anna Larina, *This I Cannot Forget: The Memoirs of Nikolai Bukharin's Widow* (New York, 1993), 11–33.
2. The letter to Feliks Dzerzhinsky, dated by archivists “not later than Dec. 24, 1924,” was first published in *VI KPSS*, no. 11 (1988): 42–43.
3. Anonymous reviewer of George Katkov, *The Trial of Bukharin* (New York, 1969), in *TLS*, January 29, 1970; and, similarly, Tucker’s introduction to Robert C. Tucker and Stephen F. Cohen, eds., *The Great Purge Trial* (New York, 1965), ix–xlviii. For different, less admiring interpretations of Bukharin’s conduct during the trial, see *Rodina*, no. 8 (1995): 39–42; and Vesa Outtinen in *SM*, no. 8 (2007): 158–69.
4. See the surveys of Soviet public opinion on historical figures reported in *NYT*, May 27, 1988; *Moscow News*, no. 44 (1990); G. A. Bordiugov and V. A. Kozlov, *Istoriia i koniunktura* (Moscow, 1992), esp. chap. 2; and for Yeltsin, *SM*, no. 11 (1995): 62–63.
5. An important but relatively small part of the original transcript was published and analyzed by Yuri Murin, once a senior archivist at the Presidential Archive. See *NNI*, no. 1 (1995): 61–76; and *Istochnik*, no. 4 (1996): 78–92.

- thing” (*Gorbachevskie chteniia*, no. 1 [Moscow, 2003], 163); and, similarly, in *PK*, no. 2 (2005): 57. And indeed observers quickly noticed that republic officials were in “a rush to seize all-union property and to declare ‘sovereignty’ over local resources” (Serge Schmemmann in *NYT*, Oct. 8, 1991).
136. For example, he gave Moscow’s mayor some of the city’s valuable real estate; gave Kravchuk traditional Russian territories and valuable holdings in Ukraine; and, it seems, gave generals their state-owned dachas (David K. Shipler in *NY*, Nov. 11, 1991, 50; Liudmila Butuzova in *MN*, Aug. 19, 2005; Nikolai Ryzhkov in *NS*, no. 10 [2006]: 198; and Hough *Democratization*, 487–88). For Yeltsin’s confiscations, see this chapter, note 82. For the elites, see Pankin, *Last*, 257; Grachev, *Gorbachev*, 287; and, similarly, Hahn in *PSA* (Jan.–March 2000): 60, 76.
137. Pavel Voshchanov quoted by Vladimir Isakov in *SR*, Dec. 7, 1996.

6. GORBACHEV'S LOST LEGACIES

1. Or as his leading interpreter has written: “the country Gorbachev bequeathed to his successors was freer than at any time in Russian history” Archie Brown, *Seven Years That Changed the World* [New York, 2007], 330). On Gorbachev as democratizer, see also Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (New York, 1997); and his contributions to Archie Brown and Lilia Shevtsova, eds., *Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Putin* (Washington, D.C., 2001).
2. See, e.g., Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika* (New York, 1987), 57; M. S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannye rechi i stati*, 7 vols. (Moscow, 1987–1990), 4:316; and in *Izvestiia*, April 17, 1991.
3. Charles Krauthammer in *WP*, April 27, 2007; *NYT* editorial, May 9, 2000; David Remnick in *NY*, May 21, 2001, 37. Similarly, see Margaret Shapiro in *WP*, Dec. 9, 1993; Michael Wines in *NYT*, June 5, 2000; and Trudy Rubin in *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Dec. 13, 2003. For an early example of this revisionism, see *NR* editorial, Sept. 9, 1991, 7–9. President Bill Clinton led the way. See the exchange on “democracy” and “reform” in his joint press conference with Yeltsin, in *WP*, April 5, 1993. Even later, Clinton’s national security adviser insisted that Yeltsin “should be remembered as the father of Russian democracy” (Samuel R. Berger in *WP*, Nov. 15, 2001).
4. Timothy J. Colton and Michael McFaul in *PPC* (July/Aug. 2003): 12. Similarly, see Michael McFaul, Nikolai Petrov, and Andrei Ryabov, *Between Dictatorship and Democracy* (Washington, D.C., 2004), esp. 2; and McFaul in *The Wilson Quarterly* (Spring 2000): 42. It is a central theme of three American biographies of Yeltsin, though more balanced in the latter one: Leon Aron, *Yeltsin* (New York, 2000); Herbert J. Ellison, *Boris Yeltsin and*

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- Russia's Democratic Transformation* (Seattle, 2006); and Timothy J. Colton, *Yeltsin* (New York, 2008). In contrast, see this chapter, n. 1; Peter Reddaway and Dmitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms* (Washington, D.C., 2001); Robert V. Daniels in *The Nation*, Oct. 20, 2008, 30–36; and Russia's leading political scientist, Lilia Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia* (Washington, D.C., 1999) and her *Russia—Lost in Transition* (Washington, D.C., 2007).
5. See, e.g., Iu. M. Baturin et al., eds., *Epokha Eltsina* (Moscow, 2001); Oleg Moroz, *Khronika liberalnoi revoliutsii* (Moscow, 2005); and Marsha Lipman cited by David Hoffman in *WP*, May 8, 1999, who is quoted here.
 6. Eduard Samoilov in *NG*, Oct. 13, 1992. Similarly, see Vladimir Motyl in *Izvestiia*, Sept. 7, 1991; and Olga Chaikovskaia in *LG*, Oct. 21, 1992.
 7. See, respectively, Michael Wines in *NYT*, June 14, 2001; Liesl Schillinger in *NYT Book Review*, July 2, 2006; Fareed Zakaria in *Newsweek*, June 16, 2003, 33; and Nicholas D. Kristof in *NYT*, Dec. 15, 2004.
 8. See, respectively, Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy* (New York, 1994), 499; Stephen Kotkin in *JMH* (June 1998): 406; Adam Ulam in *TLS*, Nov. 6, 1992, 23; Edward W. Walker, *Dissolution* (Lanham, Md., 2003), 170; Rajan Menon in *The Harriman Forum* (Spring 1997): 13; and Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (New York, 2002), 441. Similarly, see M. Steven Fish in *Demokratizatsiya* (Spring 2005): 241–53; this book, chap. 4, n. 85; the critical comments on part of this chapter by Karen Dawisha and Stephen E. Hansen in *Slavic Review* (Fall 2004): 527–52; Glennys Young on “triumphalist belief” among historians, in *RR* (Jan. 2007): 100, 117; and, on the “mythical” alternatives NEP and perestroika, Anthony D'Agostino, *Gorbachev's Revolution* (New York, 1998), 172; and Martin Malia in *Daedalus* (Spring 1992): 74. For dissenters from the revived no-alternative orthodoxy, see Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, esp. 5, 9, 16, 252–55, 636–41; Nelson and Kuzes, *Radical Reform*; Jerry F. Hough, *Democratization and Revolution in the USSR* (Washington, D.C., 1997); Brown, *Gorbachev*, chaps. 5–9; Robert V. Daniels, *The Rise and Fall of Communism in Russia* (New Haven, Conn., 2007), part 4; and Moshe Lewin, *The Soviet Century* (New York, 2005), chap. 27.
 9. Richard E. Ericson in *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Fall 1991): 25; and Eugene Huskey in *APSR* (Dec. 1998): 968. Similarly, see Michael McFaul in *FA* (Jan.–Feb. 1995): 89; Malia in *Daedalus* (Spring 1992): 69; Richard Pipes in *Commentary* (March 1992): 30–31; and, for more examples and a discussion, Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, updated ed. (New York, 2001), 40–42, 293n. 69.
 10. See, respectively, Vitalii Tretiakov in *MN*, Nov. 26, 1989; Robert G. Kaiser, *Why Gorbachev Happened* (New York, 1991), 171; and James Billington in *NYT Book Review*, June 17, 1990.

11. A. S. Cherniaev, *Shest let s Gorbachevym* (Moscow, 1993), 345; Gorbachev quoted on “heresy” by Valerii Badov in *RT*, Aug. 30, 1990; and by Anatolii Streliański in *Literaturnoe obozrenie*, no. 12 (1990): 12; Gorbachev in *Izvestiia*, March 25, 1991; William E. Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Military* (New Haven, Conn., 1998), 94; and David Price-Jones, *The Strange Death of the Soviet Empire* (New York, 1995), 5. See also Dusko Doder and Louise Branson, *Gorbachev* (New York, 1990), who reported early on that fundamentalists feared the “Soviet government had been hijacked by a heretic” (176).
12. Michael McFaul in *WP*, Sept. 30, 2000. See also this chapter, n. 4; and, similarly, Padmai Desai, *Conversations on Russia* (New York, 2006), vii–viii, 3.
13. For such “modernization,” see A. V. Fadin in *Kentavr* (Jan.–Feb. 1993): 92–97; and for the tradition, Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*.
14. For the quotes, see, respectively, *LG*, Dec. 4, 1991; *Materialy obedinnogo plenuma tsentralnogo komiteta i tsentralnoi kontrolnoi komissii KPSS* (Moscow, 1991), 8; M. S. Gorbachev, *Gody trudnykh reshenii* (Moscow, 1993), 10; Gorbachev, *Izbrannye*, 4:327, 360; and *Pravda*, July 26, 1991. A top Gorbachev aide characterized their goal as a “non-catastrophic” transformation (Vadim Medvedev, *V komande Gorbacheva* [Moscow, 1994], 234).
15. The first quote is from Tatiana Vorozheikina in *ONS*, no. 5 (2005): 17–22. See also this chapter, n. 28. The strongest proponents of perestroika as a “lost alternative” and the Soviet breakup as a “tragic mistake” were, of course, Gorbachev partisans. See, e.g., four publications on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of his rise to power: *Proryv k svobode* (Moscow, 2005); “*Perestroika*” v transformatsionnom kontekste (Moscow, 2005); V. I. Tolstykh, ed., *Perestroika* (Moscow, 2005); and *Gorbachevskie chteniia*, no. 3 (Moscow, 2005). For Gorbachev himself, see, e.g., his *Poniat perestroiku . . .* (Moscow, 2006), esp. 365–79; M. S. Gorbachev and B. F. Slavin, *Neokonchennaia istoria*, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 2005); and, of course, his memoirs, Gorbachev, *Zhizn i reformy*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1995).
16. Colton and McFaul in *PPC* (July/Aug. 2003): 20
17. Vitalii Tretiakov in *RG*, Nov. 19, 2003; and, similarly, A. V. Buzgalin in *JRL*, Feb. 2, 2002.
18. Ann Cooper, executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, in *MT*, July 7, 2005. Similarly, see Yevgenia Albats quoted by Oksana Yabloka in *MT*, June 7, 2006. Gorbachev’s own daughter lamented, “Journalism now is a dangerous business” (quoted by Gregory L. White in *WSJ*, Dec. 1–2, 2007).
19. Russians involved in the 1989 and 1990 campaigns later made this point. See, e.g., Alla Iaroshinskaia and Boris Vishnevskii in *Novaia*, March 25–28, 2004, and March 21–23, 2005.

