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THE DYNAMICS OF SECURITY IN POST-SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA: AN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From the nineteenth century until 1991 Central Asia was the periphery of an empire whose center of power, whether in the Tsarist or Soviet era, lay in Russia. The implosion of the Soviet empire in 1991 led to the rise of five independent Central Asian states. The fundamental question to be addressed in considering the security of Central Asia is the nature of future Russian conduct. The continued salience of the Russian factor should be obvious in light of the historical legacy just noted. But it stems, as well, from the stark imbalance of power between core (Russia) and periphery (Central Asia); the ease with which Russia can inject its power into the region; the tendency of Russian elites, whether liberals or ultranationalists, to see the region as one in which Russia has special interests and prerogatives; the existence of a Russian diaspora of 16 million in Central Asia; and the dependence of the region on Russia for an array of needs ranging from arms and military expertise to essential economic imports.

It is now a commonplace to stress the diminution in Russia’s power and the wider range of options that Central Asia’s leaders therefore have. But the imprint of history, the immutable factors of geography, and the still-robust coils of dependency should not be glossed over. True, it is not easy for colonial powers to dominate their peripheries after they gain independence. Britain, which emerged from World War II in a weakened state, understood this. France learned the lesson only after the expenditure of blood and treasure in Vietnam and Algeria. But, for Russia, proximity makes post-imperial dominance less formidable a challenge—and therefore perhaps more tempting. The notion that Russia’s multiple crises rule this out is, as the events in Georgia, Moldova, and Tajikistan show, demonstrably false.

The overarching question about the nature of Russia’s future policy in Central Asia hides four others that are more specific: 1) Will Russia act as a benign hegemon in Central Asia? That is, while insisting that its basic interests (peripheral security, the safety of the Russian diaspora, and a degree of influence greater than any other external power) be respected, will it be content to calibrate the balance of power among the Central Asian states while also safeguarding them against external threats? 2) Or will Russia act as an neo-imperial power? Will it, in other words, go beyond a preoccupation with the balance of power among the Central Asian states and between itself and other states (China, Iran, Turkey, the United States) in Central Asia to try to shape the internal order of Central Asian countries? 3) If Russia does pursue such a neo-imperial agenda, what countervailing strategies are available to Central Asian leaders? Can they balance Russia by turning to other extra-regional powers? 4) What are American interests in Central Asia? Should the United States undertake the responsibility of acting as a counterweight to a neo-imperial Russia?
The four questions just specified arise in the context of a post-Soviet transition, an epochal and uncertain struggle to remake the states that emerged from the wreckage of the Soviet empire. In the economic sphere, this involves discarding the centrally-planned economic system based on state control of productive assets and administered prices in favor of an alternative featuring private property and the market. Politically, it entails establishing regimes with organizational characteristics and legitimating principles fundamentally different from those of the Soviet polity. To be sure, the nature of the economic and political transition will vary from state to state; so will the degree to which democracy (civil society, a free press, and competitive elections) and markets take root. These particulars, while important, need not concern us here. What is more important is that the magnitude of change--whether anticipated or not--in the post-Soviet states will be accompanied by instability regardless of the pace and direction of change. This is a safe assumption: at issue, after all, is the replacement, under unexpected and difficult circumstances, of a system that set the political and economic ground rules and the parameters of political discourse for 70 years.

