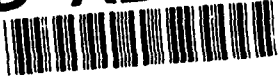


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**THE FUTURE OF RUSSIAN MILITARY:
Constraints, Trends, and Factors Affecting Stability and Instability**

by

Mr. James A. Melnick

3 March 1993

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THE FUTURE OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY: CONSTRAINTS,
TRENDS, AND FACTORS AFFECTING STABILITY AND INSTABILITY

by

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A. JAMES MELNICK

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, RI

March 1993

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ABSTRACT

In the post-Cold War world, Russia's new military in transition will be compelled by a number of factors to develop into a smaller, more professional, mostly volunteer force in which Russian nationalism will be an over-arching and unifying principle. This process will occur almost in spite of changes in the Russian leadership, the economy and shifting threat perceptions. U.S. influence, while limited, can impact on the future character of the force by accelerating the development of those positive factors identified.

PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to assess, based entirely on unclassified sources, the state of the new Russian military in transition, the key factors of stability and instability that are impacting the military, and how these factors will serve to constrain the future development and direction of the Russian armed forces. Section I examines these factors, while Section II provides initial comparisons and contrasts with the Tsarist and Soviet periods. Conclusions on what kind of Russian military will emerge from this present transition, as well as policy recommendations, are made in Section III of the study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pre-Communist Russian military roots, "perezhitki" (remnants) of the Soviet era, and primarily trends set in motion in society by the Russian reformers together have set down certain parameters on what kind of military will emerge in Russia over this decade, regardless of near-term future political outcomes. Establishing the basis for these parameters are several factors -- key among them being Russian nationalism -- which will determine the character and essence of the future force.

Most analysts view the Russian political and military leaderships, the state of the economy and Russian threat perception as the primary determinants of the future status of the Russian armed forces. Because they are so difficult to predict, however, none of these determinants is as significant in determining the overall character and direction of the force as the factors elucidated below. Further, the trends being set down now for the force are already so far along that its future course will be chiefly determined by the factors examined here, many of which are largely independent of those determinants.

These include: Russian nationalism (and, specifically, the "kind" of Russian nationalism which emerges), the impact of the "afgantsy" (Afghan vets), alternative service and

contract service programs, "new structures", political activity in the armed forces, religion, "zemliachestvo" (regional and ethnic groupings and solidarity) and others -- will profoundly determine the overall long-term character and direction of the Russian military. Other factors -- corruption, "dedovshchina" (hazing rituals for new recruits), drawdowns, housing problems, pay problems, new and unclear regulations and other considerations to be discussed will plague the military over the short term. However, the chaotic situation resulting from the current monumental transition process now underway will eventually be ameliorated by the first list of factors. By examining these factors and drawing comparisons and contrasts with the Tsarist and Soviet periods, it is possible to come to an initial estimate of what kind of new Russian military will emerge over the next several years.

While U.S./Western impact on the other determinants of the armed forces (leadership, economy and threat perception) will often be indirect, usually marginal, and sometimes counter-productive, Western involvement in the factors discussed here -- at the local, unit, and one-to-one level, could play significant dividends over the long-term for U.S. policy interests.

The new Russian military became a reality when the CIS Joint Armed Forces, the ostensible successor to the Soviet Armed Forces, demonstrated that it would be either short-lived, ineffectual or both. This, combined with the political

race toward establishing national armies in many of the other former republics of the Soviet Union, forced Russia's hand in creating its own national-level force. But its roots go deeper than the circumstances of its rebirth, as we shall examine.

This new force already has its own defensive doctrine specifically adapted for Russia's needs (this is covered extensively in another Naval War College Advanced Research Project; see MAJ Susan Terranova, "Evolving Russian Military Doctrine: Force Structure and Capabilities of the Armed Forces", March, 1993). This examination serves as a companion study to Major Terranova's paper: it assesses those factors **beyond doctrine** which will serve to constrain the Russian military for the foreseeable future and must largely determine what kind of military will evolve in the process. Although changes in threat perception, the Russian economy, and potential political upheavals can alter the focus, pace or intensity of military change, the factors assessed to be positive in our analysis will transcend those developments. Thus, to a limited extent, attempting to assess those factors has predictive value.

The Next Political Crisis.

Some observers believe that great political turmoil still lies ahead for Russia. Veteran Russian affairs expert Peter

Reddaway, writing in the **New York Times** in early January, 1993, predicted that "odds are overwhelmingly against the success" of the reforms. At the same time, the Russian military, according to Reddaway, is in "serious decay", with its Minister of Defense, Pavel Grachev, being "widely seen as incompetent." ¹

The current economic chaos in Russia is certainly destabilizing, while the severe political infighting between the executive and legislative branches has temporarily paralyzed further progress in the country. As far as the military is concerned, there is no question that it is in the midst of a very serious transition following the formal breakup of the old Soviet military machine. But to utilize the phrase "serious decay" to describe this process conjures up images of an institution tottering on the edge of collapse. For students of Russian history, the word "decay" also clearly has other ominous implications -- reminding one of the disintegration of the Imperial Russian Army on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution before the nation was plunged into civil war. It is important to distinguish the concept of "decay" from "crisis", because even if the institution of the Russian military is in serious difficulty at present, it is not about to disintegrate. New values emerging at its core (as well as the positive classic ones that are re-emerging), will prove to be more enduring and pervasive than this present crisis.

It is the goal of this study to attempt to get at those

core values and characteristics -- both those extant and those that will be emerging -- and to steer away from more sensational pronouncements. Our purpose is to demonstrate that an approach such as Reddaway's, while drawing attention to the dire seriousness of the present crisis in Russia, can also obscure the underlying changes which are occurring institutionally. His approach paints a picture of a military ready to take sides in a civil war and possibly being used as an instrument of repression by some future authoritarian regime. While a regime much more authoritarian than Yeltsin's could indeed emerge in Russia (one has only to look so far as the Russian Vice President, Aleksandr Rutskoy, for hints of that), it will (hopefully) be demonstrated that the Russian military, as it has changed and is changing at present, is not and cannot become again the same institution that served the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The momentum of change and the sweep of history -- as reflected in these factors -- are taking it in an entirely different direction. This is not to say that the Russian military will easily shrug off all of the relics of its Soviet past. But the genie is "out of the bottle".

For purposes of this study, the factors examined are defined as "factors of stability and instability". However, they could just as readily fall under other rubrics as well. They deal with the character of the armed forces, its internal ethos, its historical legacy, and its future vision.

Public Policy Significance: Stability Breeds Stability.

An unstable Russian military will contribute to the further instability of the Russian Federation, as well as to potential instability in the realm of strategic nuclear forces. Contrarily, from a public policy standpoint, a stable Russian military can serve as a significant stabilizing institution for the Russian state as a whole during this period of crisis and transition.

The military forces (as well as key security units) which stood with Yeltsin and the reformers against the coup plotters and the Communist Party, made all the difference in Yeltsin's and Gorbachev's success and the failure of the coup. The military as an institution has undergone major upheavals since the dramatic events of August, 1991. This study does not purport to gauge the present strength of democratic forces in the military versus the more repressive elements, other than in a relative sense. It is still too early to say, given the current constitutional crisis and struggle between the executive and legislative branches in Russia, what kind of government will ultimately emerge. But it does seem clear that the military has embarked on a road of reform and rediscovery of its roots which, for all practical purposes, is irreversible.

Even if a more authoritarian regime should seize power or evolve naturally through the political process, the former

will still be constrained by the factors elucidated in this study, i.e., those molding the kind of military that it will have to work with. The way the force is configured, its doctrine, the way its personnel are recruited and retained, its military ethos -- all of these are factors now in the crucible of military development. They will form the essence of the armed forces.

Further, the "events of August" may also have demonstrated that a new military mentality and loyalty is emerging. Contrary to the stereotype of the Soviet military serving as merely the tool of the Communist Party, the actions of those Soviet military personnel willing to put their lives on the line in defense of Boris Yeltsin indicated that there was an instinctive loyalty to the people that exceeded any loyalty to the coup plotters or the Communist Party. While their support of Yeltsin does not necessarily mean they also supported the later demise of the Soviet Union, many obviously believed that some degree of freedom and pluralism were superior to what the Communist Party would offer absent Gorbachev. Those in the military most willing to put their lives on the line for the reforms were the group now known as the "Living Ring" (Zhivoe kol'tso) -- those servicemen and others who put their bodies between the tanks and the Russian White House in Moscow, where Yeltsin and the reformers were prepared to make their last stand. The "Living Ring" has been a fierce supporter of Yeltsin through the subsequent political

attacks he has faced. To what extent their views and others like them permeate the rest of the military is unknown, but those who support what the "Living Ring" did form an important element in the military, if only by virtue of the fact that they acted decisively. Their existence also disputes the notion held by some that the Soviet (now Russian) soldier is incapable of showing initiative and taking such decisive action.

This background analysis of what occurred during the coup is significant in that it helped to form a new ethos for the Russian military -- loyalty to "the people" (the *narod*, in Russian). Loyalty will no longer be to a Tsar, or to a political party -- the Communists -- but now to the nation itself, for the good of the nation. The symbolism of the actions of those military personnel who stood by Yeltsin (and Gorbachev) during the coup cannot be erased from the collective memory any more than the memory of the enormous losses of the Second World War -- seared into the consciousness of every former Soviet citizen -- can be removed. They will continue to shape and mold what the military becomes, even as the factors of imperial breakup, downsizing, economic crisis and force reorganization also take their toll. While the present period is a very painful one for the Russian military, that molding process can be viewed positively for the institution -- in much the same way as a large "fat", non-competitive corporation becomes "leaner" and

more competitive as a result of sometimes painful cuts.

The political currents unleashed by the breakup of the former Soviet Union and the present economic crisis in Russia could lead to another major upheaval on the same level as the August coup attempt. A stable, professional Russian military could serve as a buffer force in maintaining greater political equilibrium in Russia and upholding the move toward reform, a key goal of U.S. foreign policy.

Section I of the study deals with the factors of stability and instability impacting the military: their characteristics, extent and probable future impact. Section II deals with comparisons and contrasts within the new Russian military today as opposed to the Tsarist and Soviet periods. William C. Fuller, Jr., noted military historian of the Tsarist period, writing in *Strategy and Power in Russia: 1600-1914*, predicted that, not only would a Russian army emerge out of the former CIS Armed Forces, but that "this new force would evince the keenest interest in its tsarist predecessor".² That process has begun in earnest, and it is not merely a search for roots and identity. What one military historian has written about the former Russian regiments reflecting the face of Russia past is also true of the transformation occurring today, in that today's military is also reflection of what is happening in society at large:

The study of the regiments of the old Russian Army is in a sense a study of Russia itself, for while the Empire existed, its Army mirrored the face of the nation and in turn influenced every sphere of national life." ³

Whether or not one accepts Lyon's historical view of the Imperial Army reflecting "the face of the nation", it is the view of this study that what Lyons wrote is certainly applicable to the Russian armed forces in transition today. Our examination of the military in transition is also a microcosm of what is happening in the rest of the nation. While not exhaustive in its scope, it is salient in its relevance for assessing what may happen in Russia as a whole.

NOTES

1. Peter Reddaway, Op-Ed article, "Russia Comes Apart." *New York Times*, January 10, 1993, p. 23.
2. William C. Fuller, Jr., *Strategy and Power in Russia: 1600-1914*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
3. M. Lyons, "Introduction", *The Russian Imperial Army: A Bibliography of Regimental Histories and Related Works*. (Stanford: The Hoover Institution, 1968), p. 3.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

BTR - "Bronetransporter" (an armored personnel carrier).

CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States (Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimikh Gosudarstv - SNG)

CPSU - Communist Party of the Soviet Union

FBIS - Foreign Broadcast Information Service

GS - General Staff

KZ - **Krasnaia Zvezda (Red Star)** newspaper (the official publication of the Russian Ministry of Defense).

MOD - Ministry of Defense (of the Russian Federation)

MVD - Ministry of Internal Affairs (of the Russian Federation)

RFE/RL - Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

NOTE: Translations from original Russian sources were made by the author. The Library of Congress transliteration system has been utilized throughout this study.

KEY RUSSIAN TERMS UTILIZED

afgantsy - Russian veterans of the USSR's war in Afghanistan, now active in Russian politics at many levels and in veteran/military affairs.

dedovshchina - from **ded** (**dedushka**) or "grandfather", meaning the often brutal hazing rituals that raw recruits undergo in the Soviet (now Russian) army; the "grandfathers" are those conscripts who have been around the longest who "break in" the new recruits according to unwritten codes proscribed by official regulations but often tolerated in practice.

komplektovaniia - the term means "bringing up to strength" and/or "collecting into sets"; used to describe the process of developing a professional Russian force that will be both part-conscript and part-contract.

konversiia - the process of "conversion", ostensibly of former military production to civilian production; also refers to the general transfer of the Russian/Soviet defense industry to other uses that would be self-sustaining or would turn a profit.

narod - the general term referring to "the people".

perezhitki - "remnants"; used mostly by the Communists to refer to "remnants" of the previous religious or political worldview. Used in this analysis as applied to remnants of the Soviet period.

profee - the abbreviation for a Russian "professional" serviceman now accepting contract service.

zemliachestvo - from the Russian word, **zemlia** (or "earth"), meaning a coming-together of persons from a particular region or ethnic group, sometimes to counter other such ethnic or regional groups or to be in competition with them.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

In his seminal work on Soviet military politics, **Commissar, Commanders and Civilian Authority**, Timothy Colton provides a useful "Note on Primary Sources" (Appendix B, pp. 297-299). Much has changed since that was written, most notably the content of Russian political and military serials and periodicals. Major editorial changes reflect the new realities since the end of the Communist era, as well as the pressing financial requirement among Russian journals and newspapers to attract subscribers to achieve solvency. Some have also changed their names. Thus, **Kommunist vooruzhenikh sil** (**Communist of the Armed Forces**), which Colton described as "an invaluable if tedious source" in 1979,¹ has been renamed **Armiia** (**The Army**) and has been spiced up in several ways from its Communist predecessor. Even the mouthpiece of the Russian Ministry of Defense (MOD) itself, **Krasnaia Zvezda** (**Red Star**), though still staid and respectable, discusses many of the issues of the day with a candor unthinkable just a few years ago (see Appendix A of this study for a list of recent **Krasnaia Zvezda** headlines). But **Krasnaia Zvezda** will not go as far as many believe it should in frankly examining points of view that contradict official policies and concerns. That has been made most clear in the emergence of a new independent Russian military newspaper, **Armiia Rossii** (**Army of Russia**) -- not to be confused with **Armiia** cited above. **Armiia Rossii**, which first began publication in November 1992, does not pull

any punches. It publishes very hard-hitting articles about the MOD and its apparent stifling of some dissenting voices. While that stifling by no means approaches the censorship of the Soviet past, there are growing concerns about the direction of MOD press policy in this regard (see the section in Part 1 under "Censorship, Military" for more on this development).

With the exception of some highly-charged issues as discussed in *Armiia Rossii* (where MOD disapproval is evident),² much of the rest of the Russian military press is indeed writing very openly about the serious problems affecting the military. This is the case with many of the same journals which Colton discussed in his 1979 Note: *Voennyi vestnik* (Military Bulletin), *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Journal of Military History), *Morskoi sbornik* (Naval Collection), and others. If some of these were "revealing" in 1979, they are all the more so now.

As one whose training was as a Soviet affairs political-military analyst, the opportunity accorded by this study to delve somewhat into the history of tsarist military traditions -- an area I had never had much chance to explore at length -- has been especially rewarding. In that respect, one has only to examine a few of the ornate Russian regimental military histories to get a feel for the pride with which these regiments served. As one example, the regimental history of the 30th Dragoons of the Ingermanlanskii Regiment (1704-1904) contains historical data not only on which commanders

commanded the unit over a period of two centuries, but also which soldiers were decorated for bravery, which had fallen in battle -- all of this extending back some two hundred years! ³ Even a list of which Russian Orthodox priests served with the regiment from 1730-1900 was carefully recorded, including their inclusive years of service.⁴ It would be hard to imagine an analogous American unit history keeping such good records!

At the other end of the "time continuum" from the Tsarist period, I have made extensive use of computer databases such as SOVSET in this research. SOVSET is an electronic mail network and database for Russian affairs specialists from around the world operated by Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies. In addition, there are numerous other new on-line resources in the Slavic studies field are now becoming available to the researcher.⁵

This study is based entirely on unclassified sources. Information cut-off date was 1 March 1993. Errors of omission and comission, as well as judgment, are entirely my own.

NOTES

1. Timothy Colton, **Commissars, Commanders, and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics**, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979, "Appendix B: A Note on Primary Sources", pp. 297-299.

2. One example of this is the recent charge of corruption by **Armiia Rossi** and others in February, 1993, claiming that some senior level Russian military officers had received valuable **dachas** at very low rates.

3. **Istoriia 30-ogo Dragoons Ingermanlandskiy Regiment**, Part I, V.I. Genishta and A.T. Borisevich, Compilers, St. Petersburg: "Berezhlivost'", 1904.

4. Ibid., **Prilozhenie**, p. 99.

5. Patt Leonard, "On-Line Resources in Slavic Area Studies", Paper presented at the November, 1992, annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS).

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure (1). Suspicious character to a father: "What are you trying to buy a Zhiguli [an Italian Fiat made in the former USSR] for? Buy a BTR [Bronetransporter - armored personnel carrier] from me for the boy!" From **Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland)**, No. 16, April, 1992.

Figure (2). "What violation? I'm from the 'new structures'. I'm your military astrologer-parapsychologist!", **Armiia (Army)**, No 14, July, 1992.

Figure (3). Wife to Officer-husband: "Do we really have enough money to live on today?" **Voennyi Vestnik (Military Bulletin)**, No. 9, September, 1992, p. 9.

Figure (4). "Duty. Honor. Glory." Sample cover page of **Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland)**. No. 49 (147), December, 1992.

Figure (5). "There was a time, son, that I served in a Soviet army..." from **Armiia (Army)**, No. 14, July, 1992.

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Peter Harrington, Curator, The Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, John Hay Library, Brown University, for his assistance in examining that library's very rich collection of Russian regimental histories--one of the best outside of Russia.

Pelham Boyer, managing editor of the **Naval War College Review**, for his suggestion at the mid-course review on examining the administrative impact of the loss of political officers on the military. This prediction seemed to be largely substantiated by a December, 1992, letter from a Russian unit commander to the newspaper, **Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland)**, published by the Russian Ministry of Defense.

Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill, former National Security Advisor to the President for Soviet and East European Affairs, now with the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, for serving as a sounding-board for some of my ideas and for his insights on expanding military-to-military contacts.