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20. See Valerii Vyzhutovich in *Izvestiia*, May 4, 1994; Konrad Liubarskii and Aleksandr Sobianin in *NV*, no. 15 (1995): 6–12; and Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, 96–97.
21. M. Steven Fish in *Demokratizatsiya* (Spring 2005): 248; and Aleksandr Kolesnichenko in *NI*, Nov. 13, 2006. Similarly, see Boris Kagarlitsky, *Square Wheels* (New York, 1994), 5, 16; Grigorii Iavlinskii in *Itogi*, March 20, 2004; and Dmitrii Furman in *NG*, March 3, 2008.
22. For Gorbachev's reluctance, see Jonathan Steele, *Eternal Russia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 261. Oddly, Steele nevertheless concludes that Gorbachev merely “paid lip-service to the notion of parliament” (256). Reading the published proceedings of the Soviet legislatures of 1989 through 1991 is a vivid reminder of a singular political moment in Russia to date.
23. Olga Kryshstanovskaya and Stephen White in *PSA* (Oct.–Dec. 2003): 289–306; and Kryshstanovskaya quoted by Arkady Ostovsky in *FT*, Feb. 24, 2003. For a full study, see Olga Kryshstanovskaia, *Anatomiia rossiiskoi elity* (Moscow, 2005).
24. Yakovlev in *NV*, no. 32 (2004): 21. For a more measured analysis of civil society during and after perestroika, see *Gorbachevskie chteniia*, no. 5 (Moscow, 2007).
25. Jonathan Weiler, *Human Rights in Russia* (Boulder, Colo., 2004), 2. In 2005, the leading civil rights activist, Sergei Kovalev, said that the “human rights situation in Russia is simply catastrophic” (Radio Ekho Moskvy, Sept. 22, 2005). The early stage of this development after Gorbachev is discussed by several contributors to Carol R. Saivetz and Anthony Jones, eds., *In Search of Pluralism* (Boulder, Colo., 1994).
26. L. Piiasheva in *Pravda*, April 21, 1995; Liliia Shevtsova in Valentin Tolstykh, ed., *Mnogaia leta: Mikhailu Gorbachevu—70* (Moscow, 2001), 453; Gavriil Popov, *Snova v oppositsii* (Moscow, 1994), 81.
27. Mikhail Khodorkovskii quoted by Anastasia Kornia in *NG*, Sept. 12, 2005. The adage continues: “And anyone who thinks it can be reconstructed has no head.” There are harsher variations: “Everyone except perhaps liberals and other members of the ‘fifth column’ regret the breakup of the USSR. Sensible people can’t conduct themselves otherwise” (L. G. Ivashov in *SR*, Dec. 7, 2006).
28. Aleksandr Galkin in *Proryv*, 86. For examples of non-Gorbachevists, see Dmitrii Furman in *SM*, no. 11 (2003): 9–30 and his *Nasha strannaia revoliutsiia* (Moscow, 1998), part 1; Fedor Burlatskii in *NG*, March 2, 2001; Shevtsova, *Yeltsin's Russia*, 14–15; Boris Kagarlitskii in *SM*, no. 1 (2002): 122; and Aleksandr Buzgalin in *JRL*, Jan. 21, 2000. On the other hand, Russians directly involved in the abolition of the Soviet state or the ensuing Yeltsin

- regime were politically constrained from rethinking what had happened. See, e.g., Baturin et al., eds., *Epokha Eltsina*, and the latter two authors of Joel M. Ostrow, Georgiy A. Saratov, and Irina M. Khakamada, *The Consolidation of Dictatorship in Russia*, (Westport, Conn., 2007). It was also true of non-Russian citizens, as, e.g., Andrei Shleifer, *A Normal Country* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005). Of course, there were also Russian intellectuals who thought there had been no perestroika alternative. See, e.g., V. V. Sogrin in *ONS*, no. 4 (2002): 95–100; and a number of contributors to Baturin et al., eds., *Epokha Eltsina*.
29. See, respectively, Mortimer B. Zuckerman in *US News and World Report*, Feb. 26, 2007; Stephen Sestanovich in *WP*, March 3, 2005; *WP* editorial, Dec. 11, 2007; *NYT* editorial, Sept. 14, 2004; and Michael McFaul in *WS*, Nov. 17, 2003. Indeed, the *New York Times* initiated a series of articles devoted to “Putin’s Counterrevolution” (see nytimes.com/world). Similarly, see *WP* editorial, Nov. 16, 2003, and Feb. 8, 2007; Fred Hiatt in *WP*, Sept. 20, 2004; Amy Knight in *TLS*, May 28, 2004, 7; McFaul in *WP Book World*, Feb. 6, 2005, 8; Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, *Kremlin Rising* (New York, 2005); Colton and McFaul in *PPC* (July/Aug. 2003): 12; McFaul, Petrov, and Ryabov, *Between Dictatorship*, esp. 2; McFaul in *The Wilson Quarterly* (Spring 2000): 42; Aron, *Yeltsin*; Ellison, *Boris Yeltsin*; and Colton, *Yeltsin*.
 30. See, e.g., Fiona Hill in *JRL*, Nov. 28, 2003; this chapter, n. 1; Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*; Daniels in *The Nation*, Oct. 20, 2008, 30–36; and Shevtsova, *Yeltsin’s Russia*. For “rollback,” see, among many others, Philip P. Pan in *WP*, Sept. 21, 2008.
 31. Anders Aslund, *How Russia Became a Market Economy* (Washington, D.C., 1995), 2. The very few include Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*; Brown, *Seven Years*; Daniels, *Rise and Fall*, part 4; Lynn D. Nelson and Irina Y. Kuzes, *Property to the People* (Armonk, N.Y., 1994), esp. 31–32; and, perhaps alone among mainstream American journalists, William Pfaff in *IHT*, Sept. 24, 1999. As Reddaway and Glinski remind us (2), most Western commentators “exulted” over the Soviet breakup. Indeed, an American political scientist warned against anyone ready to “forgive a communist leader who thought [democratization] might be possible” (Karen Dawisha in *APSR* [June 1999]: 476).
 32. See, e.g., Robert Service, *Russia* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 4–5 and chap. 22.
 33. See, e.g., Valerie Bunce in *PSA* (Oct.–Dec. 1998): 324–25, 348; Gordon M. Hahn and Walter D. Connor in *Demokratizatsiya* (Spring 2005): 166, 189; and David M. Kotz and Fred Weir, *Revolution from Above* (New York, 1997), 6–7. For Russian objections to the “myth,” see Karen Brutents in

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- SM*, no. 1 (2005): 174; Viktor Kuvaldin in Olga Zdravomyslova, ed., *10 let bez SSSR* (Moscow, 2002), 110; Dmitriy Ryurikov, *Russia Survives* (Washington, D.C., 1999), 15–18; and Ignat Pavlov in *SM*, no. 7–8 (2006): 223.
34. The nineteenth-century conservative thinker M. N. Katkov quoted by Kirill Aleksandrov in *NV*, no. 27 (2005): 8; and, similarly, Anatolii Karpychev in *Pravda*, Jan. 25, 1992.
 35. Even one of Yeltsin's former press secretaries could still write nearly fifteen years later, "We can in no way understand what the disintegration of the USSR meant for us" (Viacheslav Kostikov in *AF*, Nov. 9, 2005).
 36. A. S. Barsenkov and A. I. Vdovin, *Istoriia Rossii, 1938–2002* (Moscow, 2003), 382–93. For the correspondent, see John Lloyd in *NR*, Jan. 6 and 13, 1992, 18.
 37. See, e.g., Lilia Shevtsova in Anne de Tinguay, ed., *The Fall of the Soviet Empire* (Boulder, Colo., 1997), 86; A. V. Buzgalin in *JRL*, Feb. 2, 2002; Dmitrii Furman in *SM*, no. 11 (2003): 9–30; Ryurikov, *Russia*, 15–20; Aleksandr Panarin in *LG*, Feb. 20, 2002; and, similarly, Vladimir Putin, kremlin.ru (Sept. 2, 2005). For similar formulations of "revolution from above" in 1991, but without the historical reference to Stalin's, see Kotz and Weir, *Revolution*; and Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia's Revolution from Above* (New Brunswick, N.J., 2002); and for one with the analogy, V. P. Danilov in T. I. Zaslavskaja and L. A. Arutiunian, eds., *Kuda idet Rossiia?* vol. 1 (Moscow, 1994), 125–26.
 38. See this volume, chap. 5, n. 100; and, similarly, Julia Wishnevsky in *Report*, Nov. 13, 1992, 22.
 39. See, e.g., Aleksandr Tsipko, in *KP*, Nov. 7, 1991, and in *VA*, no. 3 (2008): 29; Burlatsky in *WP*, Nov. 10, 1991; Anatolii Sobchak in *LG*, Jan. 15, 1992; Viktor Petrovskii in *NG*, Feb. 26, 1993; Furman, *Nasha*, 73–74; S. V. Cheshko in G. N. Sevostianov, ed., *Tragediia velikoi derzhavy* (Moscow, 2005), 466; Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, whose subtitle is *Market Bolshevism Against Democracy*; and, similarly, Nelson and Kuzes, *Radical Reform*, 12–16. In Russia, we are told, "there is almost general agreement" that the ideology of post-Soviet Yeltsinism was "Soviet Communist ideology turned inside out" (Boris Kagarlitsky, *Russia Under Yeltsin and Putin* [London, 2002], 55).
 40. For a similar point, see Joel Hellman in Andrew C. Kuchins, ed., *Russia After the Fall* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 96; and, early on, Vasilii Lipitskii in *NG*, Aug. 12, 1993.
 41. Dmitrii Furman in *SM*, no. 11 (2003): 12. Even a democratic reformer known for her moderation called Belovezh "simply high treason" (Tatyana I. Zaslavskaya in *Demokratizatsiya* [Spring 2005]: 299).