This transformation will be marked by three characteristics which, as I explain later, will shape Russian-Central Asian security dynamics:

1) The Contest between Political Institutionalization and Social Mobilization: Political institutionalization refers to the creation of legitimate and effective state institutions. Such state structures are able to gain acceptance from most citizens; and they are strong enough to keep the peace, collect taxes, and replenish legitimacy by improving popular welfare. Social mobilization denotes the process of citizens, energized by new ideological and cultural influences, making demands upon the state--either peacefully within institutions (systemically) or violently on the streets (extra-systemically). The likelihood of this struggle between political institutionalization and social mobilization results from several conditions. They have not acquired strong foundations or worked out viable legitimating principles. To complicate matters, the era of the docile citizen may be over. In the Soviet years, the USSR was closed off from outside influences--or, at the very least, the regime regulated citizens' exposure to the outside world and its messages. This is no longer possible. The post-Soviet states lack the capacity to do this: more importantly, they are attempting to seek economic progress through linkages with the global economy, and this is inconsistent with a strategy of intellectual and cultural isolation. (This is something that China's leaders have found out. The quest for global economic competitiveness requires coping with CNN and sending students to Berkeley, but these influences can also stir things up at home.) Outside influences (religious, cultural, and economic) permeate both Russia and Central Asia now as never before. This is bound to raise popular expectations, make people think differently, and create a sense of relative deprivation. Simply put, having opened itself up, the struggling post-Soviet state is bound to experience a great deal of social mobilization. To take
the case of Central Asia, trade with Iran, China, and Turkey, or visits to the Persian Gulf
emirates by Turkmen traders seeking consumer goods to resell at home, will have consequences
beyond the economic sphere.

2) The Rise of Nationalism: The danger of radical and exclusionary "ethnic" (as opposed
to "civic" and inclusive) variants of nationalism that privilege titular nationalities is considerable
in the post-Soviet space. The reason is that existing state boundaries in Central Asia are arbitrary
demarcations imposed from above by fiat between 1924 and 1929. Their legacy in Central Asia is
a disjunction between national and ethnic boundaries. Consider, for example, the borders between
Russia and Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, which
create irredentist temptations for the stronger powers, Russia and Uzbekistan, to make ethnic and
state borders coincide. The high-capacity Soviet state deterred irredentist conflict; when
deterrence failed repression was used. But the situation may prove more unstable with the advent
of low-capacity post-Soviet states. To divert attention from the hardships imposed by the post-
Soviet economic transition, their ruling elites may play the nationalist card to shore up faltering
legitimacy by seeking to initiate border changes aimed at harmonizing state and nation and by
posing as the protector of ethnic kin abroad.

Even in the absence of a failed transition, ruling elites in search of legitimacy may gravitate
toward a nationalist discourse and an agenda that stresses the primacy of the titular nationality's
language, encourages a nationalist historiography, renames cities, and implements recruitment
and resource allocation policies that favor the titular nationality. Because they emphasize the
symbols, myths, and superior rights of the titular nationality, such policies could generate fear
and resentment among other nationalities, leading them to look for support from the ethnic
homeland. Intra-state ethnic tensions could thus prepare the ground for inter-state conflict:
disgruntled Russians in Kazakhstan would turn to Russia, with potentially serious consequences if
instability in Russia had by then put in place an authoritarian-nationalist leadership; or the sizable
Uzbek minority in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan would turn to Uzbekistan, a state whose population
and power already worry the smaller Central Asian states.

3) The Short-Run Tradeoff Between the Pursuit of Efficiency and the Maintenance of
Stability: The post-Soviet states face a Hobson's choice between economic reforms, which are
needed to gain efficiency and to satisfy foreign investors and lenders, and stability, which could
be eroded by enacting policies that tighten budgets, shut down inefficient enterprises, and force
people to seek their way in the pitiless Darwinism of the market. If the market is the way
towards technological advancement, rational pricing, the effective use of resources, and improved
living standards, it may also be the handmaiden of socially-explosive inflation, unemployment,
and sharp inequality. Things may work out in the long run. But, for weak states with tenuous
legitimacy, it is precisely the short run that matters. For them the bottom line is whether they can
survive the short-term dislocations created by the market and cope with angry citizens mobilized by counter-elites.

So far, I have focussed on domestic variables in order to show why the post-Soviet transition could be accompanied by upheaval. But to understand the connection between domestic turmoil and foreign and security policy, two further steps are needed: identifying the systemic variables (i.e., those governing the power balances among states) affecting foreign policy and security; and explaining how the interplay between systemic and domestic conditions will shape foreign policy and security outcomes.

