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PROLIFERATION OF RUSSIAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT:
IMPLICATIONS FOR UNITED STATES AIR AND SPACE POWER

by

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Preface

Our world is changing in ways that are quickly making traditional uses of military forces obsolete. World events in the last two years highlight the fact that “nation states” are not the only powerful actors on the international scene. Our military capabilities over that last 100 years have been fashioned to protect us against “nation state” actors. That model will no longer work. I believe our American Military is at a crossroads of opportunity to reach a new level of military capability against those non “nation state” actors such as terrorist organizations. This report attempts to analyze a very small piece of this issue by looking at the implications of Russian military equipment flooding world markets. It will look at four regions of the world and show how this proliferation will make current US military airpower obsolete in very short order.

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Abstract

Russia is flooding world markets with military equipment. This flood of equipment is acting like a fuel source for terrorist organizations and countries around the world to use force against their enemies. This paper analyses the effects of this flood of equipment in four regions of the world. Russian proliferation is marginalizing the effectiveness of US airpower because the US doesn't have quick and regular access to the thousands of hot spots military proliferation creates. Our current model for airpower application is old and inflexible. It suffers from a need for access and logistic lines of supply. These are shackles that we must shed. American airpower advocates must re-shape the military-industrial complex to produce airpower capability that gives America "on call" firepower anywhere in the world within minutes. America must make this technological and philosophical leap now, while we have an advantage over our adversaries, or we will find ourselves irrelevant and incapable of responding to the next "unexpected" world event that threatens our national security.

Chapter 1

Russia is Flooding World Markets With Weapons

“We need a more vigorous restructuring of the military-industrial complex in order to enhance the competitiveness of our products on the markets to maintain the armed forces of the Russian Federation at the modern level.”

—Vladimir Putin

It is important to first inspect the reasons why Russia is flooding world markets with military equipment in order to understand how that proliferation will impact US air and space power.

Russia’s current objective is to reform its military into a relevant world power. President Vladimir Putin desperately needs money to accomplish this objective. Moscow is selling old military equipment from its stockpiles to fund a military transformation. Such a motivation is dangerous because it is born of desperation. That desperation means that Russia will sell to anyone who can pay. There is no motivation for restraint. Anyone can buy, and anyone can use the weapons to do anything they want.

This chapter investigates the current state of the Russian military reform to understand the root causes for this vast military hardware sale.

Russia’s Desperate Need For Military Reform

Moscow has officially begun its journey to transform the armed forces. On 1 September, the experiment to transfer Russia’s 76th Airborne Division to an all-contract service began. It

constitutes a test case to see how much it will cost, and what hidden difficulties will be encountered, to transform the entire Russian military. Many smaller changes have taken place since the start of military reform. Line troops and various entities have been downsized, reorganized and renamed. Substantial money has been applied to this cause, but it seems that all these changes have done very little. There has been no overall improvement in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, while problems of military discipline have intensified from year to year.¹ Additionally, recent events highlight the fact that Moscow's goal of transforming the military may be good in theory, but very far from reality.

President Putin and Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov both have a reasonable vision of what a vital and relevant military should be in the 21st century. They see the military transformation as one of organization, training and culture, and understand that building up the respect and dignity of the military culture must be the first step. That is why they are spending in excess of 2.7 billion rubles on the 76th Airborne Division alone.² According to Colonel General Georgy Shpak, commander of airborne forces, construction has been aggressive since July to build new divisional housing developments, schools, a kindergarten, stores and a clubhouse.³ These are the types of facilities that provide a sense of dignity and pride to persons serving their country. This is not cheap, however, and Moscow understands this. Last month the Russian defense ministry reported that spending in 2003 will increase 45.9% from this year. Of the additionally 77 billion rubles to be spent next year, 47 billion are assigned for social spending (27 billion on pensions, and 20 billion on increasing allowances for regular officers).⁴

Money spent on quality-of-life infrastructure is useless, however, if the troops, and the military industrial complex, are not organized, trained and equipped to accomplish the mission. Putin seems to understand this point. In a recent visit to the Far East, he visited facilities and

spoke of instilling a semblance of order to both the military and industry (his three themes: discipline, increasing salaries, and promoting the military as a proud “state institution”). It was no accident that Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov was by Putin’s side without Chief of General Staff Anatoliy Kvashnin: The friction between Kvashnin and Ivanov could have overshadowed his message.⁵

In addition to funding infrastructure and delivering policy speeches to the troops, Putin and Ivanov are rightly targeting training as a pivotal issue in the military’s transformation. “It is impossible to accomplish this task without increasing the proportion of combat training,” Ivanov said during his tour with Putin.⁶ In another speech, Ivanov stated, “I personally am very glad that our armed forces are gradually going back to normal and do what they should be doing-- combat training.”⁷ Moscow is showing a united front as it targets training and troop readiness. On 9 September, Kvashnin inspected the United Army Group units in the North Caucasus checking the combat training and readiness of the units of the 42nd Motorized Division (deployed in Chechnya), and the 58th Army on the Russian-Georgian border.⁸ The same types of inspections are taking place simultaneously throughout Russia. Russian President Putin’s special envoy, Dmitry Rogozin, recently visited the Kaliningrad region to analyze the state of the Baltic Fleet.⁹

Despite such strategies, however, recent events reflect the reality that nothing really changes in Russia. In the Volgograd region, 54 Russian soldiers deserted their post: Five had accuse the division chief of staff, Maj, Shiryayev, of beating them, while the other 49 soldiers joined the deserters in a show of solidarity.¹⁰ Desertions are routine in Russia’s demoralized and under-funded 1.2 million-man army. A report in the weekly defense review of the Moscow newspaper Nezavisimaya gazette in July quoted the defense ministry as saying that 2,270

servicemen deserted in the first half of this year.¹¹ This type of desertion rate reflects a brutal army culture.