42. Nikolai Shmelev in *Trud*, April 13, 2005. The extent of poverty was disputed. Following official Russian statistics, many Western commentators thought it affected less than 20 percent of the people. Shmelev, a highly respected economist of moderate views, put the figure at “70 to 80 percent,” which was almost certainly correct. For production, see Ryurikov, *Russia*, 19.
43. Iurii Afanasev in *SM*, no. 11 (2004): 3. Similarly, see Nikolai Petrakov, *Ekonomicheskaiia “Santa-Barbara”* (Moscow, 2000), 223; and Vitalii Tretiakov in *NG*, Dec. 18, 1999, and in *Novaia*, Sept. 8–10, 2005.
44. For the first episode, see K. V. Kharchenko, *Vlast-imushchestvo-chelovek* (Moscow, 2000); for the second, V. Danilov et al., eds., *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni*, 5 vols. (Moscow, 1999–).
45. Aleksandr Tsipko in *LG*, May 23, 2001.
46. Aleksandr Libman in *SM*, no. 9 (2005): 54. Similarly, see Aleksandr Panarin in *LG*, Feb. 20, 2002; Garri Kasparov in *Novaia*, Dec. 15, 2008; and Hellman in Kuchins, ed., *Russia*, 106. For the nomenklatura’s “top-down” wishes, see Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, 34, 268, 319.
47. For a fuller account of these developments, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, 135–41, 158–77; and Boris Yeltsin, *Midnight Diaries* (New York, 2000), 232–34.
48. For a fuller account, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, part 2.
49. Tatyana I. Zaslavskaya in *Demokratizatsiya* (Spring 2005): 312, uses a more decorous translation. For the “off-shore” elite, see V. Iu. Surkov, *Osnovnye tendentsii i perspektivy razvitiia sovremennoi Rossii* (Moscow, 2007), 32. Surkov, the Kremlin ideologist, used the expression for his own purposes but not entirely unfairly, adding that the elite does not “see its future or the future of its children in Russia.” For the survey, see *VN*, Aug. 24, 2005; and, similarly, *NG*, Aug. 16, 2005.
50. Aleksandr Tsipko in *LG*, Dec. 20, 2006.
51. See, e.g., James H. Billington, *Russia Transformed* (New York, 1992); and Malia, *Soviet Tragedy*. For a discussion of their persistence and the policy implications, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*.
52. Aleksandr Zinoviev in *Zavtra*, no. 2 (1993). For “exulting,” see Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, 2.
53. See Thomas L. Friedman in *NYT*, Aug. 2, 2006; Malia, *Soviet Tragedy*, 485, 487, and in *PC* (Jan.–April 1992): 93; Hélène Carrère d’Encausse, *The End of the Soviet Empire* (New York, 1993), 219, 230 (and, similarly, Billington, *Russia*); Bukovsky in *NR*, Jan. 6 and 13, 1992, 44; Leon Aron in *Commentary* (December 2006): 20; Service, *Russia*, 338; and Marshall T. Poe, *The Russian Moment in World History* (Princeton, N.J., 2003), 89. Gordon M.

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- Hahn is similarly critical of this myth, in *Demokratizatsiya* (Spring 2005): 167, as are Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*. An equally large myth saw the breakup freeing “reformers in the republics” from “reactionaries in the center” (Roman Szporluk in *NYT*, Jan. 23, 1991). In reality, freed from a reforming Soviet Moscow, reactionaries took control of property and power in many republics.
54. For this development, see Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, chaps. 5–6; and, similarly, Judith Delvin, *The Rise of the Russian Democrats* (Brookfield, Vt., 1995), chap. 8. For the quote, see Egor Gaidar, *Gosudarstvo i evoliutsiia* (Moscow, 1995), 135.
 55. *Vek XX*, no. 6 (1990): 15–19. Dated March 30, 1990, this little-known document was drafted by a group headed by Chubais, later Yeltsin’s leading practitioner of shock-therapy privatization (see V. Ia. Gelman in *ONS*, no. 4 [1997]: 66–67; and Boris Vishnevskii in *NG*, Feb. 14, 1998). It grew out of a larger debate, begun in 1989, over the need for an “iron-hand” regime in the Soviet transition. It may be that these anti-Marxist intellectuals initially “favored the free market more than democracy” (Reddaway and Glinski, *Tragedy*, 59), but once in power they did not practice either.
 56. Stanislav Shatalin in *FBIS*, March 27, 1991, 29. Similarly, see Ales Adamovich in *FBIS*, Nov. 27, 1992; and Svetlana Klishina in *Izvestiia*, April 17, 1992. For the preceding quote, see Valentin Tolstykh, ed., *O strategii rossiiskogo razvitiia* (Moscow, 2003), 198; and, similarly, Gelman on their views, in *ONS*, no. 4 (1997): 66–67. For early alarm over the fate of elected soviets, see German Diligensky in *NT*, no. 51 (1991): 16–17; and Tatiana Vorozheikina in *Vek XX*, no. 1 (1992): 25–30. A property-driven campaign against the Moscow Soviet was already under way. See Kagarlitsky, *Square Wheels*. For Russia and the “Pinochet Option” in international context, see Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine* (New York, 2007), chaps. 11–12.
 57. Natalia Borova in *LG*, July 11–17, 2007; and, similarly though less harshly, Devlin, *The Rise*, 258.
 58. For continued “dreaming of a Russian Pinochet,” see Nikolai Rabotiazev in *NG*, Sept. 23, 2000. Similarly, see Vitalii Naishul in *LG*, Nov. 30–Dec. 6, 1995; Boris Vishnevskii on Alfred Kokh in *Novaia*, Feb. 28–March 3, 2002; Andrei Riabov on Gaidar in *Novaia*, Feb. 16–19, 2006; Oleg Liakhovich’s apologia for Pinochet in *Moscow News*, Dec. 15–21, 2006; and Irina Khakamada quoted by Michael Spector in *NYT Magazine*, Jan. 29, 2007, 57. For similar Russian criticisms of the role of “liberals” in de-democratization, see note 39. Even some of Chubais’s admirers admit he was uninterested in democracy. See, e.g., Leonid Radzikhovskii in *RG*, May 31, 2005; and M. Berger and O. Proskurina, *Krest Chubaisa* (Moscow, 2008). A few of Yeltsin’s intellectual supporters later regretted the antidemocratic conse-

- quences of his measures. See, e.g., Evgenii Iasin in *MN*, Nov, 11, 2003; and Evgenii Kiselev in *Novaia*, Oct. 6–8, 2008. For a “lighthearted” and distasteful self-justification of the role played by Chubais’s team, see Alfred Kokh and Igor Svinarenko, *A Crate of Vodka* (New York, 2009).
59. For this sad episode, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*.
 60. Following “liberals,” see, respectively, Natalia Gevorkian in *Liberally o narode* (Moscow, 2006), 43; Yuri Kariakin quoted in Andrei Sinyavsky, *The Russian Intelligentsia* (New York, 1997), 20; Dmitrii Furman in *OG*, July 12–18, 2001; Viktor Erofeyev in *NYT*, Feb. 29, 2008; and Alfred Kokh quoted by Vladimir Shlapentokh in *EAS* (Nov. 1999): 1168. Similarly, see Galina Starovoitova in *NG*, July 30, 1991; the letter to Putin signed by intellectuals in *Izvestiia*, Dec. 5, 2000; Kokh quoted in *SR*, Feb. 2, 2002; Kokh and Svinarenko, *Crate*; Artemii Troitskii in *Novaia*, Nov. 24–26, 2003; Vladimir Gryaznevich in *St. Petersburg Times*, Feb. 7, 2006; and Sergei Kovalev in *NYRB*, Nov. 22, 2007. *Liberally o narode* is a malicious but representative sampler of such statements, and Sinyavsky, *Russian Intelligentsia*, a protest against them, esp. 16, 20–21, 31.
 61. S. A. Korobov in *SR*, Aug. 19, 2006. For the argument that there were post-Soviet alternatives to shock therapy in 1992, see, e.g., Aleksei Kiva in *SM*, no. 2 (2007): 64–65; and Vadim Belotserkovski in *SM* no. 12 (2007): 54–55.
 62. Shevtsova in Tolstykh, ed., *Mnogaia*, 453.
 63. Gorbachev’s speech on receiving the American National Constitution Center’s 2008 Liberty Award (Sept. 19, 2008), on the Center’s Web site. More fully, see Gorbachev, *Zhizn i reformy*, vol. 2. For historians and participants, see this chapter, n. 75.
 64. Dan Bilefsky and Michael Schwartz in *NYT*, Sept. 8, 2008. Similarly, see the survey of Russians reported in *Novaia*, Aug. 11–13, 2008; the Ossetian quoted by Andrew Kramer and Ellen Barry in *NYT*, Sept. 11, 2008; the Russians by Michael Schwartz in *NYT*, Sept. 30, 2008; the Georgian by Ellen Barry in *NYT*, Oct. 10, 2008; and V. Trifimov in *SR*, Sept. 20, 2008, who wrote: “America fought Russia . . . in South Ossetia.” Henry Kissinger and George Schultz worried that the war “will be treated as a metaphor for a larger conflict” (*WP*, Oct. 8, 2008). And rightly so. See, e.g., Aleksei Bogaturov and Aleksei Fenenko in *SM*, no. 11 (2008), who, from a Russian perspective, see the war as a watershed moment in U.S.-Russia relations. For the background and an analysis, see George Friedman in *NYRB*, Sept. 25, 2008, 24–26.
 65. For the surprise, see, e.g., the report of the Central Asia–Caucasus Institute in *JRL*, Aug. 31, 2008; and a U.S. military officer responsible for Georgian affairs quoted by Helene Cooper and Thorn Shanker in *NYT*, Aug. 13,

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2008. Similarly, see the war having been a “shock” that “jolted” the Bush administration, as remarked by Stephen Sestanovich in *FA* (Nov./Dec. 2008): 12, and reported by Stephen Lee Myers and Thom Shanker in *NYT*, Aug. 15, 2008.
66. Rice in *JRL*, Jan. 24, 2008; and David Ignatius in *WP*, Sept. 4, 2008. Similarly, see Michael McFaul’s congressional testimony in *JRL*, Sept. 9, 2008; Ambassador William J. Burns in *JRL*, Nov. 12, 2007; John R. Bolton in *WP*, Oct. 20, 2008; Ronald D. Asmus and Richard Holbrooke in *WP*, Aug. 11, 2008; U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in *JRL*, Oct. 24, 2007; *WS* editorial, Aug. 25, 2008, 7; and Robert Kagan in *NR*, April 23, 2008, 44.
67. On the latter point, see, e.g., U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Matthew Bryza in *JRL*, Sept. 24, 2008; on ideology, see Tom Nichols, National Review Online, Dec. 8, 2008; and for all of the reasons, see Pavel K. Baev in *AAASS Newsnet*, Oct. 2007, 1. The points appear regularly in official and media statements, but for a sophisticated defense of the argument see Brown, *Seven Years*, 240–41.
68. Robert Kagan in *WP*, May 2, 2008, is supported by Stephen Kotkin in *NYT*, July 6, 2008. In 2003, the U.S. ambassador to Moscow complained that a “values gap” was the main obstacle in the relationship (quoted by Stephen Sestanovich in *FA* [Nov./Dec. 2008]: 12, though here I am quoting Ronald D. Asmus in *WP*, Dec. 13, 2008). For ideologues on the American side, see, e.g., Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York, 2008); Sestanovich in *FA* (Nov./Dec. 2008): 12–28; McFaul’s congressional testimony in *JRL*, Sept. 9, 2008; Council of Foreign Relations, *Russia’s Wrong Direction*, Task Force Report No. 57 (New York, 2006); most of the Russia-related events of the American Enterprise Institute, as, e.g., the one reported in *JRL*, Oct. 15, 2008; and for an Anglo-American example, Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War* (New York, 2008). On charges that Putin’s Russia is “fascist” or analogous to Nazi Germany, see, e.g., Leon Wieseltier in *NR*, Feb. 27, 2008, 48; Richard Pipes’s letter in *FT*, July 22, 2008; Zbigniew Brzezinski interviewed at huffingtonpost.com, Aug. 8, 2008; and *WP* editorial, Sept. 2, 2008.
69. See Friedman in *NYRB*, Sept. 25, 2008, 24–26.
70. Steven Lee Myers in *NYT*, Aug. 16, 2008; and for the preceding quote, *NYT* editorial, Aug. 27, 2008.
71. Almost immediately in 1985, for example, Gorbachev privately nullified the “Brezhnev Doctrine,” which gave the Kremlin the right to decide the domestic and foreign policies of Eastern Europe’s Communist states, and made clear his intention to end the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. See Brown, *Seven Years*, 242–43.