It is notoriously difficult to define and measure power. But most people would agree that population, GNP, land area, and the size of the armed forces are, taken together, useful in comparing the power of states. If one uses these indicators to compare Russia and Central Asia, and the Central Asian states themselves, two factors are readily apparent: first, Russia has an overwhelming advantage over Central Asia, making the Russian-Central Asian system a unipolar one; second, the system involving the five Central Asian states is bipolar in form, but potentially unipolar as well. This distinction between form and substance with reference to the Central Asian balance of power needs explanation. While it is true that Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are the region's most powerful states (thus making the system bipolar in form), if one assumes that Kazakhstan could face irredentist upheaval in its northern, predominantly Russian, regions, and that Russia could become involved as an antagonist, the picture changes. The system then becomes substantively unipolar given that Kazakhstan’s attention and resources would be committed to the north, thus leaving Uzbekistan as the dominant Central Asian power by default. The leeway that Uzbekistan would have to use instability in weaker neighboring states to pursue an irredentist agenda would be much greater, particularly if the coincidence of Russian and Uzbek objectives, or Russian weakness or preoccupation, prevented Russia from acting as a source of restraint.

We can now turn to the inter-relationship between domestic and systemic variables. The greater the danger that a rocky post-Soviet transition (states beleaguered by mobilized citizens, radical nationalism, and political turmoil caused by economic crises) could create instability, or bring to power ultranationalist regimes within states, the higher the probability that dominant states will prey upon weaker ones. Let us assume that the danger of Uzbekistan’s domination of Central Asia can effectively be countered by the residual capacity of Kazakhstan and, more importantly, by relying on Russia as a protector. But that begs a fundamental question: what if Russia itself becomes the security threat? To be sure, this is not foreordained. To say that Russia is fated to be a neo-imperial state and cannot act as a benign hegemom is to succumb to historical and geographical determinism.
The nature of Russian conduct in Central Asia is by no means predetermined by systemic factors (Russia's overwhelming advantages in power and its proximity). Rather, it will depend upon how these systemic realities interact with domestic conditions in both Russia and in the Central Asian states. This, again, is an observation that needs clarification. Imagine a Russia characterized by democratic politics, economic prosperity, and territorial integrity. In such a Russia, the ultra-nationalist hard right will be marginalized—the shrillness of their slogans will be more evident than their influence on politics. Add to this scenario a Central Asia in which governments—whether democratic or not—maintain stability, retain close ties to Russia, and practice non-discriminatory policies toward the ethnic Russian population. In other words, the problems of the post-Soviet transition (social mobilization, nationalism, and economic dislocations) have not led to the breakdown of order in Central Asia; and Russia is satisfied that its basic interests are protected and that the frontiers are not turbulent. This is the optimistic scenario. Russian democrats, who govern Russia in this scenario, are determined to have preponderant influence over the former Soviet republics; but relative to other groups they are least likely to try and recreate the empire through neo-imperial policies, particularly while stability prevails in Russia's southern perimeter and its great power interests are respected. They regard the quest for empire as a drain on resources and a recipe for troubled relations with the West.

Now to the pessimistic scenario. In Russia, upheaval created by the shocks of economic transformation and the resulting social mobilization strip democratic ruling elites of their legitimacy. Inflation, unemployment, poverty, and crime take their toll on the body politic. The weakness of the central government emboldens secessionist movements in the non-Russian regions (Chechnya, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan). A political vacuum emerges as the central government loses effectiveness and legitimacy. The road is open for a seizure of power by the ramshackle armed forces or civilian ultranationalists.