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Many thanks to East View Publications (one of the best organizations in the West for obtaining serials and periodicals from the former Soviet Union) for tracking down and sending me a copy of the new newspaper **Armiia Rossii (Army of Russia)**, apparently the first significant independent Russian military newspaper since the publication of **Voennyi Golos (Military Voice)** in 1906.

INTRODUCTION

Because of the difficulty in predicting changes in the Russian leadership, the economy, and projected threat perceptions, none of these factors are as significant as those analyzed in this study in charting the future course of the new Russian armed forces. These include, primarily, the role of Russian nationalism, the influence of the **afgantsy** (Afghan veterans), the introduction of "contract service" and "alternative service", political activity in the armed forces, religion, "new structures", and **zemliachestvo** (regional and ethnic groupings and solidarity), and others.

Along with these there are numerous negative factors currently impacting the force. These include: corruption, desertions, **dedovshchina** (hazing rituals), hasty drawdowns and withdrawals, housing and pay problems, ethnic strife, transitional regulations, and other factors.

Taken together, the positive and negative trends are placing constraints on the force which will determine both its future character and direction. They provide a framework **beyond doctrine** with which to assess the force, and they will in many cases transcend the continuing crises in the Russian political and economic spheres. These trends and factors are examined in terms of whether they appear to contribute to stability or instability. In some cases, they contribute to both, depending on the particular aspect of that factor being

considered, as well as where it might fit on a timeline. For example, numerous transitory regulations affecting the force right now are a somewhat **destabilizing** factor on the force since many of the regulations are: 1) contradictory; 2) counter to other Russian laws; and 3) highly controversial. However, once the new regulations become better understood, sorted out and obeyed, they will become a **stabilizing** factor.

Section I of the study examines these factors and makes assessments about them, Section II draws comparisons with the Tsarist and Soviet periods, and Section III provides both conclusions and some public policy recommendations. In the latter case, there are positive steps which the United States and other Western countries could undertake at limited cost that would reinforce positive factors and help ameliorate the impact of some negative ones. These would serve to accelerate the process of stability in the Russian armed forces -- a manifest goal of U.S. foreign policy. In any event, the Russian military appears to already be embarked on a path that will define its new character and limit its alternative futures.

Getting There From Here: Defining the Transition

As far as the present situation is concerned, Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev has spoken candidly about the fact that the Russian armed forces will be "in transition"

for some time -- at least "ten years." Only then will there be an "era of a reformed Russia in which the Russian Army will occupy a special place." ¹ On the road to establish this new Army, Grachev says, the institution itself will need "a new change of clothes" and will "live according to new military regulations." ² The Russian armed forces now has a new "evolving military doctrine" which will adapt itself to perceived threats. ³ On the basis of the new doctrine and the planned reorganization of the force, Grachev has delineated the transition problem into four broad areas:

- (i) establishing an organizational-personnel force structure in tune with the times;
- (ii) switching to hardware and weaponry whose introduction is based on state-of-the-art technologies;
- (iii) introducing new methods of training, combat techniques, and operations methods;
- (iv) creating a new image for Russian servicemen. ⁴

The first major step is the actual restructuring of the force. Grachev states that by the time the Russian Armed Forces has been reduced to 1.5 million personnel (ostensibly by 1995), it will "then be possible to abandon the division of troops among military districts...[to be replaced by] four to six Armed Forces strategic commands with a geographical designation." ⁵ In addition, "...it is planned to switch from army and divisional force structures to a predominantly corps and brigade structure, which will enable the number of combat-ready combined units to be increased." ⁶

Despite the current chaos in Russia and the psychological

trauma that the military is presently undergoing, these reorganization goals do provide specific and concrete direction. Despite some opinions about his "competence", Grachev seems very clear about what he sees as the desired end-state of the Russian military. He is under no illusions about how long it may take to get there, but his path toward reorganization seems to be clearly marked as far as public pronouncements are concerned. Though the state of the Russian economy and its political leadership may be subject to much change over the next decade, this blueprint for reorganization seems to be fairly well set -- the general principle of having a smaller, more professional force does not appear to be a matter of great controversy between factions of the right or left. The controversy enters in over the best method of getting there from here, that is, how much trauma must be endured in the **process** of reorganization with its attendant problems of rapid withdrawals, inadequate housing, poor pay, falling prestige and the like.

Methodology: Development of a Research Approach.

This study began as an examination of some of the serious problems which exist at unit levels in the Russian armed forces, which, in the author's experience, were probably not receiving adequate attention in the U.S. analytical and public policy arena -- tied as it often is to crises of the immediate moment. Further, it often seems that the current views of policy-making elites are usually given greater weight than perhaps more serious factors bubbling below the surface which have not yet reached crisis proportions. As my research has progressed, it has become more and more evident that the issues affecting Russian military units at lower levels will indeed place (and are placing) constraints upon what the political and military leadership can do at the highest levels. For example, if Russia (as any other nation) cannot adequately fill its military draft quotas, it cannot long sustain a conscript system, even a "half-conscript" force, despite the best intentions of national-level policymakers.

Threat Perceptions.

The approach taken in this study is that the continuum of factors and predicted change are largely predicated on Russian threat perceptions remaining relatively stable over the next several years. Substantial increases in Russian threat

perceptions could alter the social, political, and psychological forces already in motion within and upon the Russian military in transition and thus affect primarily the timing of the changes we predict the military will undergo.

Although some in the foreign policy-making establishment fear that a "new encirclement" against Russia is forming,⁷ the Foreign Ministry itself does not appear to view these as immediate threats.⁸ Nevertheless, though "threat perceptions" have changed drastically since the fall of Communism,⁹ some still remain and are taking new forms. "Threat perceptions" include, in varying degrees of concern: the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Ukraine, the Baltic States, and Islamic fundamentalism on Russia's borders.¹⁰ The new draft military doctrine cites the following conditions as possible sources for future conflict: "aspirations of states (or coalitions of states) for world or regional hegemony; the stationing of powerful armed formations near Russia's borders to secure a military-strategic advantage; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; political or economic pressure on, or blackmail of Russia; violations of the rights of Russian citizens in the former republics of the USSR."¹¹ The most pressing issue at this time is that of Russian citizens at risk in the other republics of the former USSR. Beyond that, however, even if a more serious border problem should occur (i.e., should there be a flareup with one or more of the Baltic or Central Asian states, with Ukraine,

or a dispute on the Chinese-Russian border), it would still likely be localized and of relatively short duration. There is not on the immediate horizon any external threat to Russia's territorial integrity or security to warrant a massive mobilization or a whipping up of the populace for widescale military action. Further, the Russian people themselves, after seventy-plus years of Communist mobilization and indoctrination are highly demoralized and not desirous of entering into unnecessary military adventures.

Nevertheless, whether valid or not, there are still concerns over "encirclement" which are fueling a major foreign policy debate between several political schools of thought in the Russian leadership: "liberal-internationalists (Westernizers); conservative-nationalists (Slavophiles; Eurasianists) and imperialists (Communist revanchists and reactionary nationalists)".¹² These concerns will likely form the basis for future "threat perceptions" and will affect domestic policy.¹³ But examined on a case by case basis, none of these "threats" -- real or perceived -- is substantial enough to justify real concern. Thus, even though debate over them may affect some domestic policy (e.g., one result perhaps being a more inward-looking Russia than a more Westernized one), the impact of the debate on the character of the military will probably be marginal. This is so because the drive toward professionalization of the force seems inescapable regardless of which vision is adopted.

Having said that, it must be also be pointed out that at this very time Russian forces are already active, engaged in withdrawals or under fire in many parts of the former Soviet Union -- it is hardly a force at rest. These include: North Ossetia, Georgia (Abkhazia, Adzharia, South Ossetia), Ingushetia, Moldova, the Baltic States, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. Russian citizens have been attacked, harassed, taken as hostages, and sometimes killed in many of these places -- conflicts that have received relatively little coverage in the Western press but which are topics of very high interest to the Russian media. The Russian military (acting alone or under cover of being a "CIS force") have been stepping in to offer protection for Russian citizens locations is fired upon and has taken casualties. None of these small "bleeding wounds" (the analogy is to Gorbachev's famous characterization of Soviet involvement in Afghanistan as a "bleeding wound") has involved any great part of the force. Moreover, the politicians are not been prepared to use overwhelming force to resolve these problems. Quite the contrary -- in most cases force has been measured and used only as a last resort. The reasons for this are manifold: a real desire to avoid bloodshed; a new commitment to diplomacy and the West; an antipathy toward being perceived in any way as the inheritors of Communist repression in the former Soviet Empire; the inward-looking focus resulting from the economic crisis. All of these aspects play a role. They will continue

to do so for the foreseeable future with regard to most other conflicts that might arise in the list enumerated above. For example, even if border skirmishes with Ukraine or one of the Baltic states should arise, what possible benefit would Russia find in prolonging such a conflict? It might take the people's minds off their troubles momentarily -- as well as flex national muscle -- but then what? The negative repercussions from such an action would be enormous. Rather, Russia would most likely seek to resolve the issue as quickly and as peacefully as possible (although the same does not necessarily apply to economic disputes, where antagonisms have often been strong and rancorous). The one exception, as has been noted, is that Russia might be compelled to use excessive force to protect or liberate ethnic Russians in one of the countries of the former Soviet Union. If so, this would be used as a demonstration to the rest of Russia's determination to protect its citizens and those of Russian heritage. However, even these actions (if they occur) will be strategic defensive ones -- not offensive operations designed to win back territory. Thus, the character of the armed forces (as examined in this study) will not be seriously affected by such actions, nor would they be departures from the new doctrine.

The Internal "Threat" and Use of the Military on the Periphery

What is likely more palpable and relevant to MOD planners

than "foreign encirclement" is the internal threat posed to Russian internal stability -- the possible dissolution of the Russian Federation itself and the use of troops to keep the peace on Russia's periphery.

If current trends toward independence in many of the autonomous republics, autonomous oblasts and other regions continue -- Bashkiria, Tatarstan, North Ossetia, Ingushetia, and so forth, to say nothing of Siberia -- these threaten the very stability of the Russian Federation as a singular state. While most of these may not lead to violence, North Ossetia and Ingushetia are already the sites of struggle where Russian military personnel have died.

These internal Russian problems, combined with CIS peacekeeping roles in other republics of the former Soviet Union, are both difficult operations and ill-defined. Recent deployments of regular forces to North Ossetia and Ingushetia to support MVD (Interior) personnel in trouble is a pattern that the military cannot deal with indefinitely without some changes. Such deployments of regular forces have already evoked widespread concern in the Russian military press (as evidenced by even a cursory examination of relevant **Krasnaia Zvezda** (Red Star) headlines -- see Appendix A). Critics of this policy -- such as **Armiia Rossii** editor Aleksandr Zhilin, are demanding legal safeguards for Russian forces deployed to these areas. Zhilin denounces the lack of such safeguards as a betrayal of the military, which he says is being used as a

political pawn. ¹⁴ However, First Deputy Defense Minister Andrei Kokoshin has tried to put a positive political "spin" on the problem. Rather than acknowledging concerns of persons such as Zhilin, Kokoshin stated in a January 6 interview on Russian television that those serving in peacekeeping operations in Moldova and South Ossetia are "professionals who...have long known how difficult it is to organize and provide the back-up for these operations and how much courage and endurance they require from those officers and soldiers directly involved in them." ¹⁵ That will not be sufficient to placate Zhilin or other critics of official policy for long. The issues of safeguards and legal rights will have to be resolved -- probably sooner rather than later. I would further argue that the dynamics of the present course are such that the deployment of forces within Federation territory and around Russia's periphery will accelerate the process of pushing the military in the direction of professionalization and a volunteer force rather than away from it. This will occur for several reasons: one, the context of the struggles are a "lose-lose" situation for Russia, except for those hardcore Russian nationalists willing to spill blood over these issues. The **afgantsy** (Afghan veterans), as discussed below, are becoming more and more an influential group in politics and on military affairs, and many of these veterans will begin to oppose policies that place conscripts in harm's way without a clear national purpose and without safeguards. Too many

remember the needless deaths of fallen comrades in Afghanistan to permit a steady flow of Russian conscripts to die in lonely, faraway places like Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, the Dniester region of Moldova, Tadjikistan, Ingushetia and elsewhere for causes that are not crucial to Russia's security. These groups will place pressure on the authorities to either disengage from some of these struggles or to use sufficient force to decide the issues at hand. At the same time, the more reactionary forces in Russia who wish to fight -- some **afgantsy**, various independent Cossack units, tiny extremist right-wing groups such as Zhirinovskiy's and others -- will do so as volunteers. Again, the major question for whatever government is in power in Moscow is whether large numbers of ethnic Russians are at risk in a given area or not.

Instability Versus Decay

One possible objection to the approach taken in this study is as follows: it could be argued that, in examining problems of instability in the military, it is splitting hairs to differentiate between "instability" and "decay". But it is nevertheless an important distinction: **institutional instability and institutional decay are not the same things.** The former can often be remedied by positive acts by the given political and institutional leadership, by an infusion of resources, setting better priorities, creating better

conditions, and so forth. "Decay", on the other hand, implies an insidious cancer or poison at work within an institution destroying it from within. It further implies that, for institutions at least, they may have outlived their usefulness and are either in a revolutionary situation or on their way to extinction. That condition does not apply to the new Russian military. Whatever it becomes, it will be an amalgam of both old and new. There has been no revolution, no purge, no total sweeping away of the old to bring in the new. Rather, there has been a partial sweeping-away of some old values (Soviet ones) and personnel and a replacement with new ones, along with a partial retention. This process, combined with economic and political confusion, has created **instability** but not **decay** for an institution in transition, while undergoing change and searching for its roots, remains a viable entity.

A Premature Analysis

Another objection which might be raised is that a study of this nature is premature, that the Russian military is changing at too rapid a pace for a "snapshot" taken now to be significant or enduring in its analysis. The initiation of a contract system, new regulations, the ongoing withdrawals and drawdowns, and the further dissolution of the "old" military system has not proceeded sufficiently, according to this view, for an analysis taken at this time to assess what the new

Russian armed forces will in fact become, and what its chief strengths and weaknesses will be.

A response to that argument would be that, though indeed the Russian military is in the very midst of transition, we have the words of the Minister of Defense himself that process will probably continue for at least ten years. No serious observer could contend that we must wait that long for a post-Soviet analysis of the Russian military to be conducted.

Further, the military as a microcosm in the post-Soviet world has only a limited number of futures available to it. Charting the directions it is heading into now can only provide a firmer foundation for future analyses based on better data. The trends now apparent are fully expected to be the foundations of the future.

Inter-CIS Relations Not Covered

Another drawback to this study is its failure to fully address the positive and negative foreign policy relations between Russia and the other newly independent states in the CIS and what role the Russian military may play in that process. The enormous controversy that erupted between Russia and Ukraine over the disposition of the Black Sea Fleet is a primary example of this. Limitations of research time as well as the major scope of such an effort has prevented the exploration of that important aspect of the topic -- one

which, undoubtedly, would cast additional light on Russian self-perceptions and concerns.¹⁶ It is not believed, however, that this inadequacy is a serious detractor to the major thesis of this study. Further, the topic of inter-CIS relations and the military is touched on in passing. For example, the interview with Rear Admiral Mochaikin in **Armia Rossii** (Army of Russia) in December, 1992, demonstrates that inter-military unofficial contacts among officer assemblies in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are continuing; however, their significance has atrophied considerably over the past year.¹⁷

We shall now examine some of the relevant factors of stability and instability affecting the new Russian military.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev, "Minister's Position", **Rossiyskie vesti**, January 4, 1993, p. 4, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-003, 6 January 1993, p. 24).

2. Grachev, op. cit.

3. MAJ Susan Terranova, "Introduction", **Evolving Russian Military Doctrine: Force Structure and Capabilities of the Armed Forces**, Advanced Research Project, March, 1993.

4. Grachev, op. cit.

5. Ibid. Grachev also notes, however, in the same citation that the present military district system might still be retained for mobilization purposes.

6. Ibid.

7. Vladimir P. Lukin, "Our Security Predicament", **Foreign Policy**, No. 88, Fall 1992, pp. 60-61.

8. Terranova, op. cit. See Appendix II, Foreign Ministry Draft on Russian Foreign Policy, Moscow, citing Interfax, 2 Nov 92).

9. For comparative purposes, see David Glantz, **Soviet Military Strategy in the 1990s: Alternative Futures** (Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1991, pp. 9-12), for an examination of the "threat variants" the former Soviet Union faced or perceived that it faced just two years ago.

10. See Vladimir P. Lukin (Russian Ambassador to the United States), "Our Security Predicament", **Foreign Policy**, Fall, 1992, pp. 60-65, and presentation by Dr. Bruce Porter, "A Shattered Identity in Search of a Mission: Russian After the Bold Regime," Russian Research Center/Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, February 5, 1993.

11. Scott McMi el, "Russia's New Military Doctrine", **RFE/RL**, Vol. 1, No. 40, October 9, 1992, p. 45.

12. See Lukin, op. cit., generally, and Porter presentation, Harvard University, February 5, 1993.

13. Ibid.

14. Aleksandr Zhilin, Editorial, "Skol'ko možno predavat' armiiu?!" (How Much More Can They Betray the Army?), **Armia Rossii** (Army of Russia), No. 2, December, 1992, p. 3.

15. Moscow, Russian Television, 6 January 1993, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-004, 7 January 1993, p. 27.

16. Another such area is demographics, a very important subject in its own right, which, like inter-CIS relations, has only been touched on in passing due to limitations of research time. It must be stated in partial defense that demographic trends are somewhat difficult to predict at this time. Numbers of internal refugees are moving around the former Soviet Union, while the civic and property rights of ethnic Russians living outside of Russian territory in other CIS states are in many cases unclear.

17. Kostin interview with Rear Admiral Aleksandr G. Mochaikin, Chairman of the Coordinating Council of the CIS Officers' Assemblies of the CIS, **Armia Rossii (Army of Russia)**, No. 2, December, 1992, p. 11.

SECTION I: FACTORS OF STABILITY/INSTABILITY IN THE NEW
RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES

The Role of Russian Nationalism

SIGNIFICANT FACTORS:

- * AFGANTSY
- * ALTERNATIVE SERVICE
- * CENSORSHIP
- * COLLAPSE OF ARMED FORCES
- * CONSCRIPTION
- * CONTRACT SYSTEM
- * CORRUPTION/ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- * COSSACKS
- * "DEDOVSHCHINA"
- * DESERTIONS
- * DRAWDOWNS/WITHDRAWALS
- * ETHNIC PROBLEMS
- * HOUSING
- * INSURANCE
- * MORALE
- * "NEW STRUCTURES"
- * OATHS
- * PAY
- * POLITICAL ACTIVITY
- * POLITICAL OFFICERS
- * POVERTY
- * REGULATIONS
- * RELIGION
- * VOLUNTEER FORCE
- * "ZEMLIACHESTVO"

These factors are by no means exhaustive of all those which impact on the armed forces of Russia today. They are merely a "laundry list" of some of the most severe issues facing the Russian military -- issues which must determine its future, almost irrespective of what faction rules in the Kremlin. Even this listing must be considered as an introduction to some of these problems -- volumes could obviously be written about many of them. But it is nevertheless important to have an overview of some of the most

significant problems of the myriad ones affecting the Russian military in this transition period to understand which trends will dominate the future landscape of the force.