In addition, corruption and low morale still haunt the services at all levels. Just last month, Lieutenant Colonel I. Rachkov, a department chief at Tula's Proletarskiy Rayon Military Commissariat, was caught red-handed receiving a bribe.¹² Experience shows that for each case reported, hundreds go unreported. The fact that Moscow only goes after "small fish," such as Lt Col Rachkov, illustrates part of the dilemma. If the reformers went after the top ranks, the whole organization would collapse because it is a system that relies on some corruption to run. Rachkov represents an example Moscow can point out to show how serious it is about cracking down on corruption.

Morale is critically low, too. In Chechnya, officers are grumbling that Moscow is depriving them of numerous benefits. This is causing significant dissatisfaction in the ranks. Many are not happy with the course of the reforms, and discipline in the troops is disgracefully weak. There is no new equipment and there are no replacements on the horizon. Troops look at Putin's initiative to increase monetary allowances by 11-percent in January 2003 as a joke. With a 12-percent annual inflation rate, they are still going backwards.¹³

However, the bad news is not limited to the "usual suspects". Recently, word came that twenty thousand former Soviet officers, who settled in Kaliningrad Region after the troops' pullout from the Baltic States, can't obtain Russian citizenship. The new Russian law on citizenship does not recognize the validity of identification papers issued by military authorities.¹⁴ This falls into the category of "actions speak louder than words." The military rank and file look at this apparent lack of respect for retired military as an indicator of how they are valued by the country's leaders. To add insult to injury, Moscow announced that it would re-

institute the system of “political officers” assigned to each major military unit. This puts the Russian military back 60 years to the days when Stalin used such officers to control and coerce the military for his own personal gain.¹⁵ These recent events breed fear, mistrust and distain among the men and women in uniform, illustrating that the more things change, the more they don’t. They are also inconsistent with any attempt by Moscow to transform its military.

If Putin really wants to reform the military, he needs to start by changing the Russian society norms of behavior. As long as corruption is accepted in society, there will be corruption in the military. As long as brutality is accepted in society, it will exist in the military too. And if Putin wants to return dignity and respect to the military, he has to establish policies that show that respect. He has to pay troops an honest wage, keep faith with promised retirements and provide the requisite equipment, facilities and training. Additionally, Putin needs to make some hard decisions about what units and facilities to cut. If he extrapolates the 2.7 billion rubles spent on the 76th Airborne Division to his whole military, he will go broke before he is half-way to any type of transformation.

The symbolic kickoff of Russia’s military transformation may have taken place with the 76th Airborne Division test, but the grim reality of an oversized Russian military has not changed. Putin must attack the root causes of these problems and build trust with the military or he will break the Russian bank trying to transform a military that is incapable of change. Attacking that root cause will cost a lot of money. President Putin knows this all too well.

Moscow’s Compelling Need for Cash to Fund Reform

The past few months have unveiled even more evidence that Russian President Vladimir Putin is accelerating the sale of Russian military equipment and using it as a fundraiser to help save the future of the armed forces, and Russia’s “rightful” strategic place in the world.

Flooding world markets with military equipment not only puts money in his pocket, it also increases his influence and bargaining position in each region.

The most telling evidence of this is Russia's expanding foreign military sales. This year Russia increased such sales to \$3.5 billion worth of military hardware. This is a \$ 300 million increase over last year. The general director of the state-owned exporting agency Rosoboroneksport, Andrei Belyaninov, told the RBK news agency that Russia's arms export has developed a distinct up trend over the last few years. The increase consists mostly of aircraft technologies and space services and includes over 1000 contracts with 69 countries.¹⁶

The president is not satisfied with simply this increase in total volume. In a meeting with his minister of science, industry, and technology on 6 August, Putin reiterated the "need for the more vigorous restructuring of the military-industrial complex in order to enhance the competitiveness of our products on the markets and to maintain the armed forces of the Russian Federation at the modern level."¹⁷ One example of this is the state-sponsored collaboration of the Mil and Kazan helicopter factories in Moscow, and the Kronstadt company in St. Petersburg to transform the Mi-17 helicopter into a custom-made, affordable military helicopter targeted to specific countries throughout the world. The package of equipment and services that comes with this sale gives Russia a clear lead over any other supplier in the world and increases its bottom line.¹⁸

These efforts to coordinate a strategy towards increasing military sales are working. In the last month alone, Syria, Iran, Nigeria, Columbia, Kuwait and Turkey all have moved forward to buy a significant amount of Russian equipment. It is interesting to note the language and theme of each press conference announcing the sale. The press conference regarding Nigeria, which took delivery of three Mi-34S helicopters, focused on how its successful exploitation of

the helicopters would make it possible to promote the same type of sales in the markets of other countries.¹⁹ Columbia took delivery of six Mi-17-MD helicopters in a ceremony similar to the one in Nigeria. The theme was the Mi-17's superiority over any American helicopter of the same class, and how other countries could also take advantage of this military capability.²⁰ The same "hard push for sales," and "advertisement style" press conferences, exist with the contracts for Syria, Iran, Turkey and Kuwait. They represent a change in the way Russia markets its military equipment and highlights the fact that Moscow is pursuing a strategy to sell as much military equipment as possible to as many countries as it can.

The reason for this strategy is clear. Putin needs the money if he wants to transform the Russian military in line with his 2010 plan. Earlier this year he adopted an arms program for the year 2010 to set up a powerful and efficient military with primary focus on its space force and strategic rocket force. To support that goal, and also spend 79 billion rubles in national defense this year, Putin needs to be aggressive about increasing his incoming cash flow.²¹

Putin, however, gains much more than just money by selling military goods. He gains influence, access and international prestige in every arena he sells military hardware. He also benefits from the fact that the US spreads itself thin trying to maintain a balance of access and influence in each region. A good example is China.