72. For the history of “New Thinking,” see Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West* (New York, 2000); for its application, Brown, *Seven Years*, chap. 9; and for insider accounts of the new policies, Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev* (University Park, PA, 2000), Andrei Grachev, *Gorbachev's Gamble* (Malden, Mass., 2008), and Jack F. Matlock Jr., *Reagan and Gorbachev* (New York, 2004).
73. Quoted in Norman A. Graebner, Richard Dean Burns, and Joseph M. Siracusa, *Reagan, Bush, Gorbachev* (Westport, Conn., 2008), 142. Similarly, see Matlock, *Reagan and Gorbachev*, xiv, and for “another era,” 302.
74. Bush quoted in Graebner et al., *Reagan*, 130. On Malta “symbolically representing the end of the . . . Cold War world,” see Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition* (Washington, D.C., 1994), 404–8.
75. See, e.g., Graebner, et. al., *Reagan*; Matlock, *Reagan and Gorbachev*; Grachev, *Gorbachev's Gamble*; Brown, *Seven Years*, chap. 9; Kiron K. Skinner, ed., *Turning Points in Ending the Cold War* (Stanford, Calif., 2008); William C. Wohlforth, ed., *Witnesses to the End of the Cold War* (Baltimore, Md., 1996); and Dick Combs, *Inside the Soviet Alternate Universe* (University Park, Penn., 2008), chaps. 9–10.
76. George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York, 1998), xiv; Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany United and Europe Transformed* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 363. Reagan agreed: “I think both sides won” (quoted by Jack Matlock Jr. in Desai, *Conversations on Russia*, 331). The secretary general of NATO concurred: “There are no losers, only winners,” as quoted by Flora Lewis in *NYT*, July 21, 1990.
77. At the Republican National Convention later that year, Patrick J. Buchanan, one of Bush's rivals for the nomination, gave primarily Reagan and secondarily Bush credit for “the policies that won the Cold War.” The party's 2008 nominee, Senator John McCain, was no less certain: “Ronald Reagan won the Cold War” (quoted by Michael Cooper in *NYT*, Feb. 24, 2008). Bush adumbrated this revised view in December 1991, claiming that the end of the Soviet Union was “a victory for the moral force of our values” (transcript of his speech on Dec. 25, *NYT*, Dec. 26, 1991). For the reaction in Moscow, see, e.g., Viacheslav Stepin in Tolstykh, ed., *Perestroika*, 69.
78. *NYT*, Oct. 28, 2002.
79. Michael McFaul in Skinner, ed., *Turning Points*, chap. 7; and James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose* (Washington, D.C., 2003), where it is said that Yeltsin's abolition of the Soviet Union had the effect of “erasing the cold war in an instant” (1). For a more sophisticated but equally triumphalist account, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York, 2005). Upon reading it, a reviewer wrote: “The

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- Soviet Union was no more. The cold war was over” (William Grimes in *NYT*, Dec. 18, 2005).
80. Tony Judt, reviewing Gaddis, *The Cold War*, and quoting David Caute, in *NYRB*, March 23, 2006, 11–12, 15.

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1. Clinton administration official cited by Daniel Williams in *WP*, March 13, 1993; Steven Erlanger in *NYT*, July 28, 1993. The crusade is the subject of my book *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia*, updated ed. (New York, 2001). It was not the first U.S. crusade in Russia. For previous ones, see David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the “Evil Empire”* (New York, 2007).
2. Years later, for example, a leading foreign-affairs columnist was still insisting, “Who lost Russia is an unfair and idiotic question” (Jim Hoagland in *WP*, Oct. 28, 2007). By then, the prevailing opinion was that Putin’s Kremlin had “lost the West” (Stephen Blank in *JRL*, Nov. 30, 2007). That same year, on the other hand, it was formulated more correctly in Dmitry K. Simes, “Losing Russia,” *FA* (Nov.–Dec. 2007): 36–52.
3. *NYT* editorial, March 13, 2006; Andrew C. Kuchins in *JRL*, May 14, 2002.
4. Retired Gen. William Odom, paraphrased and quoted by Lars-Erik Nelson in *Daily News* (New York), Jan. 2, 2000; Thomas E. Graham Jr. in *JRL*, June 21, 1999. Similarly, see Odom in Nikolas K. Gvosdev, ed., *Russia in the National Interest* (New Brunswick, N.J., 2004), chap. 17. For more on this notion, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, 208–9.
5. Mark Katz in *MT*, Jan. 26, 2004. Similarly, see Lionel Beehner, “Why Russia Matters Less Than We Think,” *huffingtonpost.com*, Jan. 2, 2008; Rajon Menon and Alexander J. Motyl, “The Myth of Russian Resurgence,” *The American Interest* (March–April 2007); Nina Khrushcheva in *MT*, May 17, 2006, who assures readers there will not be another cold war because “Russia is not important enough;” and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza of the United States, who says it is because Russia is too weak (cited in Interfax dispatch, *JRL*, Sept. 24, 2008).
6. Iurii Afanasev in *SM*, no. 1–2 (2006): 3. For the “demographic disaster,” see Nicholas Eberstadt in *NYT*, Oct. 25, 2008; and, similarly, Murray Feshbach in *WP*, Oct. 5, 2008. For an equally if not more grim report, see Nadezhda Popova in *Argumenty nedeli*, translated in *JRL*, Oct. 9, 2008.
7. *JRL*, Feb. 9, 2006. An independent Russian analyst characterized Putin as the “cement” of the political system (Mikhail Rostovskii in *MK*, Aug. 14, 2006).

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8. Peter Reddaway in *Newsweek International*, March 14, 2005. As a result of the 2008 financial crisis, according to a Russian publication, “All talk of Russia as an island of stability has dried up” (Roland Oliphant in *JRL*, Oct. 28, 2008). For the anomalous political system, economy, and property rights more generally, see Stefan Hedlund in *PPC* (July/Aug. 2008): 29–41.
9. See, respectively, the reports by Thom Shanker in *NYT*, Oct. 22, 2008; by AP in *WP*, May 9, 2008; two resolutions by the U.S. House of Representatives in *JRL*, April 2, 2008; the 2008 film *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*; the subtitle of Steve LeVine, *Putin’s Labyrinth: Spies, Murder, and the Dark Heart of the New Russia* (New York, 2008) (similarly, Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin’s Russia and the Threat to the West* [New York, 2008]); views cited in OSC report in *JRL*, May 8, 2008; Masha Gessen in *Vanity Fair* (Oct. 2008): 336–38, 380–86; and Alan Cowell in *IHT*, Aug. 1, 2008. For Churchill’s aphorism, see also Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, 76–77. There was a torrent of such examples on the Russian side, one being the 2008 film *Strangers*. See Ezekiel Pfeifer in *St. Petersburg Times*, Nov. 18, 2008.
10. See, respectively, *WSJ* editorial, June 2, 2008; Jim Hoagland in *WP*, Dec. 2, 2004; *WP*, editorials, March 21, 2006, and Dec. 22, 2004; *WP*, editorials, March 21, 2006, and Dec. 2, 2004; Eric Lipton in *NYT*, Aug. 20, 2008, congressional testimony of Strobe Talbott in *JRL*, Nov. 1, 2007; and *NYT* editorial, Dec. 30, 2007. Similarly, see Council on Foreign Relations, *Russia’s Wrong Direction* (New York, 2006); Fred Hiatt in *WP*, Aug. 18, 2008; Cathy Young in *WS*, Sept. 1, 2008; Steven Lee Myers and Thom Shanker in *NYT*, Aug. 15, 2008; Ronald D. Asmus and Richard Holbrooke in *WP*, Aug. 11, 2008; Stephen Sestanovich in *FA* (Nov./Dec. 2008): 12–28; Alexander Vershbow in *JRL*, Oct. 28, 2008; Leon Aron, “Putin’s Cold War,” *WSJ*, Dec. 26, 2007; Jackson Diehl in *WP*, June 19, 2006; William Kristol in *NYT*, Aug. 11, 2008; LeVine, *Putin’s Labyrinth*; Lucas, *The New Cold War*; and Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss in *FA* (Jan./Feb. 2008): 68–84.
11. See, e.g., Simon Sebag Montefiore in *NYT*, Aug. 24, 2008; Leon Aron in *USA Today*, Aug. 12, 2008; Stephen Kotkin on “a Soviet hangover” in *FT*, March 6, 2004; and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates quoted by Thom Shanker in *NYT*, Sept. 20, 2008.
12. Rice, address at the German Marshall Fund, Sept. 18, 2008, Dept. of State Web site. Another senior Bush administration official also emphasized, “It’s been their responsibility, not ours” (quoted by Paul Richter in *LAT*, Jan. 29, 2008). Similarly, see Stephen Blank in *JRL*, Nov. 30, 2007; and sources in this chapter, nn. 10 and 51.
13. James Traub in *NYT*, Aug. 10, 2008; and Anatol Lieven in *LAT*, March 19, 2006. (Similarly, see Michael O’Hanlon in *Washington Times*, Dec. 2, 2008,

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- who while critical of U.S. policy concludes that “cynical and ruthless Russian politicians are the primary problem.”) Traub excluded two people from the right-minded consensus as “naive,” me and Henry Kissinger. For other Americans who do not adhere to it, at least not fully, see Anthony T. Salvia in *JRL*; Nov. 30, 2007, and March 31, 2008; Jack F. Matlock Jr., *Reagan and Gorbachev* (New York, 2004); Dmitry K. Simes in *FA* (Nov.–Dec. 2007): 36–52; Ronald Steel in *NYT*, Aug. 24, 2008; David Bromwich, huffingtonpost.com, Sept. 24, 2008; Gordon M. Hahn in *JRL*, Aug. 25, 2008; Ted Galen Carpenter in *JRL*, July 30, 2008; Robert V. Daniels in *JRL*, June 24, 2008; *BG* editorial, July 20, 2008; and Patrick Buchanan, worldnetdaily.com, Feb. 4, 2004, Dec. 29, 2004, Nov. 30, 2005, and May 9, 2006; Buchanan, creators.com, Nov. 30, 2007; and Buchanan in *American Conservative*, June 4, 2007.
14. See, e.g., the sections on Russia and Yeltsin in Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York, 2004); Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand* (New York, 2002), and his congressional testimony in *JRL*, Nov. 1, 2007; Derek Challet and James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars* (New York, 2008), and Goldgeier’s interview with Bernard Gwertzman in *JRL*, July 9, 2006; Robert D. Asmus in *NR*, Aug. 12, 2008, and in *WP*, Dec. 13, 2008, and with Holbrooke in *WP*, Aug. 11, 2008; Vershbow in *JRL*, Oct. 28, 2008; Derek Shearer, huffingtonpost.com, Aug. 20, 2008; Jeremy D. Rossner’s letter in *NYT*, Aug. 24, 2008; and Madeleine Albright in *JRL*, Dec. 15, 2008. For a somewhat different but equally critical analysis of the Clinton Russia policy, see Michael Mandelbaum, “America, Russia, and Europe,” in *JRL*, Oct. 24, 2008.
 15. Sen. Joseph Lieberman quoted in AP dispatch, *JRL*, Aug. 21, 2008; *NYT* editorial, Aug. 12, 2008; and, similarly, *WP* editorial, March 8, 2008.
 16. Quoted by Peter Finn in *WP*, July 16, 2008; and by Ellen Barry in *NYT*, Sept. 20, 2008. Similarly, see Medvedev’s remarks at the Valdai meeting, kremlin.ru, Sept. 12, 2008.
 17. Secretary of Defense Gates, speech in England, Sept. 19, 2008, DOD Web site. And, similarly, Secretary of State Rice, address at the German Marshall Fund, Sept. 18, 2008, Dept. of State Web site; and in *JRL*, May 4, 2006.
 18. Holbrooke in *WP*, Dec. 14, 2004; and, similarly, *NYT* editorial, March 8, 2008. Holbrooke soon claimed Georgia, too, as a vital U.S. interest (*WP*, Nov. 27, 2006).
 19. Anders Aslund in *WS*, Jan. 17, 2005, 17–18; and, similarly, the lessons suggested by Michael McFaul in the concluding chapter of Aslund and McFaul, eds., *Revolution in Orange* (Washington, D.C., 2006). For the name-calling, see, respectively, Jackson Diehl in *WP*, Jan. 31, 2005; George F. Will in *WP*, Dec. 14, 2003; and Homan W. Jenkins Jr. in *WSJ*, Jan. 5, 2005. See also sources in this chapter, n. 50.