Even if a much more conservative, highly nationalistic regime emerges some time during this decade, it will be forced to deal both with the reality of these factors, as well as the evolution of what Russian society (and the military) have become since **glasnost** and **perestroika** were first launched under former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev. The interaction of these factors -- their synergism, essentially -- is also significant and will be discussed at the end of this section.

The Role of Russian Nationalism

Finally, the role of Russian nationalism, and specifically, what kind of Russian nationalism will eventually win out in Russia, is so central to the disposition and character of the future force that it is treated separately at the end of this section, following the factors discussed below. These begin with the Afghan vets, or the **afgantsy**.

"AFGANTSY"

One key group which is now taking a very active interest in political and military affairs in Russia is the network of

Afghan veterans' (or **afgantsy**) organizations scattered throughout the country. **Afgantsy** have become very active in politics at many levels, and their role in society is likely to become much more influential in the years ahead, as the veterans of the "Great Patriotic War" generation (World War II) pass from the scene. Their influence on military and political policy will be felt in at least four main areas: a high sense of patriotism and dedication to the country; a high commitment among many to democratic ideals (based on personal discussions in Russia by the author with various **afgantsy** in early 1992);¹ a concern for servicemen's welfare; and, just as has occurred in the U.S. military in the post-Vietnam era, a strong desire to keep Russia from becoming entangled in military "adventures" leading to "another Afghanistan". The **afgantsy** will pressure any Russian regime to have clear (Clausewitzian) goals in mind before committing any significant forces to battle.

Afgantsy are already active in national and local politics in many parts of the country. Two of the best known are the Vice President (Rutskoi) and the present Russian Minister of Defense (Grachev). But networks of local groups of **afgantsy** could be more significant in the long run than individuals in high places. **Afgantsy**, like the Russian mafias, are not a group to be treated lightly. Many of the former are highly politicized and now very fully aware of the policy-making process. They are used to bearing arms, have

had their lives at risk already and are not about to be quieted into submission simply because Moscow says so if it goes against their fundamental interests or principles. These veterans know that their past Soviet government lied to them and that future governments could also do the same. As an interest group, therefore, they are neither as ignorant nor as passive as their parents' generation, nor as submissive and politically powerless as the generations of peasant-conscripts were during the Tsarist period. They represent an entirely new phenomenon in Russian history, one that any regime in Moscow ignores at its peril. They will be a decisive factor in channeling the military into becoming a professional, volunteer force.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

"Alternative service" (al'ternativnaia sluzhba) is rapidly coming to be better accepted as a possible solution to some of the current problems the Russian military is experiencing. This is especially the case in the rear services, where cutbacks in personnel have apparently been especially severe. "Alternative service" as a concept was codified into defense legislation in September, 1992.² Though it has yet to be more fully developed and integrated into the defense system, it does appear to be a new and very important policy that is here to stay. Article 4 of the new law "On

Defense" further stipulates that "alternative service" will be a form of government service, actually "substituting for military service."³ What will "alternative service" actually entail? Although it may eventually include various civilian contract employees to do some of the traditional tasks performed by military personnel, it will primarily involve conscripts who object to bearing arms for religious reasons. Apparently, there are already some military servicemen working in various garrisons in rear service support jobs who are having their pay supplemented by local garrisons.⁴ One officer, writing positively about the potential impact that "alternative service" would have on the missions of the rear services, stated in the March, 1992, issue of *Tyl vooruzhenykh sil* (Rear Services of the Armed Forces):

Rear service units have already been reduced to such an unthinkable degree that many tasks, which should be fulfilled by soldiers, are being performed by officers and warrant officers. The paradox is that these units are being cut back even more...If this keeps happening, then the rear services generally will not be able to maintain support for combat preparedness at even minimal level.⁵

An "alternative service" option has much to offer a professional, volunteer military. If introduced properly, it could serve as a cohesive factor, positively affecting both morale and unit performance. However, the pay scale for "alternative service" would have to be somewhat commensurate with the civilian world in order to be attractive to either

civilian contract workers, enlistees, or conscripts to those otherwise subject to the draft if the draft persists. This could be especially important in light of the fact that the MOD proposal for "alternative service" as it now stands calls for a service time of 1 1/2-2 times longer than that of regular conscripts.⁶ With such an abysmal response as there has been to recent call-ups, it seems doubtful that any significant percentage of those persons now subject to the draft will sign up for "alternative service" unless there are distinct incentives to do so. On the other hand, pay disparities for comparable work between civilian workers/alternative service personnel and regular conscripts/contract enlisted personnel cannot be too great. Otherwise, these would lead to greater divisiveness within the military and further erosions of morale and discipline. Another factor is that, as now envisaged, "alternative service" will be linked with local governmental administrations, which, along with the military, will apparently be very involved in decisions on "alternative service" duties and placement.⁷

"Alternative service" will probably be an evolving concept, going beyond the narrow definition of religious exemption that now is contemplated and affecting the entire combat service support rear area. To judge from the military press, it is an idea whose time has come for the Russian armed forces.

CENSORSHIP

There have been some ominous signs that a new version of military censorship is rearing its head, most recently under the aegis of the new Chief of the General Staff Mikhail Kolesnikov. The appearance of a recent article in **Krasnaia Zvezda** apparently resulted in a severe "dressing-down" by Kolesnikov of those involved with it on that paper's staff.⁸ According to an unconfirmed source, Kolesnikov reportedly stated that "there was, is and will be censorship" and that MOD's officials "have been instructed to end direct contacts with journalists and to make them only through the mediation of the departmental press service."⁹

If true, this new policy could have profound implications for what we will be able to learn about the emerging Russian military establishment in the future. Another source, Rear Admiral Mochaikin (Chairman of the Coordinating Council of Officers' Assemblies), speaking in a December, 1992, interview for the newspaper **Armia Rossii** (Army of Russia), claimed that he recently has given two interviews to **Krasnaia Zvezda**, neither of which have been published.¹⁰ It is possible that Mochaikin is considered somewhat "persona non grata" at the MOD and **Krasnaia Zvezda** in terms of his opinions on policy; nevertheless, if that is the case, it does not appear to have destroyed his career, since he was just promoted to rear admiral in October, 1992.¹¹

A renewal of censorship, combined with new restrictions on political activity by military personnel (see "Political Activity", this section), will limit military reform over the short term, as well as outspoken criticism of existing practices in the military by active duty personnel. To some extent, this latest development is probably an over-reaction to the almost complete "free-wheeling" atmosphere that has existed in the post-Soviet military since late 1991. That atmosphere has undoubtedly led to some violations of operational security and other excesses. Thus, the pendulum is swinging back in the other direction as a corrective measure. However, "censorship Soviet-style" is simply not possible for the military any more: enforcement mechanisms are limited, while the political officer system has been eliminated from the ranks. It is expected that a moderate policy will eventually prevail.

COLLAPSE OF THE RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES.

The Russian Armed Forces...are today in a state of psychological and organizational disarray.¹²

A "doom and gloom" article in the December 5th, 1992, edition of **Pravda** was entitled: "The Soviet Army: The Tragedy of Its Collapse." The author, one Lt. Col. Sergei Rodinov, bitterly laments the demise of the former Soviet Union, and states that "today nobody needs you -- with your honor and sense of duty. Yesterday it was the 'partyocrat architects'

who betrayed you. Today [others] continue to betray and sell you out."¹³ This, according to Rodinov, is leading to a situation where Russian officers "have nothing more to lose, having already reached their limit. And if you add to the material and physical deprivations the denigration of officers' human dignity, the reaction could be terrible for today's authorities."¹⁴ Although obviously written by a hard-liner, Rodinov's complaint still merits careful attention. There are two aspects worth noting. He cites **self-preservation** as a guiding principle over loyalty to the military as an institution: "The abandoned and betrayed Army lives by the principle of 'every man for himself'";¹⁵ **disobedience**: "strikes, demonstrations, and even hunger strikes by officers are becoming commonplace in all branches of the Armed Forces."¹⁶ Although this may be somewhat of an exaggeration, it is certainly true that these problems are spreading.

At the other end of the political spectrum, Rear Admiral Mochaikin (cited above) has also written of the "betrayal" of the armed forces by "corrupt politicians."¹⁷ He says that "everyone who feels like it wipes their feet with our army as with a floor-cloth."¹⁸ He writes bitterly about the use of Russian military forces in some of Russia's peripheral "hotspots", where he says, "our boys are not provided with any sort of laws providing for their self-defense."¹⁹ As a result, "Russian soldiers and officers now cannot understand

who they are supposed to be: representatives of the armed forces of their nation with full legal rights, or the hostages of corrupt politicians...?"²⁰

There is a strong similarity in the bitterness expressed by both men over the alleged "betrayal" of the army by political interest groups. Nevertheless, there is also a profound difference in their interpretation of what the current situation portends and how to escape from it: Rodinov threatens the collapse of the military; Zhilin urges new legal safeguards for Russian servicemen. Where Rodinov implies, ominously, that the military is at the end of its rope and has nothing left to lose (*), Zhilin, by contrast, simply desires the government to live up to its legal responsibilities and to give the armed forces the legal protection it needs and deserves. He wants Russian soldiers who are called to duty to have the full force of the Russian state behind them -- not an unreasonable view, one would think.

The far right will probably always remain convinced that the reforms were a mistake since they resulted in the end of the former Soviet Union. Thus, they will also consider this period a true "betrayal" of the military -- a permanent black mark against the reformers. However, democratic critics of the military who also speak of betrayal will be mollified as soon as the rights of servicemen are better respected through an orderly system of laws and regulations. This can only come

with time and in the interim will be a difficult and painful process.

As far as "collapse" of the military is concerned, it must be realized that it has already collapsed. However, as the title of Rodinov's **Pravda** article indicates, it was indeed the **Soviet** army that collapsed, not the **Russian** one. After the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was established, the Soviet armed forces disintegrated along republic-level and largely ethnic lines. A sorting-out process is what is occurring now in the Russian and Ukrainian armies and in the forces of the other former republics of the Soviet Union. With all of their difficulties, these will remain integral forces of their new sovereign states. This is not to suggest that there may not be a descent into "warlordism" and factional struggles in some areas (especially in Central Asia) as this process unfolds. But national armies are here to stay in the former Soviet Union, and it is not assessed that they will either "collapse" upon themselves or divide into smaller units.

(*) A good example from Rodinov's standpoint might be the foiled would-be military assassin of Russian President Boris Yeltsin (January, 1993), a disgruntled Army major from the Far East Military District who reportedly believes that Yeltsin has betrayed the military. He also told authorities that he sought to assassinate Yeltsin for the sake of "socialism."
(SOURCE: ITAR-TASS News Agency)

CONSCRIPTION

Conscription in the Russian military today is in serious trouble. There is continuing "antimilitary sentiment among much of the draft-age population."²¹ The commander of the Urals Military District stated in late October, 1992, that up to 70% "of all young men in Russia were now avoiding military service."²² Some in the military blame the media, in part, for continuing "to encourage draft evasion."²³ The desertions of increasing numbers of conscripts has become a problem for the Ukrainian armed forces as well, where the acting Chief of Staff has called for "tough laws to enforce conscription and for higher pay to create a 'financial incentive' for those serving in the armed forces."²⁴

Conscription has been an essential part of the Russian military system since the time of Peter the Great²⁵ and is still technically at the heart of the new defense law, passed in September, 1992. While the law "allows" for contract service and alternative service, these measures are still experimental. Nevertheless, the Russian government does not appear to have sufficient "enforcement mechanisms" to force compliance with the draft. Military prestige remains very low, Russian conscripts face the possibility of being shot at in various hotspots, and those in normal duty stations may suffer from *dedovshchina*, very poor housing, inadequate pay and medical care, and a host of other ills. The average Russian

family -- unlike its Soviet counterpart of a decade ago -- is usually very well aware of these problems (because of freedom of the press), as well as of other risks their draft-age sons may face. It seems highly unreasonable to assume that conscription can last under a half-volunteer, half-conscript system (Grachev's plan) **unless Russia faces a substantial threat to her security.** Since Russia will remain a nuclear state, that seems unlikely, other than potential border conflicts.

This reality seems to be leading inexorably to the near total collapse of the draft system. Military prestige cannot be raised unless military personnel are well-paid, well-trained and professional. The need for rigid quotas is past as the military continues downsizing, while the military is no longer a mechanism for mass social indoctrination that it was when under Communist control. All of these facts taken together seem to indicate its coming demise. But a smooth transition process (or as smooth as is possible under present circumstances) to a volunteer force requires that it be retained until the economy can afford to pay troops an adequate, professional wage. This leads us directly into a discussion of the embryonic contract system.

CONTRACTS

As conscription policy dies a slow death, the new military contract system will be its substitute, as well as a source of future cohesion and stability will be the new military contract system. **Krasnaia Zvezda** announced in November, 1992, that the first aspects of this new program -- the beginning of a volunteer force -- were to take initial effect in late 1992 and early 1993.²⁶ According to the newspaper, the new opportunities afforded by contracts were being awaited with "special impatience" in the Western Group of Forces.²⁷ The Ministry of Defense obviously has high hopes for the successful implementation of this first phase of the contract system. In late 1992, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated that military contracts should first be offered in cities where unemployment is rising at a faster rate than elsewhere because of the defense industry conversion problem and also where discharged military personnel are being added to the unemployment rolls.²⁸ That same week, Defense Minister Grachev also presented his plan for a contractual armed forces: 50% of both the Army and Navy are to be contractual by the year 2000 according to this plan.²⁹ Grachev also stated that the initial implementation of the contract system (dubbed "Phase One") would cost some 6 billion rubles.³⁰

There are some significant downsides to this sort of piecemeal implementation of a contract system. First of all,

the contract system is to be implemented at a time when the conscript system is still in use, thereby creating potential resentment and morale problems for already conscripted. It remains to be seen whether the two programs (draft and contract) can co-exist for long without creating even greater resentment and double standards in many areas. Further, besides these potentially deleterious effects, introducing a contractual system into the military during a time of economic upheaval may induce negative effects insofar as it will have to compete with unwanted mercenary activity. According to the newspaper *Armiia Rossii* (Army of Russia), some Russian officers are reportedly being offered lucrative contracts to serve as mercenaries in various troublespots along Russia's periphery, such as Armenia and Azerbaijan. The newspaper quotes an anonymous MI-24 Russian military helicopter pilot who was reportedly waiting to be discharged so that he could become a mercenary. His contract with the unnamed party stated that he would receive 40,000-60,000 rubles a month, food, consumer goods and a three-room apartment for his family, as well as a 300,000 ruble insurance policy in the event of his death. The officer was quoted as saying that one of his reasons for considering mercenary service is because his family is living in a "stinking 12 square-meter rat-infested room..."³¹

The prospect of easy money and fighting as mercenaries may become more attractive to many regular Russian officers

and warrant officers who are presently strapped by the economic conditions they find themselves in. Such opportunities could also be more attractive for many experienced senior conscripts soon to be released from duty in place of signing on again as a contract soldier or sailor. Mercenary activity will definitely be a highly destabilizing and divisive development in the military if it continues to spread. It will obviously lead to even greater looting of equipment, divided loyalties (ethnic Russian officers could find themselves shooting at the Russian military in some hotspots in the Caucasus, for example) and will place more pressures on whatever official contract system is established to approximate what mercenaries are offered.

With those caveats aside, it must be stated that contract service appears to be the inevitable future for the force -- barring extraordinary and unforeseen developments. Once the initial problems are sorted out, it promises to become one of the most ubiquitous features of the new Russian military. The positive attitudes fostered by contract service as it begins to take hold will be manifold -- there will be an increase in military prestige, professionalism, the volunteer spirit, and a greater identification (both at the leadership level and among the rank-and-file) with Western volunteer armies and a sharp decrease in certain negative phenomena such as **dedovshchina** (see below in this Section). It will certainly

be an aspect of the new military which Western policymakers will want to encourage.

CORRUPTION

Corruption has been rampant in the new Russian military and may be growing even worse. The newspaper **Syn Otechestva** (**Son of the Fatherland**), whose masthead states that it also is published by the Ministry of Defense) printed a cartoon (Figure 1) in April, 1992 (No. 16), placing the problem in stark, if perhaps only slightly exaggerated, relief. It shows a somewhat shady character asking the father of a young boy, "Why do you want to get a Zhiguli (an Italian Fiat car manufactured in the former Soviet Union)? Buy a BTR from me." Numerous other examples could be cited.

Nevertheless, in articles in **Krasnaia Zvezda**, the official publication of the Russian Defense Ministry, there are indications that the ministry is upset that many in the Russian media have reportedly overplayed the corruption issue. Though the newspaper acknowledges problems, an article by the chief of the Finance Inspectorate and deputy chief of the Main Military Budget and Finance Directorate of the MOD, states: "...there is more than enough such nonsense, lies and stretching of the truth (about this) in many magazine articles."³² Nevertheless, even in this more conservative publication, the following problems are acknowledged: "The

incidence of losses, shortages, and theft of military property, equipment and weapons is showing a growth in 1992."

³³ Concurrent with concern over corruption is a strong MOD animus against most forms of entrepreneurship in the military, even though many officers have been forced into such situations in order to feed their families: "...the rapid flourishing of entrepreneurship [has] played an extremely negative role...[E]ntrepreneurship, which shows no respect for the law, has also drawn military personnel into the orbit of the criminals."³⁴ There is also concern that local commanders are losing control of the situation within their units: "A lack of control on the part of military commanders and chiefs [has] exposed a host of opportunities for abuses and blatant profiteering at military and state expense."³⁵

In November, 1992, Yeltsin submitted a draft decree which would allow the MOD to sell ex-military stock "excluding arms and ammunition". The decree would exempt the MOD from income taxes and customs duties on such sales, while the actual proceeds are to be "deposited into a special Defense Ministry fund and used to finance the construction and acquisition of living accommodation for servicemen, including those whose period of service has expired."³⁶ It was also stated that "agricultural co-operatives of servicemen, farm holdings, and servicemen who have been retired in connection with the reduction in the numbers of the Armed Forces, and Army

veterans" will reportedly receive the highest preferences from the income from such sales.³⁷

An explosive issue is the question of corruption in high places. The latest scandal involves whether senior Russian military officers have been receiving "dachas at a fraction of their value", including possibly Minister of Defense Grachev.³⁸ Then there is the issue of corruption tied to organized crime. Security Minister chief Viktor Barannikov in February, 1993, denounced what he called the existence in some locations of "paramilitary structures which can trigger local upheavals" in Russia.³⁹ This involves both the issue of some military personnel having links with organized crime,⁴⁰ as well as the fact that some criminal "paramilitary" elements may pose present and future problems for the military (and Interior forces) to deal with. In either event, corruption is a very destabilizing factor on the military ethos. However, as other positive factors begin to take hold (increased pay, housing, better legal standards, etc.), these shall lead to a lessening of the atmosphere that promotes corruption. This, in turn, will provide greater incentive for spending the requisite funds for the professionalization of the force.