Russia has been selling military and high-tech (dual-use) technology and equipment to China at an alarming rate. Over the first six months of 2002, Russia sold China \$20.8 million worth of equipment in the high technology sphere alone, compared to only \$11.7 million for all of last year.²² This fact, coupled with the increase in sales of traditional military hardware, has made that region of the world a concern to the US. Additionally, at last month's Asian Regional Forum in Brunei, as US Secretary of State Collin Powell was busy drumming up support for

global counter-terrorism, China proposed a new security doctrine that envisions China, and not the US, as the dominant player in a new regional security order.²³ If China were able to collect enough military hardware to stage a conventional amphibious attack on Taiwan thanks to Russian arms sales, the US would be caught off guard with no military presence in the area that could stop such an attack. In the end, therefore, such sales enable Putin to increase his influence in the region.

The US needs to re-think its capabilities based planning to stay proactive, and not reactive, to Russia's increased military sales around the world.

What Does It All Mean?

The analysis here indicates that Russia is in a death spiral. They don't even have the money to keep up the current military infrastructure let alone develop new and advanced organizations and weapons. They are desperate to sell the only commodity they have (an abundance of military hardware) to anyone. What this means is that Russia will continue to aggressively push its military weapons to every corner of the world. Air and space power strategists must assume that every group in the world with an ax to grind against the US will have a minimal amount of military might proportional to their budget. This assumption drives us to a very uncomfortable fact—there isn't enough air and space power assets to cover all the necessary hotspots in the world. This is the essential problem airman must solve.

In the next three chapters I will track the military proliferation from Russia in three regions of the world and draw some conclusions about the geo-political ramifications of that military movement, and the relevance it has to US air and space power.

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Chapter 2

The Impact in China, India, and Southeast Asia

“The Chinese navy is taking active steps to access the medium ocean zone”

—Konstantin Makienko, Russian Military Analyst

If there is a pattern that emerges with Russia, it is that Moscow plays one country against another in order to generate an arms race. It then makes money by selling weapons to both sides. Such is the case with China, India, and Southeast Asia.

Russia is Sustaining an arms race between China and India

Moscow’s accelerated sale of military equipment to India and China has created concern about the possible consequences of those sales in the region. This year alone, Moscow has sold \$4.7 billion worth of equipment to China, including 2 destroyers, 28 Su-30MKK fighter aircraft, 8 submarines, and an RIF antiaircraft missile system. Military sales to India are just as staggering and include much of the same hardware.¹ This push by Moscow to sell military equipment fuels the mutual suspicion between China and India and creates an arms race, with each country scrambling to out buy the other. Events of the last few months illustrate this point.

In late September Russia began building the first of eight Kilo-class submarines for China.² After the announcement of this sale, India decided to upgrade 3 of its 10 older Russian-built Kilo-class submarines to add the same capability as the newer submarines being built for China. These upgrades include the new Klub-S cruise missile with laser-targeting warheads able

to hit targets in the water and on the coast at a distance of 220 km. Also included are new acoustic dampening and navigation systems that make them virtually undetectable to most militaries around the world (including Pakistan and Taiwan). These upgrades will make the Kilo-class one of the world's quietest diesel submarines.³

Additionally, India will begin leasing two Akula- Class (Type 971) nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs) from Russia in 2004 to rival China's growing "military existence" in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. The two SSNs are expected to join the Indian Navy in 2004; the rental contract will cover five years until India's self-built SSN (Advanced Technology Vessel) enters into service.⁴

The same arms race dynamic exists with Air Force equipment. On 27 September, the first squadron of Russian-made Su-30MKI fighters was commissioned at the Lohegaon base near the town of Pune, Maharashtra State, India. In all, Moscow will supply India with 40 Su-30MKI fighters over the next few months.⁵ China is responding in kind with an announcement that it will use Russian technology transfers to build new Su-30 fighters in the very near future. China already has 250 Su-27 fighters supplied by Russia in their inventory.

Moscow seems happy to encourage and fuel this arms race. It puts money in its coffers to help fund the much-needed military reform. Russia doesn't seem to care about the impact these sales have on the region's stability.

Moscow is Fueling a Buildup to Invade Taiwan

An interesting common denominator is emerging as China and India continue to climb the arms race ladder of military capability. It appears that China is buying systems and hardware that are directly applicable to an invasion of Taiwan. The military logistics of crossing a 100 mile channel, establishing air superiority, and conducting an amphibious landing, require very

specific capabilities in land, sea and air forces--capabilities that China is collecting from Russia through direct sales, technology transfers and creative engineering adaptations.

In an address to a seminar on defense technology development, Shih Kuo-chiang, dean of the Taiwan Air Force College of National Defense University, said mainland China is developing a J-10 jet fighter that incorporates both Russian and Chinese technologies. These fighters are expected to surpass the capabilities of the US built F-16 fighter. Taiwan currently has 150 F-16 fighters. Shih said he expects China, with development of the Russian Su-30 and J-10 fighter, will overtake Taiwan in aerial combat capabilities by 2010.⁶

Likewise, the Kilo-class submarine with its enhanced “silent running” capabilities and new Klub-S cruise missile with laser-targeting warheads are crucial to protecting an amphibious crossing of the Taiwan straits; they are perfectly suited for such an attack. The submarine threat cannot be over-stated. Taiwan has no capability to detect these submarines. Even the US Navy has a hard time detecting these Kilo-class submarines and would not be able to operate in the area without a full armada of US naval power in close vicinity. Such an operation would take days, if not weeks, to set up.

Additionally, with some very simple modifications made by the Chinese engineers, the armored personnel carriers being purchased from Russia have the capability to cross the Taiwan straits. China also is using Russian direct sales and technology transfers to enhance its surveillance of the Taiwan Strait with aerostat-borne maritime patrol radar capable of detecting anything floating on the water’s surface.⁷ These recent sales could enhance China’s capability to invade Taiwan so rapidly that the US would be unable to react in time.