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20. Council on Foreign Relations, *Russia's Wrong Direction*. Similarly, the Washington Russia specialist Celeste Wallander declared that the Russian political system as a whole “lacks any legitimacy” (*JRL*, Dec. 3, 2006).
21. Vice President Dick Cheney quoted by AP in *WP*, Sept. 7, 2008.
22. For examples, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, part 1 and pp. 124–35.
23. See the AP report by Desmond Butler in *Moscow News*, Oct. 5–11, 2007; and Joseph Cirincione, *theglobalist.com*, Oct. 24, 2007.
24. See the exchange between Clinton and Yeltsin at a joint press conference, in *WP*, April 5, 1993; and Samuel R. Berger in *WP*, Nov. 15, 2001. For more on Yeltsin as the “personification of Russian reform,” see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, especially part 1. Perceptive Russians understood that the Clinton administration had “a strategy of indirect actions” (Viacheslav Dashichev in *SM*, no. 1 [2008]: 152).
25. See the following note. Pending access to archive documents, at least three factors seem to have played a role: Yeltsin’s psychological need for Western, particularly American approval (and perhaps protection) in the face of growing Russian resentment over his abolition of the Soviet state and subsequent policies; the Kremlin’s need for Western loans, largely controlled by Washington; and Yeltsin’s abiding desire to replace Gorbachev in the West’s esteem. (Later, some Russian analysts believed that the financial corruption of people around Yeltsin, and their accounts abroad, played an even larger role.)
26. Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, 201, 363, and other similarly revealing passages in the book; and Richard Holbrooke quoted by William Finnegan in *NY*, Oct. 15, 2007, online. Even a Yeltsin insider and beneficiary of U.S. policy understood that the Russian president was “perceived as a puppet of the West, his policies dictated by the U.S.” (Alfred Kokh in *CSM*, Oct. 15, 2008).
27. James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose* (Washington, D.C., 2003), 4 and, similarly, 59–60. For the administration’s Caspian oil pursuit, see Michael T. Klare, *tomdispatch.com*, Sept. 2, 2008. Years later, Clinton’s secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, reiterated the administration’s operational view in the 1990s: “We won the Cold War. They lost the Cold War” (*JRL*, Dec. 15, 2008).
28. See Secretary of State James Baker’s pledge to Gorbachev, quoted in Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 182; and, similarly, Stephen F. Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Reunification* (New York, 1992), 61–65.
29. For the American denials, see, respectively, Michael Beschloss in *NYT Book Review*, Jan. 15, 2006, 9; Rice in *JRL*, Jan. 24, 2008; and both Stephen Kotkin in *NR*, May 29, 2006, 36, and Tom Nichols in *Toronto Star*, May 11,

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2006. Similarly, see Rose Gottemoeller in *NYT*, May 4, 2007. For the Russian view, beginning with Putin, see *nytimes.com*, Oct. 6, 2003; Iulii Kvitskinskii in *SR*, Jan. 26, 2006; and *Izvestiia* headline, Jan. 10, 2006. On being deceived, see also the Duma debate quoted by Guy Faulconbridge, Reuters dispatch, Nov. 7, 2007; and Dmitrii Rogozin in *LG*, Aug. 27–Sept. 2, 2008. On Russian views of the new cold war, see also Sergei Karaganov in *RG*, Aug. 29, 2008; Sergei Rogov in *JRL*, Oct. 6, 2008; Aleksei Pushkov in *LG*, June 11–17, 2008; and Gen. Leonid Shebarshin in *LG*, March 28–April 3, 2007. For broken promises, see also President Dmitri Medvedev at the Valdai meeting, *kremlin.ru*, Sept. 12, 2008.
30. Anthony T. Salvia in *JRL*, March 26, 2006.
 31. Speech in Sidney, March 16, 2006, State Dept. Web site.
 32. Quoted by Steven Lee Myers in *NYT*, May 5, 2006.
 33. Council on Foreign Relations, *Russia's Wrong Direction*.
 34. Keir Lieber and Daryl Press in *FA* (March/April 2006): 43.
 35. For a survey, see the Levada Center's findings in *JRL*, Sept. 25, 2008. A once exceedingly pro-American (and influential) policy intellectual remarked, "We don't trust anybody, especially the United States" (Sergei Karaganov quoted by Megan K. Stack in *LAT*, Aug. 25, 2008). Similarly, see Karaganov in *RG*, Aug. 29, 2008; Rogov in *JRL*, Oct. 6, 2008; and Masha Lipman in *WP*, Oct. 4, 2008, who reports: "The United States no longer has a sympathetic constituency in Russia." On the absence of anti-Americanism during the Cold War, see also Alexei Arbatov, quoted by Alan Cullison and Jeanne Whalen in *WSJ*, April 1, 2003.
 36. See, e.g., V. Iu. Surkov, *Osnovnye tendentsii i perspektivy razvitiia sovremennoi Rossii* (Moscow, 2007).
 37. *Kommersant*, May 5, 2006, quoted by Oliver Bullough, Reuters dispatch, May 5, 2006.
 38. Evgenii Primakov in *AF*, Dec. 21, 2005; Surkov in *CDPSP*, Oct. 27, 2004, 2–3; Solzhenitsyn in *MN*, April 28, 2006. Similarly, see Aleksandr Dugin in *LG*, Dec. 5–11, 2007; Maksim Lavrentev in *LG*, March 12–18, 2008; and Generals Nikolai Makarov and Leonid Ivashov in *Izvestiia*, Dec. 17, 2008.
 39. Even before the war, Russian generals, protesting overflights by NATO aircraft from neighboring bases, were warning: "If they violate our border, they should be shot down" (*RFE/RL*, March 30, 2004).
 40. See Michael Wines and Celestine Bohlen in *NYT*, Feb. 20, April 2, and May 8, 2000; and Thomas M. Nichols in *WPJ* (Winter 2002/2003): 13–22. As late as 2004, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell commended Putin for having "moved in a democratic way" (*USA Today* interview, Oct. 18, 2004).
 41. A point made by Stephen Kotkin in *Prospect Magazine*, reprinted in *JRL*, March 26, 2008; and, similarly, by Anna Matveeva in *The Guardian*, Dec. 13,

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2008. On Putin, see Leon Aron in *NR*, Nov. 5, 2007, 42; and, similarly, William Grimes's review (*NYT*, July 1, 2005) of Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, *Kremlin Rising* (New York, 2005), which created the impression of a "fish-eyed, simple-minded man . . . a thorough-going mediocrity."
42. See, respectively, Bruce P. Jackson and Jim Hoagland in *WP*, Oct. 28, 2003, and Dec. 22, 2004; Jackson Diehl in *WP*, Oct. 28, 2003; and Nicholas Kristof in *NYT*, Dec. 15, 2004. Similarly, see *Economist* editorial, Aug. 24–31, 2007, on how "the West tried to be a friend."
 43. As reported by Radio Ekho Moskvyy, in *JRL*, Dec. 16, 2002. For an itemization of perceived broken promises, see Viktor Baranets in *KP*, Feb. 15, 2007.
 44. Putin speech at Munich and Medvedev's state of the nation address, kremlin.ru, Feb. 10, 2007, and *JRL*, Nov. 6, 2008. An *Izvestiia* headline on Oct. 9, 2008, described Medvedev's address as "his own 'Munich Speech.'" At a press conference following his speech, Putin himself foresaw the accusation of a "Second Cold War" (kremlin.ru, Feb. 10, 2007). For examples, see Brian Whitmore in *RFE/RL*, Dec. 26, 2007; and Anne Penketh in *The Independent* (UK), Aug. 26, 2007, who reports that the "new Cold War" had its "origins" in the speech. The Russian newspaper *Kommersant*, on the other hand, announced that "a second cold war" had begun with a speech by Vice President Cheney in Vilnius almost a year earlier (*CDPSP*, May 31 and June 7, 2006, 1). For Russia's "sovereignization of foreign policy," see Dmitrii Bulin in *PK*, no. 27 (2007), online.
 45. Vagif Guseinov in *VA*, no. 3 (2007): 7. And, similarly, Sergei Karaganov in *RG*, March 24, 2006; and Vladimir Orlov in *JRL*, Dec. 11, 2008.
 46. According to a report, Bush's National Security Council was contemptuous of arms control as "baggage from the Cold War" (Dafna Linzer in *WP*, March 12, 2006).
 47. A leading example was the Washington-based American Committee on East-West Accord, whose members included top corporate executives, retired military officers and other government officials, prominent policy intellectuals such as George F. Kennan and John Kenneth Galbraith, and independent scientists. (I, too, was a member.) Its purpose was to improve U.S.-Soviet relations by persuading political leaders, the media, and public opinion to support such policies. See, e.g., its publication *Détente or De-bacle: Common Sense in U.S.-Soviet Relations* (New York, 1979).
 48. Among the Reaganites were disparate figures such as Patrick J. Buchanan, Reagan's ambassador to Moscow Jack Matlock; his personal friend and advisor on Russia, Suzanne Massie; and a younger former appointee, Anthony Salvia. For Buchanan, see *worldnetdaily.com*, Feb. 4, 2004, Dec. 29, 2004, Nov. 30, 2005, and May 9, 2006; *creators.com*, Nov. 30, 2007; and