SYN OTECHESTVA, NO. 16 APRIL 1992

Figure (1). Suspicious character to a father: "What are you trying to buy a Zhiguli [an Italian Fiat made in the former USSR] for? Buy a BTR [Bronetransporter - armored personnel carrier] from me for the boy!" From Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland), No. 16, April, 1992.

THE COSSACKS: A REVIVAL OF OLD TRADITIONS

Just as the end of Russia's frontier period put an end to the original form of Cossackdom,...the Revolution [of 1917] ...rendered the Cossacks obsolete as a military caste.⁴¹

Not quite. The revival of Cossack units and their integration into the new Russian army have emerged out of historical obsolescence. A major article in *Kommersant* in October, 1992, discussed the meeting of a so-called "Great Cossack Circle" of the Kuban region, said to represent some 10,000 Cossack members.⁴² Just prior to this conference, the collegium of the Russian Ministry of Defense reportedly "ordered that a stage-by-stage plan and schedule be developed for staffing subunits of the Russian Armed Forces with Cossacks."⁴³ The Cossack conference then approved the slogan 'Together With the President and the Army!' and endorsed a "decision to establish a Cossack contingent within the Russian army."⁴⁴

The Cossacks' re-introduction into the Russian military has both positive and negative elements. We shall examine each of these in turn.

On the positive side, there is a great sense of Cossack tradition and esprit d'corps that could be transferred in part to some of the rest of the force. This positive tradition would probably come down somewhere between the free-wheeling traditions of the past on the one hand and the later "fawning submission" to the Tsar which characterized many of the

Cossacks.⁴⁵ Now instead, their loyalties will be ostensibly to the Russian people or to an idealized sense of Russian nationalism (although in reality it will be to themselves or to their Cossack leaders).

It is also possible that a revival of Cossack traditions will create new frictions within a professional volunteer force, especially if such a revival leads to the "legalization of the former privileges and rights of Cossacks"⁴⁶ over and above that of regular forces.

There are other potentially serious negative aspects as well, depending on how Cossacks are both employed and controlled. If not controlled properly, their use could be extremely destabilizing. A case in point was the 1992 fighting in Moldova, where Cossacks were employed in support of ethnic Russian forces of the Dniester region against those supporting Moldova's claims over the Dniester region:

Initial service for the Cossacks involved operating patrols along the 'Dniester Republic' frontier with Moldova. In those times of limited activity, the Cossacks were involved in numerous confrontations with local residents, including the ethnic Russians they had come to defend. Cossacks were often described as people who would arrange a killing for a reasonable price...While Russian sources report successful Cossack participation in the fighting in Tighina in June, 1992 (when they were credited with helping capture eleven Moldovan tanks), there are also reports that during lulls Cossacks robbed individuals as well as shops and homes.⁴⁷

In some respects, history does not seem to change very much, despite seventy-plus years of Communist rule.

Christopher Duffy describes some eighteenth century and attitudes toward Cossacks:

The most serious reservations of all concerned the Cossacks' penchant for despoiling innocent civilians. Indeed the presence of Cossacks on a theater of war often did more harm than good, for they wasted the resources of the countryside, and their reputation for infamy was likely to cling to the army as a whole.⁴⁸

The central question is, can Cossack forces be integrated into the armed forces in a positive fashion that will support overall cohesion and stability? Will they be used primarily on the periphery of Russia to support nationalist goals, as in the case of the Dniester conflict? If the latter is the case, there may not be much more centralized control of their actions than there was in the eighteenth century, when they developed such a poor reputation for their attacks on innocent civilians. The Dniester example was a very poor beginning because it demonstrated a high degree of Cossack autonomy. If Moscow desires to make Cossack units a formal part of the Russian armed forces, it must first break that autonomy in a decisive fashion. The challenge will be to reinvigorate some Cossack traditions, while downplaying the latter's independent spirit.

"DEDOVSHCHINA": CAN A 'ZINC COFFIN' ARMY ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS?

One of the sadistic hallmarks of the former Soviet military was **dedovshchina** (the so-called "tyranny of the grandfathers").⁴⁹ It comes from the Russian word **ded**, an abbreviation of **dedushka** (grandfather). "**Dedovshchina**" usually involves extreme brutality and hazing,⁵⁰ sometimes resulting in the deaths of young conscripts. Though it has gone on for some time in the Soviet military as a sadistic "rite of passage", the effects of **dedovshchina** only really began to be exposed during the **glasnost** period under Gorbachev.⁵¹ This created a major backlash -- especially among the mothers of those killed as a result of its brutal rituals. This was best exemplified by the military's use of closed zinc coffins (infamous from their use during the Afghan war) that brought home the remains of servicemen who supposedly died of natural causes or were suicides, but who actually were murdered as a result of **dedovshchina** hazing or retribution.⁵² In February, 1992, this author viewed a major Russian television program concerning the effects of **dedovshchina** and hazing.⁵³ Mothers of soldier-victims made the following kinds of comments: "My attitude toward the army used to be positive" and "I wrote to the Ministry of Defense, but they keep covering up the murders."⁵⁴ One well-known Western analyst of the former Soviet military, Harriet Fast Scott, believes that an even "more alarming" problem than

dedovshchina is **zemliachestvo**.⁵⁵ (We examine **zemliachestvo** as a general factor below). However, Scott defines **zemliachestvo** in this case as conditions in units "wherein soldiers from the same region formed gangs to protect themselves from rival gangs in the same unit but from a different region. Weaker soldiers were protected by their **zemliaks**." ⁵⁶ **Zemliaks** (ethnic or regional gang members, from the word **zemlia**, which means "earth", signifying people from "our area"). **Zemliaks** even chose their own NCOs in some units.⁵⁷

The question is, what place can **dedovshchina** have, if any, in even a semi-volunteer armed forces? Can it survive? In a perverse way, it may have served the needs of a mass conscript Soviet army under totalitarian rule, but it is certainly a destabilizing factor to the degree it still persists in a Russian military attempting to reform and modernize itself. As one observer states, the abuse generated by **dedovshchina** and similar measures are in part responsible for the "habitually low reenlistment rates among conscripts completing service...":⁵⁸

"Only about one per cent reenlist, despite large pay increases and other enticements for them to do so, reflecting the gap between societal expectations and the realities of military life."⁵⁹

In addition, "[t]he disruptive personnel turnover and lack of supportive relations across horizontal tenure-based lines

weaken unit cohesion, slowing the effort to eliminate **dedovshchina**."⁶⁰

Independent unverified sources claim that deaths by so-called "non-regulation relations" (**dedovshchina** and other forms of abuse against conscripts) have amounted to some 15,000 fatalities since 1985, a statistic that the Soviet military hotly disputed in past years.⁶¹ For comparison purposes, the "toll was 14,000 dead in nine years of fighting in Afghanistan."⁶² It also affected combat performance. One author asserts that when the Soviet military permitted **dedovshchina** to be practiced in Soviet units in Afghanistan combat effectiveness was affected detrimentally.⁶³ Higher priority units and combat units in the Soviet armed forces reportedly have had lower percentages of **dedovshchina**.⁶⁴ For one thing, it was less tolerated, and these units also had better-educated conscripts serving with them.⁶⁵

Another reason **dedovshchina** has been such a pervasive factor in the Soviet armed forces is the result of "a poorly-developed noncommissioned officer corps and an officer corps that must assume the petty administrative functions normally performed by NCOs in Western forces."⁶⁶ During the Soviet period, **dedovshchina** was one of the chief enforcement mechanisms of a caste system between second and first-year conscripts.⁶⁷ Today, however, there is much better public information about the problem. Today, new conscripts are, unlike some of their predecessors, usually well aware of what

horrors await them during their first six months of military duty⁶⁸ and also that society now has a very different view of the practice. These attitudes were beginning to change even during the Gorbachev period:

Contemporary society no longer condones the traditional abusive treatment and harsh nature of compulsory military service.⁶⁹

Casual acceptance of **dedovshchina** by much of the former Soviet officer corps as "just being the way things are" or out of indifference, or as a crude "control mechanism"⁷⁰ will have to change dramatically in the new Russian military if it is to be successful. The harmful effects of this dreaded ritual will hurt the armed forces either way: there will continue to be mass draft evasions and very poor semi-annual call-ups and/or there will be very little attraction for others to volunteer for service as "professionals".

DESERTIONS

The commander of the newly re-created Ural Military District stated in late October, 1992, that "desertion from the Army has reached proportions that neither the pre-revolutionary Russian Army nor the Soviet Army ever saw."⁷¹ The military authorities have even upbraided the parents of some conscripts for allegedly spoiling their children, or taking them home from duty stations, thereby "facilitating desertion..."⁷² Thus, desertion has spread to being not just

the action of isolated, disaffected individuals but is becoming more and more of a broad social problem. Desertions cannot continue at the very high rates that are occurring without substantially destroying what little remains of the conscript system and further eroding the remnants of military prestige. The fact that it has become much more common is another argument in favor of the more rapid establishment of a volunteer force. In addition, the social behaviors of both would-be conscripts and family networks that would abet their desertion will make forced compliance with a draft -- even under a more authoritarian regime -- extremely difficult.

DRAWDOWNS: THE VIEW FROM THE MILITARY OF DEFENSE

"The Russian Ministry of Defense is seriously worried that, even with the planned reduction in the number of servicemen on compulsory service to 1.5 million men, it will not be possible to bring the Army and Navy completely up to strength. There is already a great shortage of personnel in Army units and on ships. This is especially so in the Navy, where the length of service has been reduced to two years, and any day now two groups of conscripts will be discharged simultaneously--the last three-year recruits and the first two-year ones. There is a similar situation in other branches of the Armed Forces as well."

Krasnaia Zvezda, November 12, 1992

Serious drawdowns are occurring throughout the Russian military. Planned reductions are to be carried out through 31 December 1994, so that on 1 January 1995 the armed forces will ostensibly have met their targets.

The planned reductions, combined with fears of being unable to meet current manning requirements (as cited in **Krasnaia Zvezda** above) have created a very confusing picture for force planning purposes. It is also clear from even a cursory reading of the Russian military press that the drawdowns are psychologically traumatic for the force, as they would be for most military establishments. However, this somewhat normal reaction, combined with a scandalous lack of housing for current personnel, low pay rates and low prestige, has created a very destabilizing factor for the military. As a counter-argument to the coming "death announcement" of the conscript system predicted previously, the real manpower shortfalls anticipated by the Ministry of Defense may delay it. There is a continuing need for a stopgap measure to hold the force together at requisite levels -- a role that the draft continues to fulfill for time being, but one which will not continue indefinitely.

ETHNIC PROBLEMS -- NOW ON RUSSIAN TERRITORY

The Soviet Union has met its demise, and with it some of the ethnic problems which Moscow formerly faced now confront the new governments of the former republics of the Union. Russia, however has a brand new set of problems. Some of their names are as follows: Bashkiria, North Ossetia, Tatarstan, Ingushetia, Siberia and other regions (all located within the

territory of the Russian Federation). These regions and the various ethnic groups within them, while asserting varying degrees of independence, technically must also be integrated into the new force somehow. This must be an **vse-rossiiskiy** ("**all-Rossiiskiy**") force, that is, a "federative" or "federal" force that includes **all** the regions of Russia, not just Great Russians. It is unknown just how much thought (or not) has already gone into planning for putting such a force together. Ethnic Russians will be sensitive to charges from ethnic Bashkiri, Tatars, Ingush and others that they are acting in an imperial manner and trampling on the rights of these regions by opposing their full independence or demanding their participation in some form in the Russian national armed forces. These are dramas that have yet to play themselves out within the microcosm of the Federation itself. It is most likely that Moscow will compromise heavily in areas such as military participation if it means holding the Federation (and, therefore, Russia itself) together as a unitary state. In practical terms, this will probably mean that the force will be overwhelmingly ethnic Russian in content.

In the meantime, however, ethnic problems still abound. Minister of Defense Grachev himself recently alluded to this while speaking in Moscow to a group of heads of military-patriotic Organizations:

"There have been frequent cases of young men coming to serve in the Army and Navy who are prone to political demagoguery, who are undisciplined, who have been 'steeped' in interethnic conflicts, and who bring ethnic hostility into Army collectives."⁷³

HOUSING DIFFICULTIES

One 1992 Western assessment of the housing problem for the Russian armed forces claimed that "[m]ore than 100,000 officers and their families in the Russian Federation currently lack housing, and that number is expected to double in the coming year..."⁷⁴ Russian assessments are equally bleak. In an 18 August 1992 article in *Krasnaia Zvezda*, the deputy chief of the Main Billeting Directorate of the Russian MOD, Maj.-Gen. D. Tarmak, stated: "According to our calculations, there are presently 201,000 families of servicemen in Russia in need of housing, 121,900 of which do not have apartments."⁷⁵ Additionally, Yarmak stated that, of these numbers, "we calculate that there will be 130,000-140,000 servicemen without a roof over their head by the beginning of the year [1993]."⁷⁶ Part of the problem is as follows: local cities and oblasts do not generally have sufficient housing to house officers and others discharged from the military into the civilian sphere. Consequently, this has affected how fast some military units can be deactivated and their personnel discharged. Many local administrators have been urging the national government and the MOD to assist

in providing housing at the local level. However, the process has been a very rocky one. A story in *Izvestiia* in late November, 1992, stated that some 40 billion rubles allocated in July, 1992, "for improving the provision of housing for Army and Navy servicemen and for servicemen discharged into the reserve" had not yet been received by the Ministry of Defense as of that date.⁷⁷ The government resolution was entitled, "On Urgent Measures to Provide Housing for Servicemen, Persons Discharged from Military Service, and Members of Their Families", and it was signed on August 20, 1992.⁷⁸

The chairman of the Committee for Servicemen's Social Security, Aleksandr Temerko, claimed in November, 1992, that his committee will monitor payment of these sums, if and when the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Economy make them available to the Ministry of Defense.⁷⁹ In the meantime, the status of programs that would be funded by the 40 billion rubles remains up in the air. In some ways, the political situation appears a repetition of maneuvers between the former powerful Tsarist finance and war ministries.⁸⁰

Just as before the 1917 Revolution, this would not be a good sign for stability if the military must always go begging to the Finance Ministry and is not able to establish a sure budget on its own merits for both personnel and equipment.

Housing construction costs have been supplemented by the creation of a "Voentekh" State Joint-Stock Company, "which has

already earned \$11 million by selling military hardware designed for noncombat applications".⁸¹ This has all been spent on housing construction for the military or ex-military personnel, according to the article.⁸²

Some one and a half billion rubles have reportedly been set aside for land purchases in the Tula and Ryazan oblasts for 30,000 former officers and warrant officers who want to become private farmers; however, this program has been suspended because of a lack of government coordination of these programs.⁸³

MILITARY INSURANCE

The "American standard" is presently viewed very highly in Russia in most spheres of activity. This attitude even extends into the area of military insurance: the Russians are now looking at the American system of military insurance as a model to emulate in some way. A letter from a reader of **Voennyi Vestnik** on the nature of the American military insurance program prompted a special article in the September 1992 issue.⁸⁴ The journal remarks very favorably on the military insurance programs of the U.S. and Canada, concluding that "we hope that with time, more up-to-date laws will be adopted [in Russia] which will more truly provide for the social security of all servicemen."⁸⁵

There is a great need at this point for some sort of comprehensive insurance program for Russian servicemen. Its current deficiencies are certainly an instability factor for the military as an institution, since the present situation creates further insecurity for servicemembers and their families at a time of great economic uncertainty for the nation as a whole. Some of this may change as the new contract system begins to take effect, but only if the contracts include reasonable insurance provisions. Some such provisions have recently been initiated for those in combat duty in Ossetia and Ingushetia (see following section).

The United States and other Western countries could improve the situation from a public policy perspective and provide for greater stability in the Russian armed forces by sharing with the Russians the kind of data and expertise that have gone into our successful military insurance programs (such as Servicemen's Group Life Insurance).

Competition with Mercenary Insurance

In the meantime, however, more Russian servicemembers with experience may elect to be discharged so that they may serve as mercenaries, some of whom are reportedly receiving high salaries and good life insurance policies.⁸⁶ On the other hand, though initially attractive, such mercenary insurance schemes may be illusory -- Russian relatives and

families might have a hard time collecting survivors' benefits if the contracting party declines to pay! Contract law is still in its infancy in Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union, and it is difficult to see how an activity this controversial (i.e., the hiring of ex-Russian soldiers as mercenaries) would or could be upheld by the courts if the payer declined to pay insurance benefits. This in turn would make mercenary service that much less attractive to would-be mercenaries still serving in the Russian armed forces.

Combat Duty Insurance

In November, 1992, Minister of Defense Grachev signed Order No. 219, which provided additional pay and benefits for servicemen and reservists "performing combat tasks" in the emergency zone of North Ossetia and Ingushetia.⁸⁷ New insurance rates were also established for Russian servicemen killed or wounded in the combat zone: 50,000 rubles for a slight or medium injury (related to official duties), 80,000 rubles for a serious injury, and 100,000 rubles if death should occur.⁸⁸ Though these figures are certainly an improvement, it must be borne in mind that comparable dollar/ruble exchange rates in early 1993 were more than 500 rubles/dollar. The question is, with inflation continuing at a dizzying pace, how much can really be purchased for 100,000

rubles? In hard currency that comes to about \$200 at current rates. In the Russian economy of 1992/93, \$200 can purchase quite a lot more in goods and services than it can in the United States; nevertheless, in the larger scheme of things, this sum of 100,000 rubles (when made equivalent to its dollar value) does not seem to be much financial compensation for the loss of a human life.

MORALE

According to Aleksandr Zhilin, editor of *Armiia Rossii*, morale in the Russian armed forces is "so low that at least four underground committees opposed to President Boris N. Yeltsin have been formed inside the military."⁸⁹ These so-called "underground committees" may or may not be against the reforms. Some may in fact be very pro-reformist. But the present climate within the Russian military is such that they cannot operate openly and thus are designated as "underground".