Imagine at the same time that economic dislocation in Central Asia—where inflation, unemployment, and population growth rates are very high—sweeps away the current basically pro-Russian governments led by former communist party officials. Their successors are not cut from Soviet cloth; rather, they are inspired by anti-Russian nationalism and a militant variant of Islam. They look for alternatives to the Russian connection, and the influence of Iran and Afghanistan increases in Central Asia, leading Russia to fear that its historic predominance is at risk. Instability in Central Asia increases as the forces of change storm the rickety barricades of ancien regimes. The local Russian population feels more and more vulnerable as radical counter-elites emerge as powerful contenders for state power. In countries where they are a small proportion of the population, they emigrate. But in Kazakhstan, greater numbers (6 million, over a third of the total population), a sense of belonging to the land created by a longer history of
settlement, and proximity to Russia begets bolder actions. Kazakhstan's Russians refuse to go quietly; they seeks autonomy, even secession, with Russian help, which is readily offered given the nature of the regime in Moscow.

The chances of a neo-imperial Russian policy are far greater now for two reasons. First, the post-Soviet transition in both in the center (Russia) and the periphery (Central Asia) has failed: the domestic variables have moved in the wrong direction. Second, the systemic conditions (those accounting for Russia's superior power) now take on a new significance given domestic change in center and periphery.

In both scenarios, it is the interplay between systemic and domestic conditions that is decisive. The mere fact of Russian preponderance tells us nothing about how that preponderance will be used: for benign hegemony, or for neo-imperialism? The interplay between systemic and domestic conditions can be illustrated more fully through four scenarios. In the first, Russia is democratic and Central Asia is stable. Both are coping well with the post-Soviet transition, and the prospects for Russian neo-imperialism are virtually non-existent. In the second scenario, a failed post-Soviet transition has brought an authoritarian-nationalist regime to power in Russia, but Central Asia remains stable. Here, the mere advent of ultranationalists to state power in Russia does raise the danger of Russian intervention: such ruling elites could manufacture pretexts for intervention, particularly to wage an irredentist campaign in northern Kazakhstan. But as long as Central Asian leaders maintain order and respect Russia's interests the risks are still low. In the third scenario, democracy prevails in Russia, but upheaval emerges in Central Asia because of a post-Soviet transition gone awry. In this situation, particularly if the legitimacy of the democratic government in Russia is low (due to economic problems, ethnic conflict, etc.), its leaders will be under pressure from ultranationalist opponents to act forcefully in defense of Russian interests in the southern periphery. Consequently, the danger of intervention increases significantly. The last scenario (the post-Soviet transition fails in Russia and Central Asia) is the most dangerous. Preponderant Russian power (the systemic condition) is now wielded by authoritarian nationalists and chaos prevails in the periphery. The danger of Russian-Central Asian conflict is now exceptionally high.

The preceding analysis has several implications for US policy. In spelling them out, my point of departure is that relative to other areas (Europe, the Middle East, and Northeast Asia), no vital US interests are at stake in Central Asia. One can always point to the existence of oil and natural gas, or the involvement of American companies in the Central Asian marketplace. But this does not change the picture: the presence of natural riches or economic American activity in a given region cannot be conflated with the existence of important US interests there. Nor will events in Central Asia imperil the security of states that do matter for US security.
It follows that the US should not become the guarantor of Central Asian security—either against Russia, or any other state. Indeed, we must assume that the region (in a purely strategic sense) will be within the Russian sphere of interest for the foreseeable future. No state other than the US has the capacity to alter that reality. China’s center of power is on its eastern seaboard, and Central Asia is too remote a region for the effective projection of Chinese power as a counterweight to Russia. Indeed, Beijing, which is fearful of the implications of Central Asia Turkic nationalism for the Uighurs of Chinese Xingjiang, may well have come to regard Russia as a much-needed enforcer of stability and antidote to nationalism in Central Asia. Chinese officials have in effect said so. As for Iran and Turkey, both are far more extensively involved in Central Asia than was true during the Soviet era. But both are too dependent on Russia (Turkey for trade and construction contracts; Iran for arms and nuclear technology and as a counter to the US) and exposed to its power to take on the risks and burdens of becoming Central Asia’s protector. Without question, these states now have a much greater presence in Central Asia than they did prior to 1991; but their increased economic and cultural presence does not translate into a corresponding increase in strategic efficacy—for the foreseeable future, Russia is unrivalled in this sphere. This observation also applies to extra-regional organizations such as the UN, the Partnership for Peace, and the OSCE. For different reasons, none of them is in a position to offset Russia’s preponderant power.