Even if China’s military purchases from Russia are not a buildup to an invasion, it is worth keeping an eye on this exponential increase in combat capability. Washington also might

consider re-evaluating its 1982 communiqué with Beijing promising to reduce arms sales to Taiwan. That promise was predicated on Beijing not tipping the military balance across the Taiwan Strait in its favor, seeking instead a peaceful resolution to its dispute with Taiwan.⁸ The military balance already has been tipped in Beijing's favor and is moving quickly toward overwhelming military dominance.

China and India get Russian Weapons That Destabilize the Region

President Vladimir Putin's recent visit to East Asia and Central Asia had a clear goal: to increase military sales to everyone who will buy. As an example, during his time in India he endorsed more than 350 draft contracts for military support. According to Andrei Nikolaev, head of the Russian State Duma Defense Committee, Russia will "deliver new military hardware and weapons to India and modernize the existing types of weapons, launch production of T-70 and T-90 tanks and Su-30MKI aircraft, and develop joint production of advanced types of hardware and arms."⁹

Additionally, these 350 contracts include production of Amur-1650 submarines, radio electronic countermeasures systems for Su-30MKI aircraft, Smerch multiple launchers, airborne early warning systems for the A-50 aircraft and the modernizations of the heavy aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov for the Indian Navy.¹⁰ Of most concern to India's neighbors is Russia's renewed offer to provide an integrated air and missile defense system that President Putin proposed in New Delhi. The long-range S-300V surface-to-air missile system, along with the shorter-range "Tor-M1" and "Buk-M1" systems, will be integrated into the Indian "Trishul" system and would cover the entire Indian territory.¹¹ According to Rosoboronexport, the contracts signed with India total about \$12.5 billion, no small amount of money for a Russian military and economy in desperate need of cash.¹²

The same dynamic took place in China. China added the S-300F surface-to-air missile system to its inventory along with several naval acquisitions. According to Konstantin Makienko, deputy director of the Russian Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, China has arrived at a qualitative new stage in development of its navy. “The Chinese navy is taking active steps to access the medium ocean zone,” he said. This capability would allow them to operate outside the first chain of islands (e.g., Japan, Taiwan and western Borneo).¹³

Military sales to China and India keep the two giants on equal military ground. When asked about the arms race he is fueling, President Putin said, “We are confident about the positive development of Russian-Indian, Russian-Chinese and Chinese-Indian relations...We look favorably on the possibility of India joining the Shanghai Cooperative Organization (SCO). We have come to the conclusion that now we could address other problems through that organization.” The SCO originally included four former Soviet republics and China to resolve border disputes but has expanded its role to include fighting terrorism.¹⁴

Despite President Putin’s claim that no arms race can take place among friends, China and India still have a long way to go before they look upon one another without suspicion and caution. In the meantime, Moscow gets what it wants from both countries: money to help revitalize a failing economy and reform a struggling military.

Weapons to Malaysia and Indonesia help terrorist organizations

It seems that Moscow has now joined the worldwide fight against terrorism. President Vladimir Putin promised to give the Russian military broad power to act “in all places where the terrorist, the organizers of these crimes or their ideological or financial sponsors are located.”¹⁵ Russian strategists seem to be missing an important point, however, as they narrowly focus on Chechnya as their closest terrorist threat. They miss the point that flooding the markets of

Malaysia and Indonesia with Russian military hardware, with no strings attached, could put military capability in the hands of a much larger and more dangerous future terrorist faction growing in Southeast Asia. The recent terrorist attack in Bali should be a red flag to tread carefully in that part of the world.

It has been no secret that Russia is pushing Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and any other country in that region to buy military goods. The push was initiated back in 1996 but fell short of expectations due to the Asian financial crisis. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hasan Wirayudha recently met to discuss this and other issues. Wirayudha came out of the meeting and said “Indonesia plans to build up its ties in [the] military industrial [sector] with Russia. Groups from both countries will continue to meet and explore them.”¹⁶ Bilateral trade with Indonesia reached 203.5 million dollars last year alone. Moscow believes conditions are now favorable to start increasing that trade and economic investment in military technical cooperation.¹⁷

Moscow also is aggressive with respect to selling military goods to Malaysia. At the October LIMA-2001 aerospace show in Malaysia, the Russian airplane-building corporation MiG pressured Malaysia to buy its latest modifications on a series of MiG-29 fighter aircraft.¹⁸ Additionally, Malaysia is considering a purchase of the Mi-38 Russian helicopter that can be used for both military and civilian purposes.¹⁹ A few days after the air show, Malaysian Defense Minister Datuk Seri Najib said “ the armed forces are planning to buy several types of helicopters including the Russian Mi-171.”²⁰

Russia’s efforts to entice Thailand to buy military goods have been very successful as well. In fact, during Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat’s visit to Moscow, he took with him the commanders of the army, navy, and air force (an unprecedented move). During the visit,

Russian leaders pressed the Thai delegation to lease two Russian submarines and buy a Russian ground-to-air missile system, among other military hardware.²¹ These offers are attractive because the price tag is almost half the equivalent US price without the stiff restrictions on usage and proliferation the US would require. Prime Minister Thaksin emerged from the talks saying “Thailand is interested in cooperation with Russia in high technologies, especially in the military field.”²²

The markets in Southeast Asia may be lucrative for Moscow to dump its military hardware for cold cash, but the consequences might be high. There are never any strings attached to Russian military sales, and these countries have very porous coastlines and significant links to terrorist groups within their borders. Just a few weeks ago, the UN Security Council released a document linking al-Qaeda to a few ruling parties and non-governmental organizations in Malaysia including the Barisan Nasional [National Front].²³ Additionally, Jemaah Islamiyah, a group linked to al-Qaida by the United Nations, has articulated its ambitions to create a pan-Islamic super state across Indonesia, Malaysia, Southern Philippines and Northern Australia.²⁴ Indonesia, with the world’s largest population of Muslims, would be fertile ground to headquarter such a movement.²⁵ Rear Admiral Richard Cobbold, director of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in London, said the Bali Bombing and terrorist-related activities in Southeast Asia during the past few weeks foreshadowed the shift in “the center of gravity” of al-Qaeda’s terrorist campaign to the region. At the head of this effort is Jemaah Islamiyah.²⁶ These facts, coupled with the increased interrelationships between organizations in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, give cause for concern.