Low morale is obviously a very destabilizing factor. Various steps are being taken to improve the situation, such as the passage of a provisional law on "The Status of Servicemen", more clearly outlining their rights.⁹⁰ A *Krasnaia Zvezda* headline underscores the frustration: "We've Waited a Long Time for This Law".⁹¹ The problem is that it is a transitional law,⁹² and there is still much that remains

unclear. And even with clearer laws and regulations, morale will still likely be low for some time: the combination of low pay, ethnic conflict, and low social prestige will keep it low until a new foundation for professionalism is laid.

"NEW STRUCTURES"

Inherent in the major reorganization of the Russian military contemplated over the next several years is the concept of **novye struktury** ("new structures"). This concept holds that a new military requires new organizations -- an idea that can be unsettling to traditionalists but help could breathe life into a smaller, professional force. Over the short term, this concept of "new structures" (which is still only vaguely defined) may be somewhat divisive; over the longer-term, however, if new military organizations are brought in and carefully integrated into the force, this process will probably be a unifying and stabilizing factor. A recent cartoon in the journal **Armiia** (Army) demonstrates with humor the uneasiness that some officers feel about the "new structures" (Figure 2). It shows an officer with a magician's hat explaining to two other officers: "What violation? I'm from the 'new structures'...I'm a military astrologist-parapsychologist!"⁹³ Though humorous, the cartoon does strike at the heart of some officers' concerns -- that the so-called "new structures", whatever they are -- will be ill

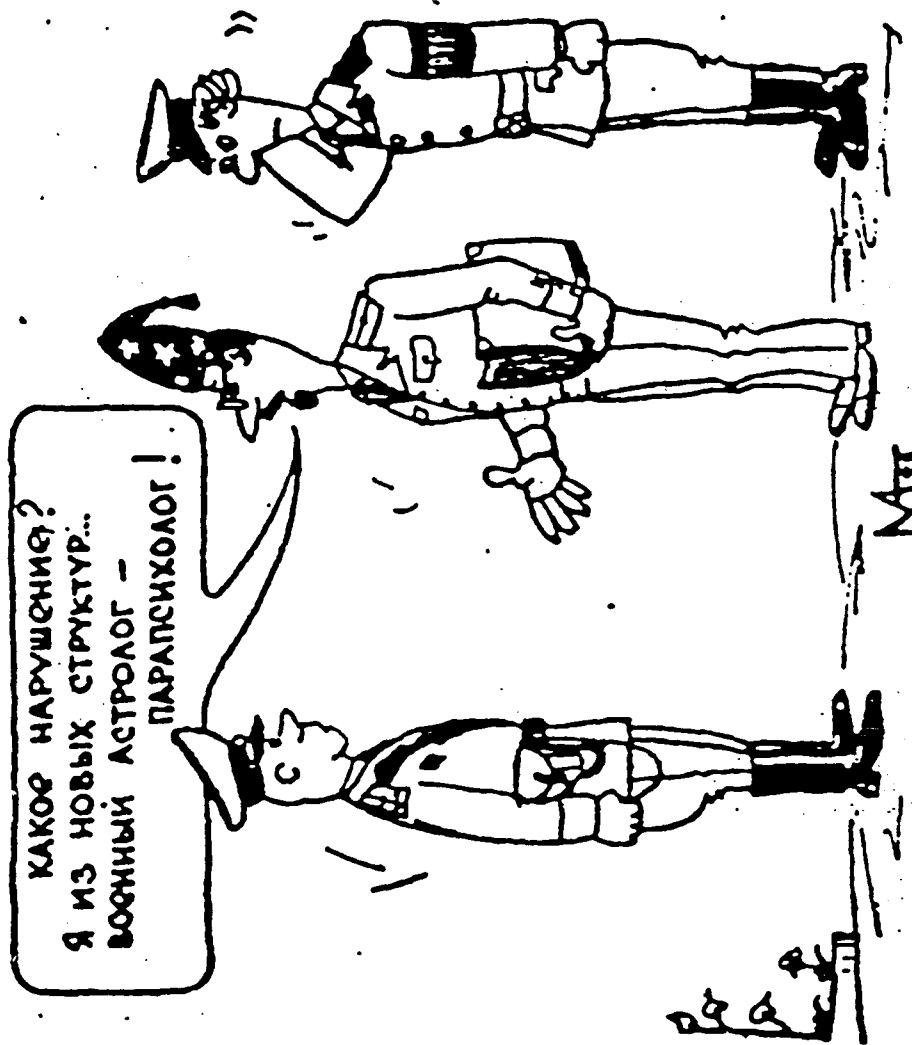


*Рисунок капитана Андрея МЕЗИНА.
Новочеркасск*

Armiya, No. 14, July, 1992.

Figure (2). "What violation? I'm from the 'new structures'. I'm your military astrologer-parapsychologist!", *Armiya* (Army), No 14, July, 1992.

-fitted to traditional military units. The other underlying theme in this cartoon is that the military must be prepared to accept very novel developments decreed from "on high" even if they appear to go against the grain of past experience or practice. Nevertheless, this concept of "new structures" is an important one to watch. It will probably be the chief conduit by which new ideas for the armed forces are passed on for implementation.

A NEW OATH FOR THE NEW RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES?

A story in *Pravda* on 5 December, 1992, claimed that Grachev had considered introducing a new oath that month, but that heavy opposition to the idea (reportedly some 80 per cent of officers who were questioned about it) pushed the MOD to withdraw the idea for the time being.⁹⁴ *Krasnaia Zvezda* vehemently denied the claim in its November 6, 1992, issue, calling them "groundless".⁹⁵ It is not clear whether a Russian oath was seriously contemplated or not by the MOD; what is clear is that the very notion received intense opposition from the officer corps, and that the MOD itself appeared extremely sensitive about the issue. The MOD certainly had the authority to reserve for itself the right to introduce an oath of some kind later on, but it did not even do that. This could be an indicator of current MOD weakness. Further, the new law "On Defense" states that the Supreme

Soviet has the power to "confirm the text of the military oath",⁹⁶ which means that whatever oath is contemplated in the future must be approved by the legislature and is not the exclusive domain of the military itself. The fact that this is so controversial means that the basis of a new Russian identity is not yet firmly established. The psychological wounds left in the wake of the demise of the former Soviet armed forces are still too raw. These, combined with the almost comical round of various Commonwealth military oaths and new individual state oaths (e.g., Ukraine), have left a sour taste in the mouths of many Russian servicemen and officers. Once the political situation in Russia has stabilized a little, however, the situation will change and a purely Russian national oath for the armed forces will follow suit. What must happen before that is a purging of the memory banks of scenes where some ethnic Russian servicemen who happened to be serving on Ukrainian territory when the USSR disintegrated were torn between taking an oath to the CIS, taking one to Ukraine, or making their way back to Russia. It has been a very bitter ordeal whereby more water must go "under the bridge" before a Russian oath can be successfully introduced. But such an oath also seems somewhat inevitable for identity and loyalty purposes: it will be an important stabilizing and unifying factor in the Russian military when it is eventually introduced.

PAY CHANGES: STANDARD AND COMBAT PAY

Standard monthly pay rates under the new contract system appear to be as follows (although it must be caveated that, with the rapid changes in the economy, even these figures and estimates may no longer be valid):

13,000 rubles for ground troops (\$26/month)
15,000 rubles for Air force personnel (\$30/month)
18,000 for submarine fleet personnel (\$36/mo.)⁹⁷

Regarding combat pay, on 6 November 1992, MOD Grachev issued Order No. 219, which increased combat pay "benefits for servicemen and military reservists of the joint forces attached to the Provisional Administration, while performing combat tasks in the zone of the state of emergency [in the regions of North Ossetia and Ingushetia]." ⁹⁸

These additional payments for combat duty in the North Ossetia/Ingushetia combat zone are as follows:

10,000 rubles for senior officers (\$20 extra/month)
9,000 rubles for junior officers (\$18/month)
8,500 rubles for ensigns (and extended-service personnel) (\$17/month)
8,000 rubles for privates (\$16/month)⁹⁹

(Figures approximate, based on 500 rubles/dollar, early 1993 exchange rate).

As with insurance, these pay figures are extremely low in comparison with their buying power in the current hyper-inflationary Russian economy. The authorities **must** address this problem eventually if it is to retain a viable force -- either contract or conscript, or any combination thereof.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE MILITARY

The Gorbachev years, followed by the failed August, 1991, coup, witnessed the establishment of numerous military union organizations, such as "Servicemen for Democracy", "Independent Union of Servicemen (IUS)" and others (see Appendix C).¹⁰⁰ Though not embraced by the authorities (either during the Gorbachev years nor during the successive Yeltsin years of power), there has been a grudging acceptance of the clout of such groups, especially the officers assemblies. An early example of a recognition of that clout was when CINC of CIS Joint Armed Forces, Marshal Shaposhnikov, "on the eve of an [officer] assembly, wanted to speak with officers...to find out what they were thinking, particularly following the events of August [1991]."¹⁰¹ Many politicians of various stripes have flocked to officers' assemblies over the last few years in an attempt to curry military votes and to gauge military concerns. In addition, many military officers have themselves been active as people's deputies at various levels in the political spectrum (Marshal Shaposhnikov, CINC CIS Armed Forces has indirectly opposed this development, asking, "Should a military man be a deputy at all? I think not."¹⁰² Officers' assemblies are a source of internal cohesion for officers, even as they also serve as a thorn in the side of the authorities. In the absence of official mechanisms, these new organizations serve

both as steam-valves for the release of frustrations and airing of grievances, as well as a means for change.

The Ministry of Defense has not been overly pleased with the influence of the assemblies and their leadership "coordinating councils", since these are parallel power structures to any official bodies that might be created. In May, 1992, the new Russian Minister of Defense, General Pavel Grachev, demanded that officers' assemblies above the regimental level be disbanded.¹⁰³ He specifically targeted the "coordinating councils" of the assemblies for dissolution. Nevertheless, nearly a month later, the main Coordinating Council of Officers' Assemblies was still meeting.¹⁰⁴ As of this writing, it appears that some of the supposedly proscribed assemblies are probably still extant -- indicating their strength as well as the weakness of the central authorities in disbanding them.

The initial refusal to disband demonstrates the very important role that the officers assemblies and their coordinating councils have been playing during this transition period. Their continued existence illustrates an unofficial degree of cohesion within the part of the officer corps that transcends the official command structure. However, the new law "On Defense" is an attempt to eventually proscribe much of that activity, if possible -- a move which is quite controversial:

The law [On Defense] contains a special article prohibiting the activity of social and

other organizations and associations pursuing political aims and the setting up of their structures within the Armed Forces. It is forbidden to conduct political campaigns of any kind, including election campaigns, on Armed Forces military unit, combined unit, or establishment compounds.¹⁰⁵

This kind of tension over military involvement in politics is not a new phenomenon for Russia. In 1905, Emperor Nicholas II signed War Department Order 804, which forbade military participation in politics of any kind, even activities which supported the monarchy.¹⁰⁶

Also, the officers' assemblies and the rise of the military unions would appear to have had a brief historical reflection in the independent military newspaper **Voennyi Golos (The Military Voice)**,¹⁰⁷ published briefly in 1906. **Voennyi Golos** asserted an independent, professional role for the military in much the same way that these present groups are asserting their prerogatives in spite of the position of the Ministry of Defense. The officers who published **Voennyi Golos** were outraged by Order No. 804. They asserted that it was "impossible and undesirable to isolate the officer corps from politics."¹⁰⁸ The paper did not last even a year before it was suppressed.¹⁰⁹ The present "independent military movement", if it can be so termed, has already lasted longer than **Voennyi Golos'** brief existence and put down deeper roots. The existence of the military unions, officer assemblies, and publications such as **Armiia Rossii** testify to that.

Both Democrats and Fascists in Military Organizations

Though we have thus far discussed political activity of the moderate-centrist categories, it is important to note that the right-wing is active as well. The Russian Officers Union, chaired by Stanislav Terekhov, is one such group. Terekhov claims that his union is

an organization of people who think independently and who have nothing to lose. This distinguishes us from the General Staff, who in the past toadied up to the [Communist] Party in an undignified manner and today is doing the same with Yeltsin. About half of our members are active officers; the other half are reservists.¹¹⁰

Terekhov further bitterly complained in the interview that "Yeltsin promised a united armed forces, clear service contracts, apartments and social security. The result is zero."¹¹¹ The group has also been identified as being part of the ultra-right "National Salvation Front",¹¹² which Yeltsin has sought to disband. Terekhov's group is pushing very hard to countermand Grachev's order disbanding the officer assemblies above the regimental level.¹¹³ He stated on January 12, 1993, that his group will continue to press for an "All-Officers' Assembly," claiming that it would deal with purely **military** (i.e., non-political) problems: "...the combat readiness of our armed forces, military discipline, and the social protection of officers."¹¹⁴

The MOD Takes the Offensive Against Political Activity

Article 3 of new MOD Regulation No. 147 dealing with officer assemblies states: "...at a general assembly [of officers or servicemen], criticism or discussion of orders is not allowed, nor of the instructions of commanders."¹¹⁵ At the same time, while attempting to destroy the Officers' Assemblies' independence, MOD Order No. 147, Article 21, attempts to place all sorts of obligations on officers in these assemblies to fulfill -- a laundry list of "cultural" and "propagandistic" requirements to support the military that has the ring of the old Soviet military (minus the Communist Party).¹¹⁶ The MOD's attempt to "take over" the officers' assemblies, dictate what they must be, and then require officers to attend and perform certain functions, violates Articles 43 and 50 of the Russian Constitution, according to one military legal observer.¹¹⁷ Concerning the new limitations being placed on the assemblies, Rear Admiral Mochaikin states: "It would appear that someone wants to curtail the democratic processes in the Army and the Navy which were laid down by the officer assemblies."¹¹⁸ Mochaikin says that individual officer assemblies are stronger the farther they are from Moscow.¹¹⁹ He also reveals that MOD Grachev may have an almost visceral dislike to the very principle of having a council of this sort.¹²⁰ Mochaikin claims that soon after the creation of the Russian MOD, the

new young minister, in a speech to the General Staff Academy, reportedly stated: "We won't have any such organization. What do I need such an organization for? What is this to have an organization that would even demand that I come to its session?"¹²¹

Mochaikin has stated that "MOD leaders have not seen in the officers' assemblies an effective force capable of stabilizing the situation in military collectives, and by their own decisions have limited the rights and possibilities of the assemblies", clearly indicating that he himself believes that they can be used as effective stabilizing organizations.¹²² He further claims that, because the MOD order has reduced officer assembly activity to the regiment and brigade level, the ability of the assemblies to help solve problems, "particularly cadre problems, has been brought to a minimum."¹²³

Mochaikin, who has extensive experience as a political officer and was once deputy commander of a nuclear submarine, states that the Coordinating Council of the officer assemblies is also somewhat in disarray with regard to its mission since the establishment of national armies.¹²⁴ It sees its new goal as one of being a "collegial organ for strengthening mutual understanding and friendship among officers" of the armed forces of the various governments of the CIS.¹²⁵ It is possible that the coordinating council may be able to support inter-CIS military relationships in ways that the official MOD

cannot, although for the moment "the activity of the Coordinating Council has been essentially paralyzed."¹²⁶ He then asks rhetorically, "Will we really be able to bring together again 5,000 delegates from different armies?"¹²⁷

The answer is that the officers' assemblies will continue in some form (at both the inter-CIS and Russian military levels) for as long as they perform useful functions that official bodies are not fulfilling. They may not have the same degree of authority (if they are proscribed), but they will still have internal legitimacy as long as they are expressing the real frustrations of officers. Officers will meet informally if necessary and exchange information and concerns -- meetings that the MOD needs to positively co-opt but not prohibit.

POLITICAL OFFICERS.

Political officers in the former Soviet military were primarily concerned with assuring political reliability in the military ranks and fulfilling the orders of the CPSU under the aegis of the now defunct Main Political Administration.¹²⁸ But the political officer (best known as the **zampolit**, deputy commander for political affairs) had another duty as well -- tainted as it was by obeisance to the Party -- and that was looking out for "military discipline and the 'moral' and 'ethical' state of every soldier or sailor."¹²⁹ Though

Western studies of the role of the **zampolit** have usually concentrated on the interference his presence played on the normal execution of military duties (and the subsequent resentment engendered in military professionals), this approach may have missed a proper understanding of his other subsidiary responsibilities. In his book on Soviet military politics, Timothy Colton hinted at some of those additional tasks:

The most highly valued role of political officers is to serve as direct elicitors of military performance...[T]heir day-to-day efforts are aimed primarily at rank-and-file servicemen, whom they induce to contribute to organizational success by means that can best be called persuasive or mobilizing. They do this in four main ways: (i) Providing heroic inspiration; (ii) maintaining morale; (iii) reinforcing discipline; (iv) encouraging technical competence.¹³⁰