While US policy-makers must be aware of the imbalance between American and Russian stakes in Central Asia, they must also realize that whether Russia is a benign hegemon or neo-imperial power is not a trivial matter. A neo-imperial Russian policy in Central Asia will alarm the other former Soviet republics and the states of Eastern Europe. They will either seek US protection or come to terms with Russia—on Moscow’s terms. More importantly, the nature of Russian policy (benign hegemony or neo-imperialism?) will affect the atmosphere of US-Russian relations and the nature of the Russian state itself; and these are important US interests. Because there are no critical US strategic interests in Central Asia, it does not follow that business will proceed as usual between Washington and Moscow if Russia adopts a neo-imperial policy in its periphery. At the very least, attitudes toward Russia will harden within the American public and certainly within Congress, with adverse implications for the entire range of issues on which the US deals with Russia, most importantly economic aid, arms control, nuclear safety, and cooperation in global hot spots such as the Balkans. A Russia that adopts neo-imperialism as its credo in Central Asia (or, for that matter, elsewhere in the former Soviet Union) will be a country in which the ultranationalists and military hardliners become significant political players. The implications for Russia’s democratic experiment, another issue of vital importance to the United states, should be obvious.
This raises the question of what kind of policy the United States should conduct in Central Asia. The systemic conditions (Russia preponderance and ease of geographic access) are either unchangeable or should be altered only if there are proportionate US interests at stake. There are not, and given our austere budget and a public and Congress wary of new far-flung security commitments, the US cannot play such a major role in Central Asian security. But the domestic conditions (crucial to the security environment in Central Asia) can be influenced--although not determined--at a lower level of engagement. A sustained program of US assistance to Russia and Central Asia will help states cope with the upheavals accompanying the post-Soviet transition, thus reducing the likelihood of domestic conditions that promote inter-state war--and it can do so by providing assistance in some specific areas: 1) Countering the rising trade in narcotics. Kyrgyzstan, for example, has now become a major conduit for drugs originating in Pakistan and Afghanistan and destined for Russia and the Baltics and from these areas to the West, and the Kyrgyz government lacks the resources and expertise to cope with this problem. The "narcomafia" has a vested interest in instability; it realizes that strong states will reduce its freedom of maneuver. 2) Restructuring industries in which ethnic Russians are statistically overrepresented (this is true of heavy and defense industries in the northern regions of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan). If economic restructuring generates ethnic tensions, the security environment in Central Asia will become more volatile. 3) Helping states establish social welfare and worker retraining programs that mitigate the pain caused by economic reforms. An economic transition that has initiatives in place to cushion the shocks of change will reduce the likelihood that extremist movements will tap public despair and anomie. Economic and technical assistance should be supplemented by a vigorous US diplomacy. Its aim should be to foster--through declared policy preferences, straight talk behind-the-scenes, and aid policies that reinforce desired behavior--democratic practices and tolerant variants of nationalism. This is a modest policy, but it is proportionate to our interests and mindful of our limitations.
THE DYNAMICS OF SECURITY IN POST-SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

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In 1991 five new Central Asian states--Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan--rose from the rubble of the Soviet empire. Central Asia's future security will be shaped by the interplay between the nature of politics in the center (Russia) and the degree of stability in the periphery (Central Asia). Preponderant Russian power is an important constant--an enabling condition--but in itself tells us little about the nature of future Russian policy in Central Asia. As regards Russia's politics, the key questions are these: How robust is democratization? How influential are pro-imperial elites? Will a discredited democracy be supplanted by an ultra-nationalist, authoritarian regime? The stability of Central Asia, in turn, hinges on three variables: Uzbek hegemony and irredentism, the balance between political institutionalization and social mobilization, and the extent of disorder generated by the wrenching post-Soviet economic transition.