Even the media sources in many of these Southeast Asian countries echo a tone of anti-Western sentiment. Such sentiment is important for terrorist organizations to recruit new

members. The recent CIA report of an unmanned US predator drone blowing up a car in Yemen hit the regional media with just that tone; “Taking the law into its own hands, [the United States] acts just like other terrorists ready to take innocent lives. It [is] just an example of how the US arbitrarily used its military power against other people.”²⁷ Additionally, when the Bush Administrations asked Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri to refute the media theory that the United States was responsible for the Bali attack, she condemned the US as “a superpower that forced the rest of the world to go along with it.” There are over 200 known Islamic militant organizations currently operating in Indonesia alone. President Megawati has shown that she lacks the ability, unity or leadership to deal with the threat.²⁸ These factors increase the risk that Russian military hardware flooding the markets could fall into the wrong hands.

It would be wise for Moscow to hold back from its aggressive arms sales strategy to the region and allow some of the anti-terrorist efforts to take hold before it proceeds. For example, after the Bali bombing, leaders of 21 Asia-Pacific nations signed up to the biggest international counter-terrorism plan ever framed. The plan, agreed to at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Mexico, seeks to introduce new conditions and controls on international travel, commerce, on-line transactions, charity, and aid organizations.²⁹ Additionally, Malaysia is establishing a regional training center to counter terrorism. Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the training center would focus on projects aimed at enhancing the capability and ability of each Asian country in dealing with terrorist movements. “Our target (timeframe for establishment) for the regional center is next year.”³⁰ These initiatives could put into place structures and barriers that reduce the risk of military arms falling into the hands of terrorists.

Moscow has historical precedence to guide their arms sales policies in Southeast Asia. After years of flooding eastern European countries with Russian military capability with no proliferation or usage requirements, Russia is finding itself a victim of its own weapons. In the last four months alone, Russia has lost four helicopters and close to 200 lives at the hands of Russian made surface to air missiles used against them. These missiles may have come from Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia or from Arab states via these countries.³¹ These avoidable losses point out the counterproductive nature of Moscow's arms sales policies.

If Russia continues to blindly push their military goods into any region, regardless of the potential dangers, they will find themselves in the same situation as Chechnya where they are being shot down by their own weapons. Moscow needs to be responsible with the war fighting capability they give to the world or everyone could pay the price as terrorists get their hands on deadly arms. The international war on terrorism requires Russia to have a broader perspective than just making money through military sales, especially now in Southeast Asia.

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Chapter 3

The Impact in Chechnya, Georgia and the Caucasus

“This issue can only be settled by using force. There is no point in talking with terrorists, trying to convince them or reasoning with them. The whole world knows it. Either they [terrorists] must face the law-enforcement agencies or their bodies must be presented for identification”

—Russian Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov

Military arms have been flooding into the Caucasus since early 1980. Not only is the region flooded with arms directly from the former USSR and current Russian regimes, it is also flooded by second hand arms from former and current Russian customers such as Moldova, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Ukraine & Bosnia. This chapter will show how the situation in Chechnya (and Russia’s desire to control Georgia) has created a dangerous battleground that the US can’t ignore. This year’s hostage crisis in Moscow was a catalyst for President Putin to change his entire military doctrine to one that is more dangerous for the US, and one that creates more problems for US airpower to solve.

Russian Weapons in Chechnya Come Back to Haunt Them

On 21 October, 2002, Russian Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov announced that in the summer of 2003, the interior ministry would take control of the antiterrorism operation in Chechnya from the Federal Security Service.¹ The Moscow hostage taking, two days later, changed everything. In the past two weeks, a fundamental shift in military strategy has been

evident, a shift from accepting the status quo of Chechnya as a “low-grade fever” to attempting to achieve victory and closure (a victory that is arguably out of reach).

Two days after FSB forces stormed the Moscow theater, President Putin announced that: “Russia is now paying the price for the weakness of the state and the consequences of its inaction, but the country will make no ‘understandings’ with terrorists or surrender to their blackmail. We will more actively use the army to combat international terrorism. The new objective for the Russian Armed Forces is to fight terrorism at the global level.”² At a subsequent Kremlin meeting with Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, Chief of the General Staff Anatolii Kvashnin, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Federal Security Service Director Nikolai Patrushev and Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov, Putin ordered a total revision of the country’s National Security Doctrine that will increase the role of the military against terrorists and those who sponsor or finance them. As part of the reform, the interior ministry’s 20 divisions of troops will be transformed over the next few years into a national guard.³ Additionally, the government’s Financial Monitoring Committee will begin investigating financial operations that are allegedly supporting terrorism; the committee already has found links between the Chechen fighters who took the 800 hostages and foreign countries, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.⁴

These extraordinary steps speak to the level of discomfort the hostage event has brought to Putin and his desire to bring some closure. To that end he has canceling the proposed transfer of responsibility for the Chechen war from the FSB to the MVD next summer. Additionally, he has halted all troop withdrawals from the republic and announced a new offensive. Speaking to journalists in Khabarovsk on 3 November, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said Russian troops have begun “large-scale and tough but precisely targeted operations in all areas of Chechnya.”⁵

There are many reasons for concern over these developments. First, the massive military clampdown and “mopping-up” operations that this hostage situation initiated constitute just “more of the same.” This strategy has been ineffective for the last three years and will continue to be a failure. If Moscow wants its war on terrorism to change, then Russia needs to invest in a reform of the military to accomplish such a task. Such reform takes years to organize, train and equip military personnel to act differently than they have for the last 50 years. They can’t just shape new doctrine that resembles US concepts for fighting terrorism and have it be effective overnight.⁶ It will also take lots of money, money Putin doesn’t have. This reality for Putin is compounded by the fact that his forces are already in such poor shape. Currently the government still owes former servicemen of the 58th Army alone 20.3 billion rubles for the first and second campaigns in Chechnya. The payment of this past debt was not funded in the 2003 budget, forcing military personnel to file lawsuits as the only hope to get paid (a great reproach to the government).⁷