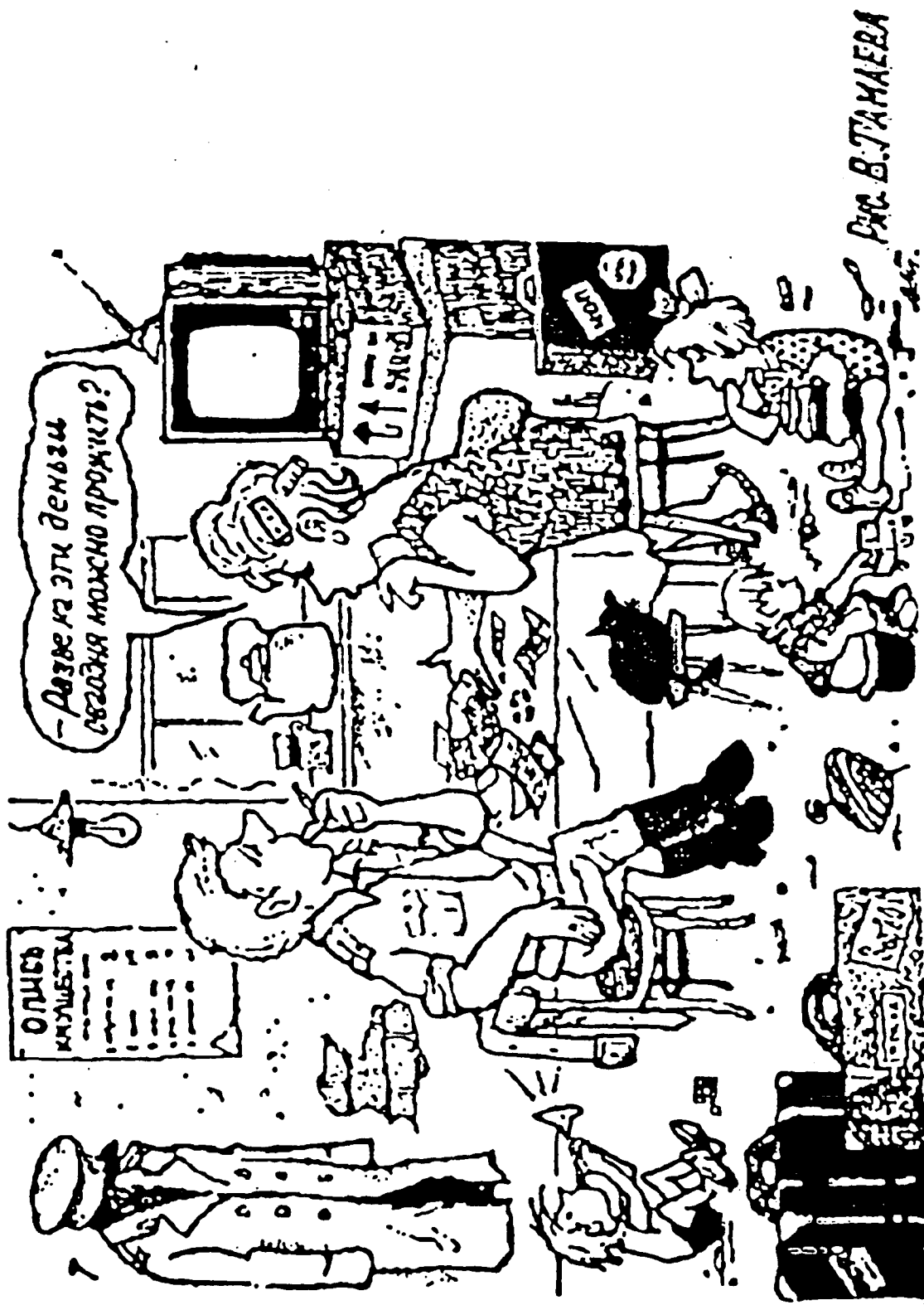
It is only now, after the **zampolit** has been removed from the chain of command, that these aspects of his duties have received more serious attention. This is not to suggest that having a "political officer" looking over one's shoulder is welcome in any professional military organization. Nevertheless, ironic as it appears, many Russian commanders may indeed have begun to bemoan the fact that their former **zampolits** have been stripped of all authority. One commander, a Lieutenant Colonel, describes his **zampolit** as now being his poor little "helper", bemoaning the fact that his **zampolit** Major can no longer assist him in the arduous task of running the unit.¹³¹ Isachenko discusses the fact that a year ago

his unit political officer, a Major Kanygin, had power in the unit "equal to the commander" whereas now he is "just a helper".¹³² He states that though some **zampolits** were "timeservers", others served honorably: "I am sure that many commanders agree with me, that when the post of political deputy was abolished in the forces, it was as though we were stripped of our right hand."¹³³ He makes the following suggestion to "normalize" the situation, in his view: "I am sure that if we would raise the [present] status of 'helper' to one of being deputy commander for personnel, a whole range of problems would be resolved in very short order."¹³⁴ He concludes: "Primarily those very officers who hold this post would feel the responsibility that the army needs them...And commanders would have the opportunity to devote more time to their chief problems."¹³⁵

POVERTY - A DIVISIVE FACTOR LEADING TO INSTABILITY.

According to a September, 1992, article in **Voennyi Vestnik (Military Bulletin)**, some one third of Russian servicemen in 1992 were in a "poverty situation", with the figure rising to 56% for those with several children.¹³⁶ It is difficult to conceive of a situation more conducive to instability than many soldiers and officers of a former imperial power finding themselves in a near-poverty situation because of rapid economic changes. Lt. Col. Rodinov, mentioned

earlier, stated in **Pravda** in December, 1992, that "some officers are selling themselves, their weapons, equipment, and military property. Very many, especially in large cities, surreptitiously join various commercial structures and even open private firms, preparing a fallback position..."¹³⁷



- Every third Russian military family today is in a poverty situation
 - For those with several children the percentage rises to 56%
 - Officers' monetary allowances barely cover food expenses

Source: Voennyi Vestnik ("Military Bulletin"), No. 9, September, 1992, P.9

Figure (3). Wife to Officer-husband: "Do we really have enough money to live on today?" Voennyi Vestnik (Military Bulletin), No. 9, September, 1992, p. 9.

This situation has created acute short-term instability in the institution and must be addressed soon. Figure 2 shows a military wife (with three children playing in the background) asking her officer husband: "Can we really make it on this money today?"¹³⁸

A Strategic Rocket Forces officer stated in late 1992 that it is "simply laughable" that highly professional specialists having control over nuclear weaponry (in the Strategic Rocket Forces) should receive the equivalent of a mere \$25 per month and also have "difficulties in obtaining basic goods..."¹³⁹ He further states that he knows this from personal experience: "I know all this not by hearsay but because I myself have received such a salary for my labors, and I myself have gone for a long time without having my own place."¹⁴⁰

A Western Christian mission reported in December, 1992, that a Russian military representative had recently requested food parcels for 5,000 Russian military families,¹⁴¹ and numerous other examples of hardship and need could be cited.

What emerges from these readings is a perception of an officer corps in great financial disarray. This economic "fact of life" will be a continuing source of problems and instability, regardless of who holds power in the Kremlin. A year or two ago the extreme right-wing fascist Zhirinovskiy (see discussion under "The Role of Russian Nationalism", this

section, as well as "Zhirinovskiy" in Appendix B) stated that, if he took power, every officer would right away have his own personal attendant -- a far cry from the present situation where some officers do not even have a roof over their heads! But Zhirinovskiy (or someone like him) could not come to power and hold power without re-establishing a Stalinist-type state, which is certainly not very likely. What would be more likely is that a more conservative regime under someone like Rutskoy will emerge with a conservative legislature that will still have a commitment to democracy but will still have a difficult time getting roofs over all officers' heads! Even if an authoritative regime were to take power and had the wherewithal to divert tremendous economic resources into the military, the problem would not necessarily be solved. For one thing, the August, 1991, coup proved that an important link does exist between the military and the people. There is no desire that the military should receive special benefits while the rest of the country experiences extremely harsh economic times. Though Interior (MVD) forces are distinct from the regular military force, a 1992 letter from an MVD officer to the newspaper *Situatsiia*, is instructive and equally applicable to professional military officers. It decried the sorry economic plight of officers in the Interior Ministry forces. It took issue with the notion that officers were receiving "respectable" salaries while the rest of the nation was suffering: "Officers, like the predominant majority

of the population in Russia, lead a poor, and at times, near beggarly existence."¹⁴²

It would seem that the military and political leadership are constrained by two requirements: to improve the lives of servicemen and officers as quickly as possible but at the same time not allow improvements to progress too far out of step with the rest of the country. As many in the military would probably cynically observe, there is little chance of the latter occurring any time soon! However, even if a more authoritarian regime were to take power and to pour greater resources into military, these would have to be measured and well thought out in order to produce the desired effects.

Increased pay and benefits must keep ahead of hyperinflation and be so constructed as to enhance professionalism and increase military prestige within Russian society. Though many servicemen and officers today find themselves in a poverty situation, this sorry state of affairs will gradually improve with the downsizing of the force for those who remain, as well as for the new contract volunteers coming into the force.

TRANSITIONAL REGULATIONS: STABILIZING OR DESTABILIZING?

An October 24, 1992, article in *Krasnaia Zvezda* indicated that the new provisional Army regulations, which took effect on 1 January 1993, "would promote a strengthening of

discipline and order and a revival of the best traditions of the Russian Armed Forces."¹⁴³ That may be a rather optimistic assessment for now but one which may eventually prove true. Although the character of the regulations is temporary (final drafts will not be ready until after 1 March 1995), they appear to go a long way toward, as the article states, removing the "legal vacuum" that many Russian servicemen have found themselves in.¹⁴⁴

Important provisions of the regulations include a new military code, which:

- * removes surviving references to the USSR.
- * sets down the duty work week and "duty time regulation" ("unlike past Soviet regulations")
- * a commander is no longer responsible for subordinates' crimes if he had no control or relationship to them.
- * the regimental commander will have authority to terminate many new enlisted contracts, if necessary, as a form of punishment.¹⁴⁵

An "Armed Forces Regulation Commission" has been set up to deal with suggestions and grievances associated with the new temporary regulations as these emerge between now and March, 1995.¹⁴⁶ Almost by definition, this development would appear to be a highly stabilizing and unifying factor for the new Russian Army. However, legal officer Kirovskiy (cited earlier in this section under "Political Activity") has severely criticized the contradictions allegedly inherent in that subset of new official regulations dealing with officers' assemblies (MOD Regulation No. 147, dated 12 September 1992). In a December, 1992, article in the independent military

newspaper *Armiia Rossii* (Army of Russia), he demonstrates how some parts in the new regulations clearly contradict other articles and woefully asks, "Who prepared these regulations? What kind of minds?"¹⁴⁷

The MOD cannot have it both ways. It cannot expect soldiers and officers to abide by regulations while some of those very regulations are self-contradictory on their face, and others may in fact be contrary to other Russian federal law. This latter problem has emerged in part because much defense-related legislation has been "in limbo" until quite recently. Two important bills dealing with the social and economic problems of servicemen entitled "On Military Duty and Military Service" and "On Pensions to Servicemen, the Command and [Those] Rank and File Servicemen with the Interior Affairs Bodies and Their Families" were rejected by the Russian legislature on January 22, 1993, reportedly for being "insufficiently prepared".¹⁴⁸ One possible problem is that the new laws sought to achieve too much too fast -- to solve too many problems at once. In addition, there were some highly controversial aspects of the military duty draft law. Article 6, paragraph 2 states: "Military personnel are prohibited from joining political parties, while previous membership in them is suspended during active military service."¹⁴⁹ Another provision might also be highly controversial, depending on how it is interpreted and applied. Article 5, paragraph 2, states: "During the transitional period, provisions of the appropriate

legislative enactments of the former USSR which do not contradict the legislation of the Russian Federation are also included in legislation on the status of military personnel."¹⁵⁰ (NOTE: As of this writing, some aspects of these draft laws have apparently been passed into law by the Russian Supreme Soviet).

In any event, institutional tension arising from the implementation of new and sometimes contradictory regulations is a natural phenomenon for an institution in transition. The Russian military is no exception. It will eventually sort out the contradictions. Thus, this factor contributes to short-term instability but over the long-term will be a positive stabilizing influence.

RELIGION

Religion will likely emerge as an important cohesive factor in the new Russian military. Freedom of religion in the military is enshrined in Russian Federation law and currently enjoys full legal protection. During the last years of the Gorbachev era, Russian Orthodox priests were active in commemorating fallen Soviet soldiers who had died in the Afghan war. As Russia began to search for a new identity in the wake of the failed August coup, the role of religion in the military acquired a new significance. Following the demise of mandatory atheistic indoctrination under the

Communists, both the Russian educational establishment and the military opened their doors wide to religious groups. One of the purposes for this was to rebuild a morality in these institutions which had been destroyed by the Communists (based on comments by former Russian Minister of Education Dneprov, at a Washington, DC meeting, 1992, at which author served as interpreter). This process is continuing.

Religion is assessed as a positive and stabilizing factor because it is building cohesion and identity within the force. This result will become more permanent if plans for a new Chaplaincy in the military become firmly established (based on 1992 discussions in Washington and Moscow with both Russians and Americans involved in these and related plans).

VOLUNTEER FORCE

Compulsory military service was initiated in Russia in 1705.¹⁵¹ It has had a long tradition, one strongly reinforced during the Soviet period. However, volunteer service by contract has now been introduced into both the armed forces on an initial basis as well as into law.

"Volunteer service by contract is to operate alongside the traditional draft. This is seen as the first step in creating a professional army...the actual numerical strength of the services in peacetime should not exceed 1 percent of the Russian population. This article of the law enters into

force 1 January 1995."¹⁵² In the past, according to *Krasnaia Zvezda*, a majority of Russians viewed military service as a "sacred" duty. Not any more. "Times have changed," the newspaper writes. "Now a large segment of youth considers [military labor] to be non-prestigious..."¹⁵³

Instituting even a semi-volunteer professional force will not be easy in such an environment. Creating a volunteer, professional force also goes against the grain of most Russian and Soviet military history. As analyst Ellen Jones states in her work on Soviet military manpower policy:

The historical record of military manning policy in the USSR reveals...a strong and continuing commitment to a 'citizen', as opposed to a volunteer army. The Soviet system inherited a long-standing tsarist tradition of peacetime military conscription...¹⁵⁴

RFE/RL analyst Stephen Foye sees the military leadership as being hard-pressed "to raise salaries and living standards to an acceptable level for a more highly professional army if at the same time it is compelled to finance the development and production of a new generation of advanced weaponry."¹⁵⁵ Thus, establishing a volunteer force, though a positive and stabilizing factor over the longer term, may be very difficult to create in the short run.

ZEMLIACHESTVO

Zemliachaestvo may be defined as serving with people from one's own region or ethnic group (see also **dedovshchina** above). It has both very positive and very negative features depending on how one is defining the term. The response also may vary, depending on the attitudes one wishes to emphasize.

While the phenomenon of **zemliachestvo** was much more of a problem during the immediate breakup of the former Soviet army than it is now, it is still a problem that must be considered for its potential impact on the developing new Russian military.

Zemliachestvo could eventually work to be a positive factor, if, in a new professional, volunteer force, it develops beyond being a "gang-oriented" phenomenon -- i.e., small groups in military units. One author, writing recently in the journal **Voennno-istoricheskyy zhurnal** (Military History Journal), speaks very positively about **zemliachestvo** in Peter the Great's army, stating that since regiments were called together according to locality "**zemliachestvo** was conducive to mutual aid, competitiveness and making for an easier adaptation of recruits to the service."¹⁵⁶ The author then goes even further: "Soldier cooperatives and **zemliachestvo** strengthened solidarity, soldierly fraternity, lessened desertions and completely excluded anything similar to the semi-criminal **dedovshchina** of the twentieth century."¹⁵⁷

Thus, **zemliachestvo**, if properly adapted by the new Russian military, might serve to promote professionalism and cohesion under certain circumstances, according to this definition!

The opposite concept of **zemliachestvo** in the Soviet armed forces was "extraterritoriality": "Extraterritoriality precluded the development of regional military formations drawn from the local population."¹⁵⁸ The old Russian regiments were usually territorially based. This principle was completely abrogated by the Bolsheviks for the purpose of destroying any sort of regional loyalties: "Manpower policy in the Soviet Army had long been based upon the twin principles of universal military service and extraterritoriality."¹⁵⁹ Destroying territoriality and **zemliachestvo** was also part of the Soviet plan to turn the armed forces into a training ground for socialism and creating the so-called "new Soviet man" (*homo sovieticus*).

Territoriality and **zemliachestvo** will likely be a part of the new Russian military in some form. For now, however, the "extraterritorial principle" has been written into the defense law under the proposed semi-conscrip, semi-volunteer system.¹⁶⁰ As the law is now written, extraterritoriality will definitely continue to apply to the conscript system, but it is possible that contract volunteers could eventually be offered some "territorial incentives" (i.e., service within a specific area), based on one's military specialty or

expertise. In fact, the success or failure of a volunteer force could very well rest on such an option.

RUSSIAN NATIONALISM: A FACTOR ALL ITS OWN

Finally, we come to the question of Russian nationalism and its impact on the military. This is a factor that could easily receive an entire study in its own right. We shall deal here with some of its more important aspects, which are both positive and negative. As Stephen Foye writes:

"[M]ilitary leaders have attempted to use Russian nationalism as a means of building esprit de corps, a policy that is likely to bring positive results but could have less salutary effects."¹⁶¹ While Russian nationalism is a unifying factor for ethnic Russians, it can also alienate non-Russian citizens of the Russian Federation, which include many Muslim and native peoples. On the other hand, Russian nationalism will form the core identity of what the military will become: a Russian force, defending Russian territory, and, perhaps at some point, what might be defined as Russian values.

The key question is, how will Russian nationalism shape the force in this manner and how can it be gauged? There are numerous right-wing Russian extremist groups vying for attention to command Russians' loyalties. This is perhaps best exemplified by the newspaper *Den'* (The Day), which bills itself as the "spiritual opposition" to the reformers and

which is widely distributed in Moscow, for example. *Den'* actively supports many of the anti-Yeltsin rallies that occur in the city, most of them at the level of several hundred or a few thousand people, and which, curiously enough, usually include both disaffected "reds" and "browns" (Communists and fascists). The latter are perhaps best represented by the colorful figure of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who is virulently anti-American and who recently organized a "force" of a few Russian volunteers to go to Iraq to support Saddam Hussein against the United States. Although Zhirinovskiy's positions are viewed as extremist even by many other Russian nationalists (based on personal discussions by the author with representatives of various Russian political parties and movements, February-March, 1992), his rhetoric nevertheless sometimes finds its mark -- reminiscent of another fascist thug with a small band of followers, Adolf Hitler. Zhirinovskiy's extremism, however, does make it "safer" for some Russian nationalists to express opinions which might be viewed as "beyond the pale" if Zhirinovskiy did not exist to outdo them. The impact on the military, though, is in the area of action. Beyond his words, even if Zhirinovskiy and the newspaper *Den'* do not command large followings, they are still doing something for Russians and for the ideal of the Russian nation, according to some perceptions. For example, in April 1992, *Den'* trumpeted the fact that Russian soldiers (these included Cossacks and Russians who eluded the military's chain

of command) were fighting and dying in the Dniester conflict in Moldova were fighting "for Russia".¹⁶² This is so even though the Dniester region is nowhere near Russia -- it is just an enclave in Moldova (formerly, Moldavia) filled with many ethnic Russians. Most Russians probably reject the idea of spilling blood to regain the Empire. But they nevertheless are very sensitive about protection for Russian minorities living "abroad" in CIS countries, of which the Dniester region in Moldova is a prime example. If the Russian nationalist-extremists are generally viewed as being in the forefront of efforts to defend Russians' rights, this places pressure on the armed forces to wrest a legitimate mission from disreputable and unreliable elements (from Moscow's standpoint).

Average Russians of draft-age or former servicemen who care deeply about these issues but are otherwise offended by the extremism of Zhirinovskiy and those like him will be attracted to such "activity" if official Moscow is slow or reluctant to take action. This then will compel Moscow to move further to the right to defend its citizens in other CIS countries (Yeltsin, in fact, has just issued a political trial balloon asking for international and UN authority for Russian forces to intervene in "ethnic conflicts" in other countries of the CIS. See Serge Schmemmann, "Yeltsin Suggests Russian Regional Role", **New York Times**, March 1, 1993). It will have

a formative influence on the character of the force, making it more nationalistic than it might otherwise be.