In this article, after providing brief background on Central Asia to set the context, I stipulate the principal determinants of Central Asian security. I then illustrate their significance with four scenarios of Russian-Central Asian relations. Throughout this inquiry, the prospects for a neo-imperial Russian policy remain a key preoccupation. For this reason, I next assess the ways in which Central Asian states might cope with the irreducible reality of preponderant Russian power. I conclude by discussing the implications of my arguments for U.S. policy.

I. Setting the Context

Bounded by the Caspian Sea to the west, China's Xinjiang region to the east, Russia to the north, and Iran and Afghanistan to the south, Central Asia has a population of almost 50 million and occupies just under four million square kilometers. The diverse topography includes the vast, sparsely-populated steppe of Kazakhstan, the densely-populated Ferghana Valley that traverses Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, large deserts (the Karakum in Turkmenistan, the Kyzylkum in Uzbekistan), and the rugged mountains of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

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I define neo-imperialism as infringements on a weaker state by a great power through its ability to apply increasing amounts of military power (shows of force, support for insurgents, cross border operations, and outright invasion) to shape the external orientation and internal order of the weaker state.
### TABLE 1: CENTRAL ASIA AND RUSSIA: POWER INDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>GNP Billion(US$)</th>
<th>Area (1000 sq. k.ms.)</th>
<th>Armed Forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RUSS</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>400.2</td>
<td>17,075</td>
<td>2.03 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAZ</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>2,717</td>
<td>44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRG</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAJ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURK</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UZB</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Notes:** Population figures are for 1989 and have been rounded; GNP and armed forces data are for 1992.

As Table 1 shows, the countries of Central Asia vary markedly in size and population. The two most populous are Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan; Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan have far fewer people. Kazakhstan spans an area equivalent to a third of the lower 48 states of the U.S., Uzbekistan is two-thirds the size of Texas, and Turkmenistan is as large as Colorado and Wyoming combined. In contrast, Kyrgyzstan is the size of South Dakota, and Tajikistan as large as Iowa. The cultural and linguistic roots of indigenous Central Asians are Turkic; the Tajiks, with their Persian language and culture, are an exception. The vast majority of Central Asia’s non-Slavic people is Sunni Muslim. While militant Islam may emerge as a potent political force, this is by no means a given: Central Asian politics are also shaped by strong loyalties vested in region, clan, and tribe.

For the last 150 years, Central Asia’s history has been one of Russian domination—first by Tsars, then by commissars. By the end of the 19th century, the independent tribal confederacies and emirates of Central Asia had become part of the Tsarist empire. The process of incorporation—marked by determined, but ultimately futile, resistance—began with Russian incursions into the Kazakh lands in the early 18th century, reached a climax with the conquest of

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Tashkent (1865), Samarkand (1868), Khiva (1873), and Kokand (1876), and was completed with the defeat of the Turkoman (the inhabitants of modern Turkmenistan) in 1881. With the fall of the Tsarist regime, Central Asia was a battleground among Bolsheviks, nationalist and religious Muslim elites committed to independence, and anti-Bolshevik White armies. The Bolsheviks had fanned anti-Russian sentiment within the empire and championed self-determination while in opposition; but, during the 1920s and 1930s, they consolidated control over Central Asia with a strategy combining force (especially against the assorted bands of the Basmachi resistance that operated throughout the area, resisting Bolshevik rule until the 1930s), the manipulation of rivalries among Central Asian elites, and the appeal of the modernizing, egalitarian ethos of Marxism.