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- American Conservative*, June 4, 2007; for Matlock, see *Reagan and Gorbachev*; for Massie, see *JRL*, Dec. 22, 2008; for Salvia, see *JRL*, Nov. 30, 2007; and for Gorbachev, *JRL*, June 4, 2006.
49. For the crusading media of the 1990s, see Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, esp. part 1; and for the post-2000 period, my articles “American Journalism and Russia’s Tragedy” and “The Media’s New Cold War” in *The Nation*, Oct. 2, 2000, and Jan. 31, 2005. For an example of the monopoly, see the writers used to comment on the fifteenth anniversary of the Soviet breakup (Peter Baker, Leon Aron, Michael McFaul, and Stephen Sestanovich) in *WP*, Dec. 24, 2006; and for a similar pattern on “public” radio, see the NPR broadcast featuring Yeltsin-era “reformers” in *JRL*, March 7 and 9, 2007. For the historian, see Robert V. Daniels, *Russia’s Transformation* (Lanham, Md., 1998), 193.
 50. Kristof in *NYT*, Dec. 15, 2004; Thomas Oliphant in *BG*, Dec. 21, 2004. On “fascist,” see also Will in *WP*, Dec. 14, 2003; Leon Wieseltier in *NR*, Feb. 27, 2008, 48; Richard Pipes’s letter in *FT*, July 22, 2008; and *WP*, editorial, Sept. 2, 2008; Cathy Young in *NR*, Feb. 27, 2008, 48; Zbigniew Brzezinski, huffingtonpost.com, Aug. 8, 2008; and Paul Johnson in *Forbes*, Oct. 13, 2008. Regarding deaths, I have in mind, of course, those of Anna Politkovskaya and Aleksandr Litvinenko.
 51. See, respectively, Bret Stephens in *WSJ*, Nov. 28, 2006; Anne Applebaum in *WP*, Nov. 24, 2004; Ana Palacio and Daniel Twining in *WP*, March 11, 2006; and Elisabeth Bumiller in *NYT*, Dec. 2, 2004. For later examples of blaming Russia alone for the Georgian War, even after it was clear Georgia had initiated the fighting, see Asmus and Holbrooke in *WP*, Aug. 11, 2008; Fred Hiatt in *WP*, Aug. 18, 2008; and in this chapter, note 128.
 52. Daniel Johnson in *New York Sun*, March 21, 2006.
 53. Allen C. Lynch in *Great Decisions* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 2008), 51; and Putin cited by RIA Novosti, May 13, 2006.
 54. Mark Almond in *The Guardian*, Jan. 21, 2006; and similarly Anatole Kaletsky, an associate editor, in *The Times* (UK), June 7, 2007, who concluded, “It is not Russia but America and Europe that have restarted the Cold War.”
 55. David Remnick on National Public Radio, in *JRL*, Oct. 4, 2007; and for a report that it is a “commonly held” opinion among U.S. diplomats and scholars, Andrew C. Kuchins in *JRL*, Nov. 21, 2006.
 56. See, respectively, Stanislav Belkovskii in *Vedomosti*, June 26, 2006; Aleksandr Tsipko summarizing the charge by others, in *LG*, Jan. 24–30, 2007 (and, similarly, Aleksei Kiva in *LG*, Aug. 10, 2005); John Laughland in *The Spectator* (UK), Oct. 9, 2004, repeating the charge of “appeasement,” which I, too, heard in Moscow; and Vitalii Tretiakov explaining accusations of

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- betrayal made by others, in *MN*, March 22, 2006. Similarly, see Iu. Kotov in *SR*, April 10, 2004; and most of the items cited in this chapter, n. 58. See also Aleksandr Droban's demand for a "policy breaking completely with the time of Gorbachev and its legacy" (*LG*, Dec. 5–11, 2007). A reliable observer reported that top Russian military officers "will never forgive" Putin for "placating Bush" by allowing U.S. bases in Central Asia (Boris Kagarlitsky in *The Progressive* [March 2005], reprinted in *JRL*, March 3, 2005). That hostility seemed to be reflected in Aleksei Pilko's article in the military paper *KZ*, June 14, 2006, and in Gen. Leonid Ivashov's remarks in *KP*, May 1, 2006.
57. See, e.g., Sergei Karaganov in *RG*, June 30, 2006; Evgenii Kiselev on Radio Ekho Moskvy, in *JRL*, Nov. 10, 2008; and Matthew Bunn cited by Hubert Wetzel in *FT*, March 9, 2005. In 2006, Putin's modernization campaign took the form of four funded "national projects"—in health care, education, housing, and agriculture. Medvedev was appointed to oversee them.
 58. For "naive" and "illusions," see Alexander Pikayev quoted by Sharon FaFraniere in *WP*, March 7, 2003; and Gen. Leonid Ivashov, fednews.ru, March 23, 2006. For the quotes that follow, see, respectively, Valentin Falin in *JRL*, March 5, 2006 (and, similarly, Lavrentev in *LG*, March 12–18, 2008); Natalia Narochnitskaia in *Bolshaia politika*, no. 1–2 (2006): 53; and Aleksandr Dugin in *Izvestiia*, April 13, 2005. For permanent cold war against Russia, see also Aleksandr Zinoviev, *Gibel russkogo kommunizma* (Moscow, 2001); Shebarshin in *LG*, March 28–April 3, 2007; and Vladimir Savelev in *LG*, Dec. 26–31, 2007.
 59. Dmitrii Rogozin in *LG*, Aug. 27–Sept. 2, 2008; and Dugin in *Izvestiia*, April 13, 2005. On "deceits," see also Baranets in *KP*, Feb. 15, 2007.
 60. For "hard-line," see Pilko in *KZ*, June 14, 2006. For overviews of their thinking, see the analyses by Yury Fedorov and OSC in *JRL*, May 30, 2006, and May 8, 2008; and Andrei P. Tsygankov in *PPC* (March/April 2008): 49–52.
 61. See, respectively, Anatolii Utkin in *Rodnaia gazeta*, July 20, 2006; Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on the Cold War in *RG*, no. 45 (March 2006); Ivashov, fednews.ru, March 23, 2006; Aleksei Pushkov in *Trud*, May 13, 2005; KGB/FSB officer quoted in *Economist*, Aug. 24–31, 2007; and Pikayev quoted by Sharon FaFraniere in *WP*, March 7, 2003. Similarly, see Kiva in *LG*, Aug. 10, 2005.
 62. As noted by Aleksei Arbatov in *Gazeta*, April 12, 2007; and, similarly, by Karaganov in *RG*, March 24, 2006. Speaking of Cold War "inertia," Putin himself noted, "Both here and in the United states, there are still many people who are guided by outdated mentality" (interview with *NYT*, nytimes.com Oct. 6, 2003). The Russian ambassador to Washington em-

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- phasized the same point (Yuri Ushakov in *WP*, Oct. 8, 2003). Similarly, see President Bush quoted by Jim Ruttenberg and Andrew E. Kramer in *NYT*, July 16, 2006.
63. Vitalii Tretiakov in *Izvestiia*, Aug. 28, 2008 (and, similarly, Dmitri Trenin in *Newsweek*, Sept. 1, 2008); and Medvedev, kremlin.ru, Sept. 12, 2008. Elsewhere Medvedev explained, “Russia had no option” (*FT*, Dec. 16, 2008), and “this was the only course of action we could take” (kremlin.ru, Dec. 24, 2008).
 64. See, respectively, the obviously official statement by Andrei Feyashin, RIA Novosti, in *JRL*, Nov. 10, 2008; Dmitri Rogozin quoted by Clifford J. Levy in *NYT*, Aug. 28, 2008; and kremlin.com, Feb. 8, 2008. Similarly, see Putin, “National security is not based on promises” (quoted by Helene Cooper in *NYT*, Aug. 18, 2008), and “We didn’t start this” (quoted in *RFE/RL*, Feb. 13, 2008); Medvedev, “We are not the ones. . . . It’s NATO” (quoted by Ellen Barry in *NYT*, Sept. 3, 2008), and “This was not our fault” (kremlin.ru, November 18, 2008); and Viktor Kremeniuk, “The West must be the first to make concessions” (*JRL*, Sept. 5, 2008). For Russia having “had enough” of U.S. behavior toward it, see also Andrei Stoliarov in *LG*, Nov. 19–25, 2008.
 65. Alexei Arbatov in “Behind the Headlines” supplement to *WP*, Sept. 24, 2008. The expression “eye-for-an-eye” is attributed disapprovingly to Arbatov and others by Lilia Shevtsova, opendemocracy.net, Nov. 3, 2008, in *JRL*, Nov. 17, 2008.
 66. Masha Lipman in *WP*, Oct. 4, 2008, who previously blamed bad relations on the “unpardonable consequences of Russia’s geopolitical aspirations” (*WP*, Jan. 30, 2006). For a profoundly embittered Russian policy intellectual who had vested his career in such a partnership and whose feeling of having been betrayed by his American colleagues was evident, see Karaganov in *RG*, March 24, 2006.
 67. See, e.g., Vladislav Surkov in *Ekspert*, Nov. 20, 2006, 108, and in *JRL*, June 28, 2006; Sergei Samuilov in *SM*, no. 3 (2006): 42–43; and Aleksandr Tsipko in Karl Aimermakher et al., eds., *Preodolenie proshlogo i novye orientiry ego pereosmysleniia* (Moscow, 2002), 90.
 68. Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*, 59; Sarah E. Mendelson and Theodore P. Gerber in *FA* (Jan./Feb. 2006): 2–8; Katherine E. Graney in *JRL*, Dec. 12, 2008; and *WP* editorial, Feb. 27, 2008.
 69. Putin interview with *Time* magazine, kremlin.ru, Dec. 19, 2007. Putin added, “This is the main problem in our relations,” though by 2008 he would not have cited it as the “main” one.
 70. Mark Katz in *MT*, Jan. 26, 2004; Anne Applebaum in *WP*, April 19, 2003; *WP* editorial, March 2, 2008.