Second, only Chechen civilians are hurt when the estimated 80,000 troops in and around the separatist North Caucasus republic go on rampages to rout out terrorists. The Chechen Security Council chief, Rudnik Dudayev, protested against the mopping-up operations, saying that the military was flouting new rules governing the security sweeps that were supposed to avoid human rights abuses.⁸ Such fears for human rights seem plausible given the history of Russian activity in the area and the conditions the military have on the ground. One Russian Army sergeant said: “[E]very time we arrest a suspect, local officials come protesting and Chechen women stage a rally, This is a real war for us, with explosions and battles every day. But we can do nothing—officially we have only civilians around.”⁹

Another concern deals with this new doctrine giving the military internal “police” powers. One group of influential figures in the armed forces, especially in the General Staff, advocates broader powers for the military in the war against “enemies within.” The military even has drafted legislation for a constitutional provision stating that all security structures, including the military, are to be used in response to internal threats.¹⁰ This latest hostage event, and Putin’s shift in military strategy, open the door of opportunity for the hard-liners to capture enormous powers for the military, setting a dangerous precedent that could ultimately threaten Putin and the government.

Regardless of these concerns, it would be wise for Moscow to step back from this situation and reflect on the root cause of its problems. First, at the root of the Chechnya dynamic are unresolved ethnic and nationalistic issues. These issues have grown with the use of military force which, applied conventionally, has precipitated much of the terrorist activity against Moscow. Chechnya’s President Aslan Maskhadov explained: “We have nothing to lose by teaming up with hard-line separatists. This war has radicalized us all regarding Russia. I am certain that in the final stage, we will carry out an even more exceptional operation, in the style of jihad, through which we will liberate our land from the Russian aggressors.”¹¹ Both Vietnam and Afghanistan are historical examples of the military failing to deal with situations rooted in ethnic and nationalistic struggles. The military solution will only exacerbate the problem until Putin attacks the root causes of conflict in the region; however, many analysts see that as unlikely since Chechnya has been a convenient vehicle to foster nationalist sentiments and to win elections. Still, the hostage crisis might have changed his view and precipitated these fundamental changes in military strategy.

Moscow's Flood of Weapons Could Cause War With Georgia

Of additional concern is Moscow's desire to increase its influence and access in Georgia. Over the past few months Moscow has taken every opportunity to build up the case that Georgia is harboring terrorists and that Russia would use force to deal with the situation. Could the increase in military forces in Chechnya and the recent doctrinal and organizational changes be used as a springboard towards future military action in Georgia? The answer lies in the grim reality of Russian military capability both in Chechnya and in Georgia.

The troops in the region are seriously worn out by the war in the Caucasus. Moreover, the reserves of the General Staff have dwindled so much that detachments are being sent to the region not yet having the stable structure to fight guerrillas.¹² Additionally, morale is low, discipline is non-existent, and frustration with the status quo is high. Russian armed forces garrisoned in Georgia constitute mostly a symbolic presence. While their presence does provide some advantage, that alone does not mean they have the ability to join any coordinated offensive operation. They are severely limited due to lack of supplies, equipment, and morale. Additionally, they face opposition from their "host country." Georgian Defense Minister Lieutenant General David Tevzadze told journalists in Tbilisi that Georgia would restrict the movement of Russian forces within the country and limit the amount of supplies they bring to expedite the closure of the two remaining Russian military bases on its territory. He cited the negative effect Russian bases have on Georgia's aspiration to join NATO.¹³ Also, after Russia threatened preemptive strikes on Georgia, the Georgian parliament voted to increase defense spending by an additional \$5 million.¹⁴

The risk of Putin using his military to strong-arm Georgia is low. Unlike Chechnya, there is too much Western media visibility in Georgia to keep any military operation quiet, and the

international outcry would be significant. More importantly, Moscow understands it doesn't have the military capability or horsepower to wage a war on terrorism in Chechnya while simultaneously attacking Georgia.

Putin can announce all the change he wants, but until he can reform his military into one that is properly funded, organized, trained and equipped, he will never win his war on terrorism or influence regions of the world like he would hope.

Caspian Sea Military Buildup May Be a Precursor to Invasion

In August 2002, Russia held the largest military exercise ever undertaken in the Caspian Sea. It came about because of Putin's frustration with the failure of the five-nation Caspian Summit to reach any agreement on the delineation of the Caspian Sea. The official goal outlined by Russia was merely to test the ability of the troops to battle terrorism and crack down on criminal activities at sea.¹⁵ However, Putin gets three benefits from one exercise. He signals to the four other littoral states that he holds all the military cards in the region, he gets some marginal training for his troops, and he maintains a level of intimidation and fear in Chechnya and Georgia.

The intimidation is subtle but clear, and consistent with the ongoing desire by Moscow to pressure Georgia at every opportunity and re-establish Russian influence. In a news conference held in Kaspiysk, just as the military exercise was reaching its highest point, Russian Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov didn't focus on the exercise but rather on Georgia's Pankisi Gorge, reiterating Moscow's demands for direct involvement. "This issue can only be settled by using force. There is no point in talking with terrorists, trying to convince them or reasoning with them. The whole world knows it. Either they [terrorists] must face the law-enforcement

agencies or their bodies must be presented for identification.”¹⁶ This statement was punctuated by the massive military operation going on just miles away.