### TABLE 2: CENTRAL ASIA: ETHNIC COMPOSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Russ</th>
<th>Kaz</th>
<th>Kyrg</th>
<th>Taj</th>
<th>Turk</th>
<th>Uzb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KAZ</td>
<td>6,227,549</td>
<td>6,534,616</td>
<td>14,112</td>
<td>25,514</td>
<td>3,846</td>
<td>332,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(38%)</td>
<td>(39%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRG</td>
<td>316,558</td>
<td>37,318</td>
<td>2,229,663</td>
<td>33,518</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>550,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(22%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(52%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAJ</td>
<td>338,481</td>
<td>11,376</td>
<td>53,832</td>
<td>3,172,420</td>
<td>20,487</td>
<td>1,197,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td>(62%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURK</td>
<td>333,892</td>
<td>87,802</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3,149</td>
<td>2,536,606</td>
<td>317,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9%)</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(71%)</td>
<td>(71%)</td>
<td>(9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UZB</td>
<td>1,653,478</td>
<td>808,227</td>
<td>174,907</td>
<td>933,560</td>
<td>121,578</td>
<td>14,142,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8%)</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(negl.)</td>
<td>(71%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: a) negl. = under 1%; --- = none reported; b) figures are for 1991-1992; c) percentages denote given nationality as a share of the total population; d) total population for each of the Central Asian states is as follows: Kaz (16,464,464); Kyrg (4,257,755); Taj (5,092,603); Turk (3,552,117); Uzb (19,810,077).
Central Asia's present borders emerged during the 1920s and 1930s in a process that was directed from Moscow and paid scant heed to the distribution of ethnic groups. As Table 2 shows, the legacy is a mismatch between state and ethnic borders and the existence of significant diasporas, consisting mainly of Tajiks and Uzbeks. Waves of forced and voluntary immigration by Russians (and others Slavs) spanning the Tsarist and Soviet periods have also bequeathed a Russian diaspora of nearly 10 million. As Table 2 also shows, Kazakhstan has by far the largest number of Russians, and their proportion of the population almost equals that of the Kazakhs themselves. In some northern and eastern provinces adjoining Russia, with which Kazakhstan has a 3,500 kilometer border, Russians account for over half the population. This disjuncture between state and ethnic boundaries creates a context for irredentist conflict between the Central Asian states and between Russia and Kazakhstan.

From the late 1920s, Central Asia witnessed a marked expansion in industrialization, urbanization, and education. Yet the region fared poorly compared to other areas of the USSR in industrial investment allocated by the center. It remained an importer of manufactured goods and a provider of raw materials, especially cotton, which dominates regional economy, and oil and gas, with which Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and to a lesser extent Uzbekistan, are richly endowed. Even the processing of Central Asia's raw materials was undertaken largely outside the region—a constant, though gingerly-voiced, complaint of local elites during the Soviet period. Another economic characteristic of Central Asia—also a legacy of the past—is the dependence on Russia and ethnic Russians in a variety of spheres. Moscow subsidized local economies; Central Asia's communications and transportation networks were oriented to Russia; Russians occupied crucial positions in the realms of science, technology, and management and constituted the vast majority of the officer corps of local military formations. This multifaceted dependence upon

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4 Given the staggering expenses involved, Kazakhstan's government may not implement its declaration to transfer the capital from Almaty, in southeastern Kazakhstan, to Aqmola in the north. But, at a symbolic level, the declaration is a response to Russian nationalists' claims on northern Kazakhstan.


independent Russia and local Russians, a reality that the leaders of Central Asia cannot escape, raises the distinction between juridical and substantive independence.