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING FACTORS

What does it all mean? In the matrix below is a rough approximation of how these various factors are affecting both stability and/or instability in the Russian military. The matrix is not an attempt to make a formal scientific analysis of the factors (which is not possible anyway), but merely to assess their relative impact, and to draw some hopefully salient conclusions concerning their future significance.

FACTORS OF STABILITY/INSTABILITY

STABILIZING

afgantsy (++)
alternative service (++)
assemblies, off. (+)

contracts (++)

cossacks (+)

drawdowns (+)

insurance (+)

nationalism, Rus. (+)
"new structures" (+)
oath, mil. (+)
pay (+)

regulations (++)
religion (++)
unions (+)
zemliachestvo (+)

DESTABILIZING

assemblies, off. (-)
censorship (-)
contracts (-)
corruption (-)
cossacks (-)
dedovshchina (-)
desertions (-)
drawdowns (-)
ethnic strife (-)
insurance (-)
morale (-)
nationalism, Rus. (-)

oath, mil. (-)
pay (-)
pol. off. status (-)
poverty (-)
regulations (-)

unions (-)
zemliachestvo (-)

Many factors appear to have both strong positive and negative dimensions (real or potential). Some of the positive aspects deal primarily with the future, which does not necessarily make them less viable, but which is significant in assessing how the Armed Forces are being influenced **at the present time**. All of these factors are in dynamic flux -- none are firmly established in the constellation of the new military system. Just four factors are **only positive** in the view of this study: "afgantsy", "alternative service", "new structures", and religion. While negative aspects to even these three items can be adduced, they are not considered sufficient to warrant inclusion in the "minus" column.

The most obvious conclusion one might draw from this chart is that negative factors far outweigh the positive ones and that, therefore, the Russian military at present is more unstable than stable. Though simplistic, this assessment appears to be true on its face -- **the Russian military is generally unstable at this time, although a foundation is slowly forming beneath it.**

Institutional instability, as discussed earlier, does not in and of itself have to denote institutional decay. It may, as on this case, indicate an "institution in transition".

NOTES TO SECTION I

1. According to discussions with various **afgantsy** in early 1992, there were many **afgantsy** groups which organized during the abortive August 1991 coup to side with the reformers. In some regions of Russia, young **afgantsy** are at the forefront of local reform politics, often being opposed by elderly Communist holdovers.
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5. Letter from Lt. Col. N. Eroshevich, "Inogo puti net" ("There is No Other Way"), **Tyl vooruzhennykh sil**, No. 3, March, 1992, p. 12. Translated by the author.
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8. See **Rossiyskie vesti**, December 31, 1992, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-001, 4 January 1993, p. 33.
9. **Ibid.**
10. Kostin interview with Mochaikin, **Armiia Rossii**, No. 2, December, 1992, p. 11.
11. **Armiia Rossii**, op. cit.
12. Stephen Foye, "Rebuilding the Russian Military: Some Problems and Prospects", **RFE/RL Research Report**, Vol. 1, No. 44, 6 November 1992, p. 51.
13. Lt. Col. Sergei Rodinov, "The Soviet Army: The Tragedy of Its Collapse", **Pravda**, December 5, 1992, pp. 1-2.
14. **Ibid.**
15. **Ibid.**
16. **Ibid.**
17. Aleksandr Zhilin editorial in **Armiia Rossii (Army of Russia)**, "Skol'ko mozno predavat' armiiu?" (How Much More Can the Army Be Betrayed?), No. 2, December, 1992, p. 3, translated by the author.

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25. Ellen Jones, *Red Army in Society: A Sociology of the Soviet Military* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985), p. 33.
26. *Krasnaia Zvezda*, December 9, 1992, p. 1.
27. Ibid.
28. ITAR-TASS, 3 November 1992.
29. ITAR-TASS, 3 November 1992, cited in FBIS-SOV-92-213, 3 November 1992, p. 43.
30. Ibid., ITAR-TASS, 3 November 1992.
31. *Armiia Rossii*, No. 1, November, 1992, p. 2, in FBIS Daily Report, 9 December 1992, FBIS-SOV-92-237, p. 12.
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33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. INTERFAX, 11 November 1992, cited in FBIS-SOV-92-219, 12 November 1992, p. 50.
37. Ibid.

38. "Russian Officers Called Demoralized", **Baltimore Sun**, February 11, 1993, p. 9.
39. Viktor Barannikov, "Security Ministry Sounds the Alarm: Russia Is Ringing With Crime and Espionage", **Nezavisimaia Gazeta** (The Independent Newspaper), February 12, 1993. Cited in Federal News Service - Kremlin Package, February 16, 1993.
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42. Aleksandra Yemtseva and Andrey Rakul, "The Russian Army Will Be Staffed with Cossacks", **Kommersant**, No. 16, October 27, 1992, p. 14. Cited in JPRS-UMA-92-042, 25 November 1992.
43. **Ibid.**
44. **Ibid.**
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52. **Ibid.**, pp. 66-67.
53. Channel 2, Russian Television, February 29, 1992.
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62. **Ibid.**
63. **Ibid.**, p. 56.
64. **Ibid.**, p. 70.
65. **Ibid.**
66. **Ibid.**
67. **Ibid.**, p. 57.
68. **Ibid.**, p. 59.
69. **Ibid.**, p. 73.
70. **Ibid.**, p. 71.
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76. **Ibid.**
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101. Kostin interview with Mochaikin, **op. cit.**, **Armia Rossii**, p. 11.

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118. A. Kostin interview with Rear Admiral Aleksandr Mochaikin, Chairman of the Coordinating Council of Officers' Assemblies, "Est' li par v armeiskom kotle?" (Is There Steam in the Army Cauldron?", *Armiia Rossii* (Army of Russia), No. 2, December 1992, p. 11.

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SECTION II.

COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS WITH THE TSARIST AND SOVIET PERIODS

Drawing comparisons and contrasts of the current transitional Russian military to the Tsarist and Soviet periods could easily extend to several volumes to be fully exhaustive of the relationships involved. Some observers would assert that it is far too early to make such comparisons about a military machine that is so much in transition.

Nevertheless, whether the objection has merit or not, the reality is that comparisons are already being made by the Russians themselves. What is important for our analysis is to draw a useful framework from which to assess what those comparisons and contrasts may signify. To the extent the comparisons and contrasts define limits as to what the Russian military may become, they will serve as useful guideposts for our analysis and as historical yardsticks with which to gauge the future.

RE-DISCOVERING THE PAST

Prior to re-creation of the Russian Army, William C. Fuller, Jr., wrote:

"It is highly likely that we will soon witness the re-creation of an authentically Russian army. We can confidently expect this new force to evince the keenest interest in its tsarist predecessors. A knowledge of imperial military history is more pertinent than ever to an understanding of the impending transformation of Russia and its military."

William C. Fuller, Jr. **Strategy and Power in Russia: 1600-1914** (1992)¹

As the new Russian military struggles to find a new identity and mission in the post-Communist era, both the military and political leadership will look increasingly at the old Imperial army for inspiration and examples of tradition (see Figure 4 for an example of a return to the Tsarist era motif, as carried in an official MOD newspaper). The process of a search for Russian military self-identity in historical roots has already begun in earnest. In this section, we shall examine some of the salient features of this process.

Recent articles in **Voenno-istoricheskyy zhurnal** (Military History Journal) seek to put current military reforms in perspective. Demonstrating how past reforms occurred (and the fact that the army and the state survived the process!) are apparently intended to ameliorate a little of the pain of the

DEC 23 1992

Долг. Честь. Слава

СЫН ОТЕЧЕСТВА

№ 49 (147) Декабрь

1992 года

Цена свободная



Выходит (с перерывами) с 1812 года
ЦЕНТРАЛЬНАЯ ЕЖЕНЕДЕЛЬНАЯ ГАЗЕТА

Возобновлена с февраля 1990 года
МИНИСТЕРСТВА ОБОРОНЫ РОССИИ

НА СОЛДАТА... ДВА КОМБАТА

④ — ⑤

ЛЕНД-ЛИЗ:
ВЗГЛЯД
ЧЕРЕЗ
ДЕСЯТИЛЕТИЯ

"Ленд-лиз" — это не только помощь СССР, это и помощь нашей стране в годы войны. В октябре 1945 года было принято решение о создании в СССР специального комитета по изучению опыта войны. Этот комитет и сейчас работает. Он изучает опыт войны, чтобы в будущем избежать повторения ошибок. Он изучает опыт войны, чтобы в будущем избежать повторения ошибок. Он изучает опыт войны, чтобы в будущем избежать повторения ошибок.



Figure (4). "Duty. Honor. Glory." Sample cover page of Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland). No. 49 (147), December, 1992.

present and provide some cohesion with the past. One example tries to take pride in a past military reform movement. In an article under the rubric "Military Reform: Past and Present", the author states: "In scale, speed and results, there has been nothing equal to those [military reforms] in world history".² Not surprisingly, Peter the Great is viewed most positively as a great military reformer in many of these articles. Though the line between fact and fiction is often clouded, the fact remains that the image of Peter as a great reformer (who shook society up in the process) is held up very positively.

According to one historian, "...Peter was the first in Russia to turn to new stimuli -- ambition, duty, and personal glory, patriotism, and competitiveness on behalf of collective military honor."³ Peter thus "not only laid down the traditions of the Russian army, but even raised its moral level."⁴ Out of this development, "there appeared something in the army which had not been there previously -- a strong organizational structure and the collective will of separate units."⁵

These separate units then developed a "...degree of pride on the part of the members in the regimental history and traditions, [which] gave each regiment a distinctly individual character."⁶

Some of those traditions may arise again within a new, professional military structure. But the regimental histories

also discuss the pain of previous military reforms. This helps put the present in some perspective, even though the crisis of today is of a different order. A regimental history covering changes in the period 1797-1800 comments on a "massive discharge of officers from service" in one regiment, coupled with the transformation of the unit from a **karabineriy** regiment to a **dragoon** regiment.⁷ The editors comment unfavorably that, during this regimental drawdown and reorganization, 27 officers were discharged by the commander, who had been with the unit less than 11 months. They then wryly observe that the commander, a Major General Polivanov himself soon received his walking papers in October, 1797, following this incident.⁸

Corporatism and the Officer Corps

"...Russian officers lacked the cohesion to pursue a program of corporate interests or even to develop such a program."⁹

Another issue to consider is the concept of "corporatism". Fuller discusses the impact of both "corporatism" and "negative corporatism" on the Russian officer corps in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁰

"Corporatism" in the military, broadly defined, includes a sense of shared professionalism and expertise in the officer corps which may include a self-perceived superiority over the outside civil society.¹¹ "Negative corporatism", however, relates to a group's perception of itself as being among

society's victims or potential victims, while group unity is largely based on fear. How do these concepts apply to the Russian armed forces today?

Since the demise of the Soviet Union, a declining corporatism appears to be occurring within the Russian officer corps. The prestige of the Soviet officer of the past has been replaced by a real decline in living standards as well as in the public's appreciation for the military. Since August, 1991, these factors have strongly influenced the corporate military mentality. The result is perhaps most clearly seen in the response today of Russian officers to their profession.

As economic conditions continue to decline, the new Russian officer corps may in some respects be mirroring its Tsarist counterpart at the turn of the century. But there are important distinctions: "The disunity of the [Tsarist] Russian officers...contributed to their failure to satisfy the fourth condition of professionalism: the recognition and articulation of innate military interests".¹² This does not seem to be true today -- the existence and vociferousness of the officer assembly groups are just two examples of the difference. To the extent that, for the time being, a desire for professionalism continues to be prevalent in the officer corps today, it is a unifying and stabilizing factor.

THE SOVIET PERIOD

While in this period of transition, the "new" Russian army is, in many respects, still the "old Soviet army" -- minus. While the new military is undergoing serious transition, it still retains much of the old during that process. We will refer to some of these remnants of the old military as "perezhitki" (remnants).

CIS Joint Armed Forces

Though a Russian national army now exists, there is still a CIS Joint Armed Forces, the last relic of the old Soviet armed forces. Though some might argue that the CIS Joint Armed Forces really no longer exists, it still has life nominally on paper. *Krasnaia Zvezda* still refers to the "Joint CIS Armed Forces",¹³ while numerous republics of the former Soviet Unions are still cooperating in some fashion under its aegis in specific areas. One example was the decision in February, 1993, to build up the former Soviet border with Afghanistan with an additional 2,500 CIS troops (five CIS states agreed to send a battalion of 500 men each to man the Tadjik border with Afghanistan, since Tadjikistan is still in the midst of a civil war.¹⁴ This decision had strong political overtones, since the border in question was on the territory of Tadjikistan and has a hardline ex-Communist government in

power. However, joint CIS concerns over drug and arms smuggling across that border into other states appeared to motivate this action.¹⁵

The key issue is that the CIS Joint Armed Forces is still extant -- even if it is an extremely weak or nearly meaningless entity (it also still has a strategic role under Marshal Shaposhnikov). The very fact that five CIS states could agree on this action regarding the Tadjik border situation could provide the basis for other "collective" actions in the future. It is certainly not a new type of CIS Warsaw Pact, although a CIS collective security treaty is being discussed (Armenia is the only state that has ratified it, however).¹⁶

Perezhitki ("Remnants")

Soviet propaganda often spoke in terms of the so-called "perezhitki" (remnants) of the previous worldview. These **perezhitki** were primarily of a philosophical and religious nature, indicating areas where the Soviet worldview had yet failed to penetrate. Soviet political officers and institutions of the Communist Party were urged on by the regime to continue the ideological struggle against these **perezhitki**.¹⁷ Now instead there are forms of what we shall term: "post-Communist **perezhitki**".

Since the demise of Communism and the Soviet Union, the

ideological tables have turned completely. At the present time it is a question of what **perezhitki** of the Soviet period remain, specifically: how many **perezhitki (remnants)** of the Soviet worldview still survive in the military? How will these affect the new Russian military?

One example is the conscription issue. As one author states: "Reliance on some form of conscription is one of the strongest military traditions of the Soviet Union -- one that predates the Bolshevik Revolution."¹⁸ The tradition of conscription -- even as it fails -- will die hard among those "Soviet elements" still remaining in the military, as well as everyone who is "used" to it as the only "proper" way to support and put together the armed forces.

Another **perezhitok**, so to speak (the singular form of the term), may be nostalgia for "the way things used to be". This does not mean a nostalgia for a return to Communist control, but rather a desire for the "lost Soviet empire", which disintegrated so rapidly that it created a sense of national trauma among many different strata in the society. Figure 5 captures this feeling to some degree, depicting a soldier explaining to a young boy the fact that there once was such a thing as a **Soviet** army. Another important issue is the fact that virtually everyone now in service was trained and indoctrinated under the Soviet system. It will not be easy to shed the historical baggage that that represents.

● НЕСКУЧНЫЕ ВОЕННЫЕ МЕМУАРЫ

Рисунок
подполковника
Андрея
ДЕРЯГИ

Военно-строительные
части



Figure (5). "There was a time, son, that I served in a Soviet army..." from *Armiya* (Army), No. 14, July, 1992.

Armiya, No. 14, July, 1992.

New Programs Adopted Slowly: The Old Soviet Way

In addition to old traditions dying hard, there is the problem of new ones coming into being too slowly. As Herbert Goldhamer points out in his book on Soviet military management, when the Soviet authorities introduced new military programs, they often did so with much more initial propaganda fanfare than they did actual allocation of resources and changes. The latter came much more slowly, but this also was the result of a calculated realization of how slowly change occurred in the military:

The Soviets realize that ambitious [military] programs can only be built up over a number of years. Effective programs in such areas require enormous investments and a long indoctrination and training of the population. The longer time perspective of most Communist leaders, in conjunction with the high level of political control, makes them less likely than us to be paralyzed by the inability to achieve useful results immediately or even in the first few years.¹⁹

This tradition takes on special meaning when applied to the development of a professional volunteer, contract force. First of all, the new authorities may not have "a number of years" and "enormous investments" to make in the new military without receiving "useful results" fairly quickly. They do not have the luxury of the kind of "political control" over the military that the Communist authorities exercised. This is not to say that the new Russian military is not loyal to the principle of civilian control, merely that the current

authorities do not have the enforcement mechanisms available to them in a democratic Russia that the former Soviet authorities did.

NOTES TO SECTION II

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5. Ibid.
6. A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, Introduction to M. Lyons, **The Russian Imperial Army: A Bibliography of Regimental Histories and Related Works** (Stanford: The Hoover Institution, 1968), p. xiv.
7. V.I. Genishta and A.T. Borisevich, Editors. **Istoriia 30-ogo Dragoonskogo Ingermanlandskogo Polka, 1704-1904** (History of the 30th Dragoons Ingermanlanskiy Regiment, 1704-1904). Part I. St. Petersburg: "Berezhlivost'", 1904, p. 99.
8. Ibid.
9. William C. Fuller, Jr., **Civil-Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881-1914**, p. 29.
10. Fuller, op. cit., p. 29. Bengt Abrahamsson, in his book, **Military Professionalism and Political Power**, further develops the concept of corporateness as applied to the military sphere: "...corporateness and the common recognition of the basic values of

the profession are essential elements for its achieving normative influence. The propagation of values can be effective only to the extent that the profession succeeds in minimizing internal dissensus (sic) and conflicts over its major goals." (pp. 155-156).

11. Fuller, **Civil-Military Conflict...**, pp. 28-29.

12. **Ibid.**, p. 30.

13. **Krasnaia Zvezda**, January 23, 1993, p. 1.

14. "Press Conference by CIS Heads of State", Minsk, Belarus, January 22, 1993. Federal News Service via SOVSET.

15. **Ibid.**

16. **Ibid.**

17. Even as late as 1989 during the Gorbachev era of **glasnost** and **perestroika**, the Soviet military was still publishing atheistic material directed at servicemen intended to remove such **perezhitki**: "...religious traditions, customs and norms...cause enormous injury to people." (A. James Melnick, "'Scientific Atheism' in the Era of Perestroika", **Studies in Soviet Thought**, Vol. 40, No. 1-3, Aug/Sep/Nov 1990, p. 225, citing I. S. Ishchenko and S. I. Ishchenko, **Iz plena sueverii: zametki ob ateisticheskoy vospitanii voynov** (Out of the Bondage of Superstition: Notes on Atheistic Education of Soldiers). The book was published by the military publisher Voenizdat in 1989.

18. Ellen Jones, **Red Army and Society: A Sociology of the Soviet Military**, p. 33.

19. Herbert Goldhamer, **The Soviet Soldier: Soviet Military Management at the Troop Level** (New York: Crane, Russak & Company), p. 319.

SECTION III. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS.

The Army actually remains one of the most stable state structures. It is the Russian units that have shown themselves in their best light in their actions in Yugoslavia; it is the Russian Army that has quelled the conflicts in the Dniester region and North Ossetia and is helping to put an end to the conflict in South Ossetia today."