Moscow has been using every incident in the Chechen conflict lately to frame Russian incursions onto Georgian territory in the light of counter-terrorism efforts. On 22 August 2002, Russia accused Georgia of harboring terrorists and quickly blamed those “terrorists” for shooting down the Mi-26 military transport helicopter that crashed near Khankala killing over 116 soldiers.¹⁷ Russia also justified the latest series of cross-border air raids into Georgia as nothing more than raids on terrorists.¹⁸ It is not a stretch to conclude that these Caspian Sea exercises are meant to flex Russian military muscle in the region that might one day be used to invade Georgia under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

This region of the world is a powder keg of potential violence. US air and space power cannot always rely on Turkey as the host base to bring forces to bear in this region. Turkey has ties and commitments that could prevent us from getting any help. We need to be ready to deal with that eventuality.

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Chapter 4

The Impact in Iran, Iraq, and Central Asia

“The strengthening of Russia’s political and economic position depends directly on the success of its technological ties”

—Russian President Vladimir Putin

After the terrorist attacks in September 2001, central Asia has taken on more strategic significance because of the US war on terror. Air and space power must be able to support the commanders in this area even if access, response times, and distances make that impossible with current capability. Russia’s flood of weapons into this area of the world add to the likelihood that conflicts will arise needing air and space power application in the very near future.

This chapter looks at some of the activity over the year of 2002 and draws conclusions about future realities that airpower strategists must face.

Russian Sales Are Creating the next Iraq in Iran

Recent events may point to the fact that Iran is the next major threat to regional security in the Middle East, and Russia is fueling the problem. On 20 Oct Iranian forces based in Lebanon received the Zelzal-2 missile system capable of carrying over 1000 pounds of chemical, biological, nuclear, or conventional weapons as far as Tel Aviv (a range of 150 miles). Once fired, the missiles would reach Tel Aviv in just a couple of minutes. For the first time, Iran is capable of targeting main cities and military installations in Israel; this acquisition has changed

the strategic balance in the region. Iran didn't get this capability on its own. Russia played a major role in their ability to gain this military advantage.¹

This latest development is only the "tip of the iceberg." For years Moscow has been supplying military goods and services to help arm Tehran. Over the last two decades, Russia has sold Iran countless weapons such as anti-aircraft defenses, firearms, armored vehicles and anti-tank weapons.² Even more worrisome are the dual use technologies that Russia has given to Iran both directly and through other countries such as Ukraine which profit on the transfer of knowledge and equipment to rogue states. Recent taped conversations between Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma and the director of Ukraine's largest rocket maker, Yuri Alexeev, indicate that Ukraine supplied Russian rocket technology to Iran that surely helped them achieve this most recent capability.³ Russia also is actively engaged with Iran on nuclear development. Moscow is helping the Islamic republic build a nuclear reactor at Bushehr on the Gulf. This nuclear help has blossomed into Russia promising five nuclear reactors over the next few years.⁴ The West is concerned because the Bushehr project, and a flood of additional nuclear support assets, could provide a conduit for Russian nuclear specialists to be recruited into Iran's nuclear military effort.⁵

Moscow is not without conscience. In this month's International Arms Export Conference held in Warsaw, Russian officials talked about the need to control exports of so-called dual-application goods, but went no further than to say that nuclear technologies would only be used for peaceful purposes.⁶ Clearly, Moscow's sales of dual-application goods to rogue states, with no strings attached, speak louder than words. Russian officials don't take seriously the potential that Iran could use nuclear knowledge for military purposes.⁷ Russia is also a bit blind to the dangers that Iran can pose to the region. Yakov Bravoy, the director general of

ITAR-TASS international department, recently pointed to Iran as a pivotal regional state and said he saw signs for optimism with Tehran's upcoming International Forum: "Given that the forum marks Iran's orientation towards peace, it cannot be accused of supporting terrorism," he said.⁸

Nothing could be further from the truth. Iran has been articulating its hatred of the West for decades and its willingness to use force to deliver its notion of justice. It also blames Israel and America for Iraq's eight-year war against Iran. In a recent newspaper article, Iran officially called America the "Great Satan" and pointed to the so called "accidental" US missile attack on the Iranian Air Bus (killing 300), the US backed eight-year war against Iraq and US attacks on Iran's marine terminals as reasons to fight. "American soil [has become] the safe haven and sanctuary for all the terrorists whose hands were stained with the blood of our innocent people and prominent figures everywhere in our country."⁹

Iran has shown clearly the intent to use force. Now Russia has provided the means to use force (in the form of the Zelzal-2 missile system) and the potential to develop nuclear weapons (with the contract to build five nuclear reactors). It would be wise to keep an eye on Iran and not get so focused on Iraq that the danger signs from their neighbors to the east are missed.

Russia is not maliciously creating this potentially volatile situation. It just is looking out for its own self-interest without regard to any unintended consequences. While funding is a major motivation, politics and strategy also play a part. On 3 October, Russian President Putin explained the connection of trade to status at a session of the Commission for Technological Cooperation: "The strengthening of Russia's political and economic position depends directly on the success of its technological ties."¹⁰ Moscow also is motivated by potential regional influence. One man who has been on the inside of Russian strategic planning over the past decade, Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov (now vice-president of the geopolitical studies

academy), was interviewed recently by the Russian press. When asked about Iran he indicated that the appearance of US troops in Central Asia now requires Russia to stay engaged in the region militarily, politically and economically to the maximum extent possible.¹¹ These two statements support the latest trend in Moscow to sell as much as possible to anyone who will open up their pocket book. It is a trend that is creating greater and greater concern, especially because of countries such as Iran.

It could be argued that the Iranians have the same desire to use weapons of mass destruction as Iraq. They are, without question, closer to possessing the technology and materials to produce nuclear weapons. To treat them as no threat would be to turn a blind eye to the facts. Combining Iran's nuclear potential, delivery vehicle capability and the current political environment in the Middle East, creates the recipe for disaster, and Russia must take some responsibility. Moscow's blatant disregard for the geopolitical consequences of its military and dual-use technologies sales may create the next major crisis in the region.