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71. Vladimir Socor in *WSJ*, Sept. 19, 2003; Catherine Belton in *MT*, May 19, 2006 (and, similarly, Michael McFaul in *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 21, 2005); and Jim Hoagland in *WP*, May 21, 2006. Similarly, see Stephen Sestanovich's congressional testimony in *JRL*, March 18, 2004; Richard Holbrooke in *WP*, Feb. 16, 2005; and Gregory Feifer on National Public Radio, in *JRL*, March 6, 2007.
72. Stephens in *WSJ*, Nov. 28, 2006; Sestanovich in *JRL*, March 18, 2004; and Council on Foreign Relations, *Russia's Wrong Direction*.
73. For the original, see the senior Bush official quoted by Thorn Shanker in *NYT*, Nov. 12, 2008, which is only one of dozens of examples.
74. Vladimir Socor in *WSJ*, Jan. 10, 2003; Charles Krauthammer in *WP*, Dec. 3, 2004; Mark Brzezinski and Mark Lenzi in *BG*, Sept. 14, 2003.
75. For an example of the widespread view that an actual "U.S.-Russian alliance" was in the making, see Robert Legvold in Gvosdev, ed., *Russia*, 63–76; and, similarly, Anatol Lieven in *International Affairs* (Moscow) (Oct. 2007): 24.
76. Stanislav Kondrashov in *VN*, Jan. 19, 2002; Medvedev, kremlin.ru, Oct. 8, 2008. Similarly, see Aleksei Pushkov in *NG*, March 21, 2003; Pavel Felgenhauer in *MT*, Sept. 11, 2003; Fyodor Lukyanov in *MT*, Sept. 12, 2006; and Kokh in *CSM*, Oct. 15, 2008. Still worse, some Washington insiders blamed the Kremlin for the disappointed expectations. See Angela E. Stent quoted by Peter Baker in *WP*, Oct. 5, 2007.
77. Katz in *MT*, Jan. 26, 2004. Similarly, see President Bush and a State Department official quoted on Russia's "isolation" by Steven Lee Myers in *NYT*, Aug. 16 and 19, 2008; Bush's assertion that Russia's actions in Georgia could exclude it from "the diplomatic, political, economic and security structures of the 21st century" (quoted by Myers in *NYT*, Aug. 14, 2008); and Stephen Kotkin's assertion, "The only true friend Russia has is U.S. foreign policy" (fpri.org, March 6, 2007).
78. As I argued nearly a decade ago in *Failed Crusade*, 217–18.
79. Dmitri Trenin in *FA* (July/Aug. 2006): 92; and Medvedev quoted by Michael Abramowitz in *WP*, Nov. 16, 2008.
80. For a similar argument, see George Friedman in *NYRB*, Sept. 25, 2008, 24–26.
81. Thomas L. Friedman in *NYT*, May 10, 2006.
82. *RFE/RL*, April 20, 2006. Similarly, see the negotiations between Russia and China reported by Andrew E. Kramer in *NYT*, Oct. 9, 2008.
83. Dmitry K. Simes, nationalinterest.org, Oct. 30, 2008.
84. George Friedman quoted in *Deutsche Welle*, Feb. 15, 2006.
85. Putin quoted by Jim Rutenberg and Andrew E. Kramer in *NYT*, July 16, 2006. For a similar point, see Padma Desai in *WSJ*, Feb. 16, 2007. For Mos-

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- cow's complex interests in the Muslim world, see Jacques Lévesque in *Le Monde diplomatique* (Dec. 2008).
86. An Azeri quoted by Sabrina Tavernise in *NYT*, Oct. 23, 2008.
 87. Garry Kasparov quoted by David Remnick in *NY*, Oct. 1, 2007, 77. Some journalists are so passionately anti-Kremlin they seem to hope the nuclear state “implodes” (Edward Lucas in *JRL*, May 8, 2006).
 88. For the argument that inadequate U.S. support was the primary cause of democracy promotion's failures, see Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*, 347–54.
 89. See, for example, the accounts of Vice President Cheney's attack in Lithuania on the Kremlin in 2006 and subsequent trip to Kazakhstan, and the Russian reaction, as reported by Steven Lee Myers, Ilan Greenburg, and Andrew E. Kramer in *NYT*, May 5 and May 6, 2006; and in *CDPSP*, May 31 and June 7, 2006, 1–4. Similarly, his appearance in Baku in 2008 with two Western oil executives, reported by Myers in *NYT*, Sept. 4, 2008.
 90. Even if this is not the case, leading Western journalists and specialists still think Russian oligarchs are “the most progressive force with any remaining power” and “our best bet” for “Russia's eventual return to a more democratic path” (Chrystia Freeland in *FT*, Aug. 22, 2008); similarly, see Anders Aslund in *JRL*, May 12, 2008. For examples of the continuing Russian memory of the U.S. role in “privatization” and in the destruction of the parliament, see Denis Novikov in *SM*, no. 8 (2007): 23; Igor Mikhailov in Tolstykh, ed., *Perestroika*, 145; and Iurii Boldyrev in *LG*, Oct. 8–14, 2008.
 91. Rodric Braithwaite in *FT*, March 12, 2008. If so, Americans are merely echoing the contempt many Russian liberals have for their own people, as I pointed out earlier.
 92. See, respectively, David Satter in *WS*, Nov. 13, 2006, 8; *Economist*, May 6, 2006, 1; Thomas L. Friedman in *NYT*, May 10, 2006; DeVine, *Putin's Labyrinth*, 10; Allan Sloan in *WP*, May 2, 2006; and again DeVine, *Putin's Labyrinth*, 10, whose book is replete with such views. Similarly, see Olga Carlisle quoted by Michael T. Kaufman in *NYT*, Aug. 4, 2008; Lucas in *JRL*, May 8, 2006, who thinks post-Soviet “Russian imperialism has become a lot more sinister”; and Dinitia Smith in *NYT*, Dec. 18, 2008, who warns even more gravely that “Russian civilization is but a fragile surface beneath which brew shadows and ineluctable forces of history, ready to erupt at any moment and bring with them chaos.”
 93. For “de-sovereignization,” nuclear weapons, and energy, see Vitalii Ivanov and Konstantin Simonov in *NG*, April 28, 2006 (and, similarly, Vladislav Surkov in *CDPSP*, Oct. 27, 2004, 1–3); Pilko in *KZ*, June 14, 2006; and Valentin Falin and Gennadii Evstafev in *MN*, Sept. 25, 2006. For energy, see also Andrei Lebedev in *JRL*, May 12, 2006; Dmtirii Orlov in *Izvestiia*, July 17,

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- 2006; and Andrei Efremov in *LG*, June 20–26, 2007. For nuclear weapons, see also Dugin in *CDPSP*, May 18, 2005, 1–4; and FBIS analysis in *JRL*, June 22, 2005. For the Cold War, see Sergei Roy in *JRL*, April 21, 2006; and sources in this chapter, n. 58.
94. Interview with the *Dallas Morning News*, Nov. 9, 2007, in *JRL*, Nov. 12, 2007. For the quotations, see Francis Fukuyama in *The National Interest* (Summer 1989): 3; and John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War* (New York, 2008), xi.
 95. Michael Gerson in *WP*, Sept. 19, 2008. For “declinism,” see, e.g., Robert D. Kaplan in *WP*, Dec. 17, 2008.
 96. George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy* (New York, 1952), 112. The article quoted here first appeared in *FA* (April 1951). Though Kennan’s advice was forgotten, as usual, it was recalled many years later by the former British ambassador to Moscow, Rodric Braithwaite, in *FT*, March 12, 2008. During my years teaching at Princeton, I sometimes discussed this issue with Kennan, usually in the company of Professor Robert C. Tucker, who had served with Kennan when he was ambassador to Moscow. Both men still adhered strongly to Kennan’s principle.
 97. Liliia Shevtsova in *Novaia*, Oct. 20–22, 2008. Shevtsova thinks this support is a reason for more intrusive U.S. democracy promotion (see opendemocracy.net, Nov. 3, 2008, in *JRL*, Nov. 17, 2008), but I think it is a reason not to discredit or otherwise burden would-be Russian democratizers with American interventions. Another Russia analyst disagrees with Shevtsova, arguing that if international conditions enable Russia to develop middle-class capitalism, it will evolve into a democratic system on its own. See Dmitri V. Trenin, *Getting Russia Right* (Washington, D.C., 2007). For an example of how cold-war tensions harm Russian democrats and abet their opponents, see Radio Ekho Moskvyy in the aftermath of the Georgian War, reported by Philip P. Pan in *WP*, Sept. 15, 2008.
 98. Tsipko in Aimermakher et al., eds., *Preodolenie proshlogo*.
 99. Arbatov in *WP*, Sept. 24, 2008.
 100. The U.S. press widely interpreted Medvedev as having demanded for Russia, on August 31, 2008, a “sphere of influence.” In fact, he spoke of “regions in which Russia has privileged interests,” and earlier, on August 29, a “sphere of strategic interests.” On this important matter, see Peter Rutland in *MT*, Oct. 14, 2008.
 101. Condoleezza Rice quoted by William Branigin in *WP*, Sept. 19, 2008; and Anatoly Utkin in *Profil*, no. 33 (2008), as translated in *JRL*. Utkin is the author of the best Russian biography of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.
 102. Shevtsova (opendemocracy.net, Nov. 3, 2008, in *JRL*, Nov. 17, 2008) attributing the view disapprovingly to Moscow foreign-policy specialists.

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103. William Safire in *NYT*, Feb. 9, 2004; and Socor in *WSJ*, Jan. 10, 2003.
104. *NYT*, Feb. 5, 1997. According to a leading American historian, “Kennan did not always get it right. . . . He warned of a new cold war [as a result of NATO expansion]. But his fears proved unfounded” (Douglas Brinkley in *NYT*, February 17, 2004).
105. Quoted by Peter Baker in *WP*, April 5, 2008.
106. Nikolai Patrushev, head of the FSB, in *Izvestiia*, Oct. 2, 2008; and Putin in *CDPSP*, March 4, 2008, 1. For assurances that NATO enlargement “expands peace and security,” see Asmus in *WP*, Dec. 13, 2008; and Daniel Fried in *NYRB*, Oct. 23, 2008, 80.
107. Vitalii Tretiakov, an editor and policy intellectual with ties to the Kremlin, in *Izvestiia*, Sept. 11, 2008. Putin used the term “red lines,” it seems, in a conversation with Bush about Georgia. See Helene Cooper in *NYT*, Aug. 18, 2008.
108. Sergei Karaganov quoted by Megan R. Stack in *LAT*, Aug. 25, 2008.
109. Natalia Narochnitskaya quoted by Peter Finn in *WP*, April 3, 2006. A U.S. nongovernmental research institution agrees: “Ukraine is critical to the long-term defense and survival of the Russian state” (Peter Zeihan, stratfor.com, Jan. 4, 2006).
110. Dmitri Trenin in *Newsweek*, Sept. 1, 2008; and also see the other sources cited in this chapter, n. 63.
111. *WP* editorial, March 26, 2006; Holbrooke in *WP*, Dec. 14, 2004; Krauthammer in *WP*, Dec. 3, 2004.
112. For the warning, see President Medvedev quoted in *Moscow News*, June 11–19, 2008. Similarly, see Vyacheslav Nikonov in *Der Spiegel*, Oct. 16, 2008; Liliia Shevtsova in *NG*, Dec. 16, 2005. In Moscow, sources close to high-level security officials told me that “some people would consider it a declaration of war.” For an echo of those discussions, see Karaganov quoted by Stack in *LAT*, Aug. 25, 2008, who says “it will be seen as an act of belligerence.”
113. A Russian close to the Kremlin said “a non-aligned Ukraine is preferable for us” (Nikonov in *Der Spiegel*, Oct. 16, 2008). The Finland model was proposed in *SM*, no. 9 (2008): 59. Robert V. Daniels recommends “Finlandization,” though perhaps only for Georgia (*The New Leader* [Sept./Oct. 2008]: 11); and, also for Georgia, a British academic cites Austria’s neutrality after World War II (Mark Almond in *JRL*, Nov. 17, 2008). In a survey in Moldova, another divided former Soviet republic, 55 percent favored neutrality, though about the same percent chose Russia as a “strategic partner” (*JRL*, Oct. 30, 2008, and, similarly, *JRL*, Dec. 19, 2008).
114. David Holley and Kim Murphy in *LAT*, June 3 and 8, 2006. Television footage of the protests is even more compelling.