MOD Grachev, Krasnaia Zvezda, November 26, 1992

The Russian military -- in its present state -- contrary to MOD Grachev's assertion -- is not entirely stable. Nevertheless, the interaction of the factors we have examined will, in combination, bring about a greater stability over the longer term. This will become more apparent when the legal framework for the new armed forces is more fully in place. Even if the present economic crisis worsens, this study concludes that the constraints examined will be the primary determinants defining the force.

Within the present framework, one might conclude from what has been examined thus far that, though surrounded by much external instability and insecurity, the institution is developing a small core of inner stability. Perhaps Grachev believes in such "core stability" and this is the basis for his statement. In any event, there has not been an attempt within the limited scope of this study to compare the military

with other so-called "state structures" in Russia, many of which are undergoing their own crises of instability. Thus, it is not possible to independently assess Grachev's statement that the military is ~~more stable~~ than some of these other institutions other than on the pure face of his comments. The military may indeed be much more stable, comparatively speaking, than many other institutions in Russian society today. As stated in the public policy section of the Introduction, it is certainly important for the future of Russia and East-West relations that the military be assisted in its quest to be as stable as possible. The present Administration, according to press reports "has already begun to characterize the fate of Russia as the country's most important national security problem in the next decade".¹ This is the main point, upon which, hopefully, there is general agreement.

Nevertheless, the examples that Grachev provides do not support his argument. Russian military performance in Yugoslavia, the Dniester conflict and South Ossetia -- while commendable in Grachev's view -- are not the sort of military adventures that tend to improve stability. All three are outside of Russian territory, all intense ethnic struggles, and it is doubtful that any of them has strong public support. Fortunately, the numbers of troops involved are minimal in each case, so that there would probably not be strong public opinion in any event. However, these are just the sort of

actions (at least in the cases of Dniester and South Ossetia) that *Armiia Rossi* editor Zhilin so strongly denounces. He believes that servicemen sent to these areas are there without any legal guarantees and that they essentially serve as pawns in Russia's political maneuvering. It would seem that much of the rest of the country is too engrossed in its own economic problems to notice.

Finally, the legacy of the Gorbachev period and by the Yeltsin reforms means that future Russian governments -- even more authoritarian ones -- will have to turn to "the people" (*narod*) as its source of legitimacy. Perhaps for the first time in Russian history, conditions exist for a healthy relationship to be fostered in Russia according to the classic Clausewitzian "paradoxical trinity" between the government, the military and the people. There is a greater perception than ever that the military serves "the people" (the *narod*), a view that was greatly strengthened by the military's role in countering the failed August 1991 coup. Even an authoritarian regime will have to take this vital change into account.

Predictions of What the Russian Armed Forces Will Become Based on the Factors Examined

*** HALF MEASURES WILL FAIL.** Implementing a semi-contract/semi-conscript military (as presently sought by the MOD) will fail long before the target date of the year 2000 is reached. Current low draft compliance rates will force either the abolition of the draft (i.e., a total volunteer Russian force), its very minimal use, or merely turn it into a paper exercise. There are psychological problems associated with moving too quickly to abolish the draft, and it may simply die a slow and unheralded demise.

*** A SMALLER, MORE PROFESSIONAL FORCE WILL EMERGE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.** Regardless of which political faction emerges on top in Russia over the next 1-10 years, a return to a mass conscripted army seems very unlikely. Most Russian politicians of various political hues appear to have settled on the establishment of a smaller, more professional force, which would include Rapid Deployment Forces and Strategic Reserves. This includes Vice-president Rutskoy (who is more associated with the center-right politically). Rutskoi envisions a three-tiered military made up of:

(i) rapid reaction airmobile divisions, brigades and regiments; (ii) airmobile reinforcement troops also capable of rapid reaction; and (iii) a strategic reserves force.²

This more professional force could emerge sooner if there are sufficient economic resources available to fund it. Such monies would also have to extend to funding more advanced weaponry and equipment and associated technology to make the force as professional as possible. It will emerge eventually in any event as the present conscript system continues its collapse.

*** A PROFESSIONAL NCO CORPS WILL EMERGE FROM THE CONTRACT SYSTEM.** As a professional, better-trained, better-paid force begins to take shape, a professional Non-Commissioned Officer corps will eventually find its place in the vacuum left behind by the decaying senior conscript system (with its elaborate and brutal hazing procedures). These NCOs will provide the substantive leadership necessary to make the contract system work.

*** NATIONALISM WILL BECOME A CORE MILITARY VALUE.** Russian nationalism -- loyalty to the people (*narod*) and the *Otechestvo* (the Fatherland) will more and more become a military core value replacing the Communist loyalties of the past. This Russian nationalism could be channeled in a

positive, cohesive sense, or could become a destructive force if the economy continues to deteriorate or right-wing extremists are allowed to define themselves what is in Russia's interests. Moscow must not allow itself to be co-opted into that trap but to clearly define for itself what are national (and nationalistic) goals and priorities.

* A POSITIVE REFORM PERIOD? Military reforms and transitions are difficult for any nation. It is possible that some in the military and political leadership will, like former General Field Marshal Münnich, completely misread the signals and signs of the times in the reform process and have denunciations hurled at them similar to this one directed at Field Marshal Münnich:

Unfortunately, he [Münnich] did not have the genius of Tsar Peter the Great, with no understanding of the spirit of the Russian people, no understanding of the spirit of the army.

V.I. Genishta (1904)³

While opportunities for short-term failure abound, it is also possible that the new Russian armed forces could also experience the equivalent of a "Miliutin reform" period, one in which it could begin to flourish qualitatively after downsizing and promote professionalism and stability. The Miliutin period was a very positive one in Russian military history for reform:

The Miliutin period was a time of promise for the Russian army [in the 1860s and 1870s]...The Russian army had taken its first step toward professionalization.⁴

Certainly the reforms could eventually lead to a "Second Miliutin Era" (i.e. an acceleration of the trends described in this study), but they will probably not occur if they are not better financed -- an unlikely development (barring greater Western support) given the present hyperinflationary crisis. Another possibility for funds to fuel military reforms, ironically, is weapons sales. These would go against the grain of the current **conversion** process (**konversiia** in Russian) for converting military production over to civilian production.⁵ However, it would be a means of short-term financing for immediate military personnel needs. The chairman of the State Defense Industry Committee, Viktor Glukikh, for example, believes that successful arms sales could result in 300,000 new jobs for Russians in weapons-related production.⁶

Public Policy Recommendations

A case has been made that a certain kind of Russian military will eventually emerge (smaller, more professional, more nationalistic, voluntary) -- based on the factors now at work within and upon it -- regardless of who or what political faction rules from the Kremlin.

That being said, it is also true that positive inputs will have influence, primarily in the degree of commitment to democratic ideals, as well as a tempering of the nationalistic spirit. The latter, left to its own devices, will become more paranoid and suspicious, following well-worn paths. U.S. policy could adopt various programs to help shorten the period of instability and lessen "threat perceptions", as well as to attempt to channel nationalistic attitudes into positive directions. One area of direct positive impact on the military is **military-to-military contacts**.

Increasing Substantive Military to Military Contacts

The Harvard "Executive Program for Russian General Officers" is one example of a series of military-to-military contacts that could be substantially expanded to include numbers of U.S. military institutions exchanging with comparable Russian military ones. According to Ambassador Robert Blackwill, a former Special Advisor to the President for Soviet and East European Affairs of the NSC Staff under President Bush, the Russian military leadership is very anxious to expand such ties between senior educational institutions (such as the General Staff Academy) and American counterparts.⁷ In general, American influence in Russia is at an all-time high, but so also are expectations. Opportunities

that now exist need to be followed through for greater contacts and exchanges. These would strengthen U.S. influence on how the Russian military develops and would especially strengthen the hands of the Russian "Westernizers" and remove some of the anti-Western feelings of the more inward-looking "conservative-nationalists". The latter, if they gain power, will still have some democratic tendencies, but they will on balance have less desire for Western influence. They will likely become more of an irritant in foreign policy decisions if they are able (an example of this was Russia's recent position on Serbia in contrast to the United States). This particular decision appeared to be either a concession by Yeltsin to the "nationalist-conservatives" or a desire to carve out a somewhat more independent foreign policy.

Increase Investment at the Organizational One-to-One Level.

Even though the United States is currently experiencing its own economic difficulties, the dollar is so strong now in Russia that minimum investments (chiefly private organizational one-to-one investments) could produce significant public policy dividends over time. Beyond foreign aid, this could include rounding out traditional military-to-military contacts (as described above) with personnel investment, such as NCO counterpart training.

National Service and the Russian Volunteer Force

The new U.S. program of "national service" (as well as traditional U.S. programs such as the Peace Corps or Vista) could provide useful experience and resources for the rudimentary program of "alternative service", which will be designed for conscientious objectors to perform non-combat related tasks in the army rear services. The Russian infrastructure is direly in need of many different kinds of Western expertise in this area, as is readily admitted by the Russians themselves. In this post-Cold War era, it seems that there should be mechanisms to marry up contacts for rear support services problem in a way that is productive both for infrastructure requirements and enhances military stability. One area would be support to the fledgling agricultural programs that seek to provide land and small farms to recently discharged Russian servicemen and officers. Many of these personnel lack adequate housing, while the Russian agricultural sector is sorely in need of labor. Creative program solutions could be found to provide low-cost incentives to ex-military personnel to take up the plow instead of the sword, clearly what would be one of the greatest dividends to the end of the Cold War era.

NOTES TO SECTION III

1. Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Will Draw Up a Strategy to Aid Ex-Soviet States", **New York Times**, February 8, 1993, p. 1.
2. Interview with Vice President Ruskoy, **Krasnaia Zvezda**, May 22, 1992, pp. 1-2. Cited in FBIS 291511Z May 1992.
3. V.I. Genishta and A.T. Borisevich, Editors. **Istoriia 30-ogo Dragoonskago Ingermanlandskago polka, 1704-1904. Part I.** (St. Petersburg, 1904), p. 18.
4. William C. Fuller, Jr., **Civil-Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881-1914**, p. 11.
5. See the **Russian Defense Business Directory**. US Department of Commerce, US-Russia Defense Conversion Subcommittee, November, 1992, for a general discussion of defense conversion problems and the possibilities of U.S.-Russian trade with former Russian defense entities.
6. Press report, February 11, 1993.
7. Based on discussion with Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, February 5, 1993. Ambassador Blackwill has been lecturing regularly at the General Staff Academy and other Russian military institutions.

APPENDIX A

KRASNAIA ZVEZDA HEADLINES: AN INDICATOR OF STABILITY/INSTABILITY THEMES AND MILITARY PERCEPTIONS.

The official press organ of the Russian Ministry of Defense, **Krasnaia Zvezda** (Red Star), in the post-Communist era serves as an interesting indicator of current military thinking. Western Sovietologists used to look for hidden clues in the Soviet press as to policy developments. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, that approach to media analysis has been replaced by a torrent of material in the Russian open press which leaves little to speculation. As the post-Soviet process of social politicization continues apace in Russia, most institutions and their publications now speak and write directly about the issues that most concern them. In this respect, **Krasnaia Zvezda** has been very forthright -- in its headlines at least -- concerning those issues. A sampling of leading headlines follows below:

SAMPLE KRASNAIA ZVEZDA HEADLINES

"Russia Was, Is and Will Be a Great Space Power" (2 October 92)

"The Reforms are Moving, If They Can Overcome the Inertia of Political Opposition" (7 October 92)

"Laws for Military Reform in Russia Can and Must Be Speeded Up" (13 October 92)

"The Military Industrial Complex (MIC): Today, Russia's Fate Depends Largely on the Fate of Conversion" (17 October 92)

"The Army Must Live Strictly by Regulations, Even if the Regulations Are Temporary" (24 October 92)

"Our Foreign Policy Can Have Only One Ideology -- Russia's Interests" (28 October 92)

"All Hope is On the Stabilizing Role of Russian Forces"
(referring to the fighting in Northern Ossetia and
Ingushetia) (4 November 92)

"Russian Soldiers Have One Goal -- To Restore Peace in the Conflict Zone" (5 November 92)

"Russian Mothers Await Letters from Their Sons As They Once Awaited Letters from the Front"

(referring to Russian soldiers serving in Georgia and
comparing their mothers' anxiety for them as that during
the Second World War) (13 November 92)

"Russia's Nuclear Shield Remains And It Will Be Sufficiently Reliable" (14 November 92)

"Russia's Future is Not In Confrontation and Destruction But in Agreement and Creation" (17 November 92)

"Russia's Military Might Will Respond at the Level of Real Military Danger" (21 November 92)

"Those Who Have Served Their Fixed Term of Service Have the Chance to Be the First Russian 'Profes'"
(24 November 92)

"Reforming the Army Demands a Well-Considered and Thought-Out Approach" (25 November 92)

"Because of Political Ambitions, The Fleet Loses Its Ship-Repair Base on the Black Sea" (27 November 92)

"Parliament Fulfills Its Obligations to the Russian Armed

Forces" (28 November 92)

"There are Many Factions, Even More Positions -- But There is Only One Fatherland" (1 December 92)

"If We Desire to Create Genuine Soldiers, We Must Overcome a 'Spiritual Vacuum' " (4 December 92)

"The Fall Call-Up is Proceeding with Difficulty: How Soon Will the New Law Begin to Work?" (9 December 92)

"Weapons Modernization and Professionalism in the Army: Guarantees of Defense Effectiveness" (23 December 1992)

"Social Defense is Necessary Not Only for Servicemen But Also Their Children" (30 December 1992)

"A Cottage for the Officer: Will This Dream Become a Reality?" (26 January 1992)

"Russia Has No Law for Pensions for Servicemen. Who Is Blocking One?" (27 January 1993)

"The Memory of Stalingrad Can Help Us Bring the Country Out of Crisis" (2 February 1993)

"To Declare War on the Past is Absurd, But in Latvia They Forget This." (5 February 1993)

Conclusions: An Analysis of Krasnaia Zvezda Headlines.

This sampling of Krasnaia Zvezda headlines, while incomplete, reflects the flavor of many MOD concerns for the present and future state of the armed forces. As indicators of stability and instability in the military, we can draw some tentative

conclusions of MOD assumptions and goals. The following appear to be the major Krasnaia Zvezda themes.

KEY KRASNAIA ZVEZDA THEMES

- * Russia will remain a nuclear power with a reliable strategic force.
- * Russia's national interests must supersede all internal ideological and political squabbles
- * Military reform must be speeded up but must also be done carefully
- * Serious economic reforms for servicemen must be addressed soon
- * The Russian military must look back to her victories over great adversity (e.g., Stalingrad, etc.) for inspiration to get through the present crisis
- * For those now on duty in CIS conflict zones, it is real war with real suffering for the Russian military families involved

APPENDIX B: KEY PERSONALITIES CITED (*)

GRACHEV, PAVEL (ARMY GEN.). Russian Minister of Defense. Formerly with the airborne forces. Supported Yeltsin during the abortive August, 1991, coup against Gorbachev. Grachev was 44 when appointed to be Minister of Defense, "one of the youngest military ministers in Russian history," according to *Krasnaia Zvezda*. Served two tours in Afghanistan.

KOBETS, KONSTANTIN. (GEN.). Chairman of the "Committee for Preparing and Implementing Military Reform".

KOLESNIKOV, MIKHAIL (COL-GEN.). New Russian Chief of the General Staff.

KOTENKOV, ALEKSANDR. Deputy Chairman, Russian Supreme Soviet Defense and Security Committee.

KUZNETSOV, LEONTIY V. (LT.-GEN.). Deputy-chief of the General Staff; Chief of the General Staff Main Operations Directorate.

MOCHAIKIN, ALEKSANDR. (REAR ADMIRAL). Chairman of the Coordinating Council of the CIS Joint Armed Forces Officers' Assemblies.

RUTSKOY, ALEKSANDR. Vice-president of the Russian Federation. Soviet combat veteran shot down twice over Afghanistan. Leader in "People's Party of Free Russia" (often referred to as Rutskoy's Party), as well as the center/center-right umbrella political movement, "Civic Union".

SEMENOV, VLADIMIR. (COL.-GEN.). CINC, Russian ground forces; Deputy Minister of Defense.

SHAPOSHNIKOV, YEVGENIY. (MARSHAL) CINC of Joint Armed Forces of the CIS. Played a key role in supporting Russian President Boris Yeltsin during the the abortive coup in August, 1991.

SHAPRAN, IVAN (COL). Chief, Finance Inspectorate; deputy chief, Main Military Budget and Finance Inspectorate of the Russian MOD.

STEPASHIN, SERGEI. Chairman of Russian Supreme Soviet Security and Defense Committee.

TEMERKO, ALEKSANDR. Chairman, Committee for Servicemen's Social Security, Russian Supreme Soviet.

TEREKHOV, STANISLAV. Chairman of the right-wing Russian Officers' Union.

TOPOROV, VLADIMIR. (COL.-GEN.). Russian Deputy Minister of Defense.

VOLKOGONOV, DMITRIY A. (GEN, Ret.?). Military advisor to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Key military reformer. Chaired the commission which created the Russian armed forces.

VOLSKIY, ARKADY. Head of "Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs", which represents the interests of the Military-Industrial Complex. Volskiy is also a leader of the coalition group, "Civic Union".

ZHILIN, ALEKSANDR I. Chief Editor, new independent military newspaper, *Armiia Rossii* (Army of Russia).

ZHIRINOVSKIY, VLADIMIR. Extreme right-wing fascist, leader of the so-called "Liberal Democratic Party" in Russia. Considered to be a fringe group. Recently organized the sending of a small group of Russian "volunteers" to go to Iraq to support Saddam Hussein against the U.S.

(*) Information available as of February, 1993. Sources: ITAR-TASS News Agency, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, FBIS, *Rossia*, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, RFE/RL Reports.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE RUSSIAN NON-OFFICIAL MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

Coordinating Committee of Officers' Assemblies (Koordinatsionnyi sovet Ofiterskikh sobranii) Headed by Rear Admiral MOCHAIKIN.

Independent Union of Servicemen (Nezavisimyi profsoiuz voenno-sluzhashchikh)

Officers' Movement for the Rebirth of the Fatherland (Dvizhenie ofitserov za vozrozhdenie Otechestva; led by General PLATONOV)

Russian Union of Officers (Soiuz Ofitserov Rossii) Leader: Stanislav TEREKHOV.

Servicemen for Democracy (Voennye za demokratiyu)

SOURCES: Armia Rossii (Army of Russia), FBIS.

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(*) Materials consulted for background and comparative purposes only.

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The Library of Congress
Naval War College Library
The New York Public Library (Slavic and Baltic Division)
Pentagon Library, Washington, DC
Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University