Russian Weapons in Kyrgyzstan Illustrate a Dangerous Precedence

Moscow is finally fighting back against what it perceives to be an insidious increase in US presence and influence in the Central Asian region. On 2 December, two Su-25 Frog-Foot ground attack aircraft and two Il-76 Candid transport aircraft arrived at the military airport in Kant, 20 kilometers from Bishkek. Over the next few weeks, five Su-27, five Su-25 fighter aircraft, two AN-26 Curl transport aircraft, five L-39 trainers, two Mi-8 Hip multi-mission helicopters and two Il-76 aircraft will join the initial arrivals. Over 700 Russian servicemen and civilians from Tajikistan also will be stationed at Kant with this hardware.¹²

The Russian military attaché in Kyrgyzstan, Major General Vladimir Varfalameev, told news agencies that this move is meant to provide air cover for the ground units which already

have been set up at Kant, and is comprised of Russian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Tajik battalions. He went on to say that this increased presence is part of a continuing effort to bolster Central Asia's collective rapid-deployment forces for the Collective Security Treaty's Central Asian sector (CSTO).¹³

But the timing and method of this move indicate a different intended objective. President Vladimir Putin may be more interested in sending a message to the region rather than bolstering CSTO. The activity comes on the heels of Tajikistan President Emomali Rakhmonov's announcement that he would visit the United States in December to discuss increased American military presence adjacent to current Russian units based in Dushanbe.¹⁴ Of additional concern to Putin are the squadrons of planes and soldiers from NATO which have been stationed at the Manas airfield in Kyrgyzstan for over a year. That may also be why he announced this move of military force into the region and why he arrived in Kyrgyzstan on 5 December to visit the troops and see the situation first-hand.¹⁵ However, moving a 700-soldier unit from Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan, an insignificantly small distance, does nothing to increase military capability in the area. It equates to little more than a shell game to make it appear that significant military might is being added.¹⁶

This "hollow" gesture by Putin might be explained by a recent Russian survey. The results, published by the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute for Comprehensive Social Research (ICSR), indicate that Russians dislike any US military presence near their borders (to include former Soviet states) and overwhelmingly approve of Putin using Russian troops to counter such a presence. Additionally, the study found that most Russians believe Putin's greatest achievement of the past two years is the "unfreezing" of Russia's relations with the West.¹⁷ These results could explain why, on the one hand, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov recently

indicated that Russia no longer views one country as its principle antagonist, while at the same time Putin shuffles troops around Central Asia to make it appear that Moscow is countering the US presence.¹⁸

In the final analysis, the Russian military is in such poor shape, and stretched so thin because of Chechnya, that no new military force could be generated to increase the Collective Security Treaty Organization's ranks in Kyrgyzstan. The most that Moscow can do is appear to be doing something about the US presence by shuffling military forces within the region. Such a move merely attempts to boost Putin's public popularity domestically and send a message to the Central Asian states that they are not out from under the Russian orbit of influence, an influence that continues to deteriorate along with Russia's economic and military might.

However, a more dangerous development is that Moscow is willing to sell military weapons to this region with no restrictions. There is no more likely place for that type of military capability to get in the hands of evil men than Southeast Asia. US air and space power has very little footing in this region. If catastrophe struck, we would once again be shackled to long and compromising negotiations with regional powers to use any current air and space power we have. We as military thinkers can brake those shackles for our national leaders by applying technology to our future concepts of air and space force application.

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Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

I'm really concerned that the pace of our modernization won't keep up with the reality of what we have to do to keep airplanes operating and flying every day."

—General William Bergert, Commander, Pacific Air Forces

Russia is flooding the world with weapons in a desperate attempt to increase cash flow. This phenomenon is creating thousands of potential crisis spots around the world that threaten US national security. United States air and space power potential in each region analyzed in this paper suffers from the same critical weakness; it is reliant on access and approval by foreign countries and dependent on very long and vulnerable logistic lines of supply. With terrorism on the rise, those vulnerable logistic lines and bases of operation become lucrative targets for terror that America doesn't have the resources to adequately protect.

Our current paradigm of airpower application cannot support this new reality that is emerging. We cannot be everywhere all the time with perfect protection of our assets. We don't have the infrastructure, number of weapon systems, or money to build logistical lines and access locations for every hotspot. We must change our approach to airpower applications and design an infrastructure that can deal with this new reality. Air and space thinkers must forge a path towards a future where air and space power is free from these cumbersome shackles.

To solve this problem, we must apply effects based operational planning to our weapons research phase, development phase, testing phase, and implementation phase. Instead of trying

to force fit current weapon systems to this new problem, we need to coordinate the development of different systems that work together to meet this need.

One potential need this research paper highlights is the need to have some kind of kinetic or energy weapon poised (presumably from space) anywhere in the world and ready to be applied at any place and at any time dictated by an agile command and control system with broad visibility. One airman on the ground anywhere in the world should be able to communicate with all levels of intelligence and command, and call in air and space power to a set of coordinates within minutes. Such capability cannot rely on manned airplanes shackled with heavy and time limiting life support systems. It cannot be shackled by the low speeds and high energy costs associated with loitering in the low earth atmosphere. It cannot be shackled to forward operational bases venerable to attack and costly to operate. It cannot be dependent upon the political whims of a host country for permission to operate or held hostage by the need for host nation support. It must originate from defensible locations within the US and have the speed and flexibility to change missions within seconds. It must spring from the national security need that is emerging in our world today, a need that is being accelerated by Russia's proliferation of military weapons. Such a capability would allow our national command authority to act and react to thousands of hotspots around the world with near instantaneous results. If we don't act now to bring about this change, we risk becoming irrelevant and incapable of defending our national security in the future.

Air and space power thinkers have their work cut out. We must arrive at this new kind of capability for air and space power without risking our ability to fight today's war. We must arrive at this capability with well thought out theory, doctrine, and operational concepts that guarantee success. We have a challenge before us. Airmen everywhere must commit

themselves to transforming air and space power so it stays relevant and successful at defending America.

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