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115. See this volume, chap. 6, n. 73.
116. Condoleezza Rice interviewed in *NYT Magazine*, Nov. 16, 2008, 47; *NYT* editorial, Aug. 27, 2008. For similar Russian comments about the infrastructure even earlier, see Vladislav Surkov in *JRL*, March 12, 2006; and Oleg Liakhovich in *Moscow News*, March 31–April 6, 2006. Russia’s early-warning system became impaired in the 1990s, and, according to Russian authorities themselves, this was still the case a decade later. See Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, 270–71; Gen. Yury Baluyevsky cited by Leon Aron in *WSJ*, Dec. 26, 2007; and Anatoliy Baranov in *JRL*, Jan. 29, 2008. Similarly, most reported cases of black-market nuclear materials in 2008 still involved components stolen from facilities in Russia and other former Soviet territories.
117. See, respectively, Roland Oliphant in *JRL*, Oct. 28, 2008; Stephen Kotkin’s assertion about the middle class and society, *fpri.org*, March 6, 2007; and Putin quoted by Clifford J. Levy in *NYT*, Nov. 21, 2008. Two years earlier, Boris Kagarlitsky warned that “oil prosperity maintains the illusion of stability” (*JRL*, April 12, 2006).
118. Richard Lourie in *MT*, Nov. 24, 2008; and Boris Orlov in *Izvestiia*, May 25, 2006.
119. CIA director George Tenet quoted by Susan Ellis in a USIA release, *JRL*, Feb. 3, 2000. Similarly, see FBI director Louis J. Freeh quoted by Douglas Farah in *WP*, Oct. 2, 1997; and Robert E. Rubin’s warning, “If Russia destabilizes, the costs to the United States are going to be vastly greater than anything we can possibly think of” (quoted in Reuters dispatch, *JRL*, March 19, 1999).
120. See Vagif Guseinov, cited this chapter, n. 45; and Sergei Lavrov quoted by Aleksandr Golts in *JRL*, June 27, 2008. For mistrust, see Sergei Karagonov in *RG*, Dec. 24, 2008.
121. See Secretary of Defense Gates, speech in England, Sept. 19, 2008, DOD Web site; and the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson quoted by Steven Lee Myers in *NYT*, Sept. 24, 2008. Similarly, see Medvedev on Washington’s need to “make a choice,” quoted in *WP* editorial, Nov. 6, 2008; and Foreign Minister Lavrov’s warning, “The U.S. will have to choose between its virtual Georgia project and its much broader partnership with Russia” (*WSJ*, Aug. 20, 2008).
122. On “missile madness,” Jane M. O. Sharp, *theworldtoday.org*, Dec. 2007; and on events having “turned even [U.S.] doves into hawks,” see the Bush official quoted by Helene Cooper in *NYT*, Aug. 19, 2008.
123. Alexei Arbatov, *opendemocracy.net*, Oct. 15, 2008. Similarly, see Aleksei Bogaturov and Aleksei Fenenko in *SM*, no. 11 (2008): 8.
124. I plagiarize myself here, having cited Hegel in the same connection in *Failed Crusade*, 276–77.

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125. See, respectively, Karl Schwarzenberg cited by Helene Cooper in *NYT*, Aug. 20, 2008; Dmitry Trenin in *JRL*, Oct. 6, 2008; and John R. Bolton in *WP*, Oct. 20, 2008. Similarly, and puzzlingly, see Dimitry K. Simes, nationalinterest.org, Oct. 30, 2008, who nonetheless warns of cold-war-like realities.
126. See, respectively, Alexander J. Motyl, a Rutgers University professor, in *Kyiv Post*, Jan. 17, 2008 (and, similarly, Lucas in *JRL*, May 8, 2006); Rice interviewed in *NYT Magazine*, Nov. 16, 2008 (and, similarly, Leon Aron's indifference to a possible Russian accidental nuclear attack in *WSJ*, Dec. 26, 2007); Judy Dempsey's report on Lithuania in *NYT*, June 19, 2008; and Jim Hoagland on Finland in *WP*, Sept. 14, 2008 (and similarly Asmus and Holbrooke in *WP*, Aug. 11, 2008).
127. Lee Hamilton in *Indianapolis Star*, June 19, 2006. For an exception, See Rep. Curt Weldon in *MT*, June 20, 2006, who lost his bid for reelection.
128. See Cathy Young on the *NYT* opinion page, Nov. 21, 2008; and Clifford J. Levy on the front page, Nov. 27, 2008. (Focusing on terror-era archives under Putin, Levy omitted the complexities I point out in chapter 2.) In a similar vein, see Svante E. Cornell in *NYT*, Aug. 12, 2008; and Fred Hiatt in *WP*, Aug. 18, 2008. Despite evidence to the contrary, the *Times* repeatedly accused the Kremlin of initiating the August 2008 war in Georgia. When the evidence could no longer be ignored, the paper finally published an article blaming Georgia's leaders (Nov. 7, 2008) but without expressly retracting its previous, influential coverage. For a fuller examination of the *Times's* coverage, see Mark Ames, thenation.com, Dec. 19, 2008; and on similar "editorial malpractice" by the *Washington Post*, Ames in *The Nation*, Dec. 29, 2008, 8–9.
129. Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee in *Tulsa World*, Aug. 24, 2008. For television, see, e.g., Tom Brokaw's assertions on NBC's *Meet the Press*, Nov. 30, 2008. CNN essentially permitted President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia to tell the story of the war.
130. See, e.g., Traub in *NYT*, Sept. 7, 2008; Sestanovich in *FA* (Nov./Dec. 2008): 12–28; Leon Aron, aci.org, Jan. 16, 2008; the statement by former U.S. and Russian ambassadors in *IHT*, Sept. 24, 2007 (and similarly the joint statement in *JRL*, Sept. 29, 2008). For partial or more substantial exceptions, see Simes, "Losing Russia"; Mandelbaum in *JRL*, Oct. 24, 2008; Mortimer Zuckerman in *US News and World Report*, Dec. 6, 2007; Henry Kissinger and George P. Shultz in *WP*, Oct. 8, 2008; and Kissinger in *WP*, July 8, 2008.
131. Lieven in *International Affairs* (Moscow) (Oct. 2007): 27–28.
132. For the quotes in the order they appear, see George Packer in *NY*, Dec. 20/27, 2004; Jackson Diehl in *WP*, June 19, 2006; Mendelson and Ger-

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- ber in *FA* (Jan./Feb. 2006): 3; Lieven in *International Affairs* (Moscow) (Oct. 2007): 27–28; *WP* editorial, March 28, 2006; and Anne Applebaum in *WP*, Dec. 1, 2004. (The latter charge was directed, I should acknowledge, at my wife, Katrina vanden Heuvel, editor of *The Nation*.) Similarly, see Michael McFaul in *WP*, Dec. 21, 2004; McFaul and Stoner-Weiss (on “Putin apologists”) in *FA* (May/June 2008): 163; Cathy Young in *Reason Magazine*, Oct. 24, 2008; the reply by Glenn Greenwald, *salon.com*, Oct. 25, 2008; and the attack on Mary Dejeveky by Cathy Fitzpatrick, *opendemocracy.net*, March 12, 2008. The most shameful example, however, was Fredo Arias-King’s suggestion that Strobe Talbott, a top Clinton adviser and appointee, may have made a “Faustian bargain” with the KGB (*National Review Online*, Dec. 8, 2008).
133. Traub in *NYT*, Aug. 10, 2008. Again, Traub included me among the “naive.”
 134. James Carroll in *BG*, Oct. 27, 2008.
 135. Quoted in Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, 185. Yeltsin’s heavy drinking and drunkenness appear frequently in this memoir.
 136. Unnamed official quoted by Thom Shanker and Steven Lee Myers in *NYT*, Oct. 13, 2007.
 137. For examples of this notion, see Council on Foreign Relations, *Russia’s Wrong Direction*; and Sestanovich in *FA* (Nov./Dec. 2008): 12–18.
 138. Two other examples: by 2009, no Americans were among the world’s top heavyweight boxers, a division the United States once dominated; and by 2010, the United States, lacking its own spacecraft will be completely dependent on Russian shuttles for transporting astronauts and cargo to and from the international space station. There are other examples in Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York, 2008), even though he persists in thinking of the United States as “a global superpower.”
 139. The expression is that of Yuri V. Ushakov, a former Russian ambassador to Washington, in *WSJ*, Feb. 13, 2006.
 140. Quoted by Andrew E. Kramer in *NYT*, Aug. 19, 2008.
 141. Soltan Dzarasov in Tostykh, ed., *Perestroika*, 44.
 142. Referring to her background in academic Soviet studies, Secretary of State Rice liked to say, when relations were growing worse, “I will tell you: Russia today is not the Soviet Union”; “It’s not the Soviet Union and that’s a good thing”; “This isn’t the Soviet Union”; and “We’ve come a long, long way from when there was a hammer and sickle above the Kremlin.” See *JRL*, Oct. 23, 2007, Feb. 3, 2005, May 10, 2006, and May 22, 2006. President Bush echoed her: “Nobody’s going to give up on Russia. We know it’s not the Soviet Union” (*JRL*, May 22, 2006). Historians and psychologists might reflect on the meaning of this refrain. Whatever the explanation, Rice often

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- seemed baffled by developments, having “a difficult time explaining,” for example, Putin’s landmark speech in Munich in 2007 or the emergence of “a different Russia than we expected.” See *JRL*, Feb. 18, 2007; and *Fox News Sunday* (TV), Dec. 7, 2008. For the record, her counterpart in the Clinton administration, Madeleine Albright, also a reputed expert on Russia, was “very surprised” by Medvedev’s threat to counter U.S. antimissile sites with deployment of Russian missiles (*JRL*, Nov. 17, 2008).
143. Anthony T. Salvia in *JRL*, April 28, 2006.
 144. Senator Barack Obama’s Web site, Nov. 1, 2005; Obama on *Meet the Press*, NBC TV, Dec. 7, 2007; and Obama’s Web site, Oct. 2, 2007.
 145. See John Edwards quoted in Bloomberg dispatch, March 8, 2006; Richard Holbrooke quoted by Steven R. Weisman in *NYT*, Sept. 12, 2004 (and, similarly, his article in *WP*, Feb. 16, 2005); and the pro-Democratic columnist E. J. Dione Jr. in *WP*, May 9, 2006.
 146. Michael McFaul, a Stanford University professor, who is cited in that connection frequently in this chapter and in chapter 6. In particular, McFaul was a fervent democracy promoter during the Yeltsin years and a bitter critic of Putin for having, he thought, betrayed its achievements.
 147. Biden reported and quoted by Stephanie Ho on Voice of America, Dec. 3, 2006; for his acceptance speech, see *NYT*, Aug. 27, 2008. Similarly, see his article in *WSJ*, March 24, 2008; and congressional statement in *JRL*, June 13, 2008.
 148. There were only a few. Though to no good purpose, it seems, I was perhaps the earliest and most persistent. See my *Failed Crusade*, which includes my warnings published since the early 1990s. For warnings of Russian testing and intimidation, see, e.g., the U.S. State Department official John Rood quoted by Reuters in *NYT*, Dec. 18, 2008; *WP*, editorial, Dec. 6, 2008; and, for “kowtowing” and “capitulation,” *WP*, editorials, Jan. 3 and March 4, 2009.
 149. President Medvedev quoted by Michael Abramowitz in *WP*, Nov. 16, 2008.