The advent of Mikhail Gorbachev’s glasnost’ and perestroika in 1985 generated nationalist mobilization in the Baltics, Moldova, the Ukraine, and the Transcaucasus; but Central Asia remained relatively quiet. None of the local leaders, whose careers had been spent climbing the communist party hierarchy, sought independence⁷: they wanted greater autonomy, but chose independence only after the abortive August 1991 coup against Mikhail Gorbachev sounded the Soviet Union’s death knell. Such nationalist movements as arose in Central Asia were relatively weak. Yet the region has not been free of instability since 1985. In 1988, unemployment sparked riots in Ashgabat (Turkmenistan’s capital). In the following year, economic disputes led to fighting between Uzbeks and Meshketian Turks in the Ferghana Valley and left many dead. In 1990 violence between Uzbeks (resented by Kyrgyz for their perceived economic advantages) and Kyrgyz (seen by the Uzbeks as dominating the political apparatus) broke out in Kyrgyzstan’s Osh province and spread to other parts of the country. The fighting left 320 dead before Soviet troops restored order.⁸ In 1992, Kazakh coal miners struck to protest price increases and shortages. In the same year, police shot and killed numerous students in Tashkent (Uzbekistan’s capital) during a protest over price increases.

These episodes pale before Tajikistan’s bloody civil war, a product of longstanding regional and clan rivalries, the desire for autonomy on the part of the ethnic Pamiris in the Gorno-Badakshan region, and the aspirations of democrats and nationalists to mold the country’s future.⁹ As the USSR crumbled, a coalition of Islamists, democrats, and nationalists (the Democratic Party, the Islamic Renaissance Party, the Rastakhiz movement, and the Pamiri La’i

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⁷ The current leaders of Kazakhstan (Nursultan Nazarbaev), Turkmenistan (Saparmurad Niazov), and Uzbekistan (Islam Karimov) headed the local communist party organizations prior to becoming presidents of their independent countries. Tajikistan’s president, Emomali Rakhmonov, did not have such an exalted position in the communist party, but served as the chairman of a collective farm. Kyrgyzstan’s president, Askar Akaev, is generally portrayed in Western accounts as reformer from an academic background who did not have a career in the communist party. In fact, he served a stint as a department head in the local communist party’s Central Committee apparatus.

⁸ According to Igor’ Rotar’, “Mina, zalozhennaia kremlevskimi kartografami: problema granits mozhet vzorvat’ Sredniuiu Aziiu,” Nezavisimaia gazeta, December 25, 1992,” p. 1, the figure of 320 is “according to conservative official statistics.” Rashid, Resurgence, p. 146, claims that “the official death toll reached 200, although unofficial estimates put it at more than 1,000.”

Badakshan) challenged Tajikistan’s governing communist nomenklatura. The severe economic crisis accentuated pre-existing regional economic disparities, intensifying popular dissatisfaction and social mobilization. The nomenklatura from the northern region of Leninabad (the capital of which is Khujand) had traditionally dominated Tajik politics and was also economically the most developed area. It has strong and longstanding ties with Uzbekistan, and the region itself is 30 percent Uzbek.

In 1992, the opposition sought to mobilize popular support to change the prevailing distribution of power. Its support came largely from the poorer, politically-disadvantaged regions such as Garm, Kurghan Teppe, Karategin, and Gorno-Badakshan. In May 1992, mass demonstrations enabled the opposition to gain representation in the government; but this was an outcome that the communist establishment was determined to reverse. The communist elite became even more apprehensive when, in August, Rakhmon Nabiev (a Leninabadi and former head of the Tajik communist party who became president in a November 1991 election held because of opposition pressure) was forced out. As fighting between the rival groups intensified, the communist-dominated parliament, elected Soviet-style in 1990, met in Khujand, elected Emomali Rakhmonov head of state and formed a government that excluded the opposition. The Leninabads used their alliance with the nomenklatura from Kulob, an impoverished southern region that, until the late 1970s, had not been a significant political force in Tajikistan. The Kulobis served as the core of the People’s Front, the fighting arm of the communist coalition, which began a brutal military offensive to destroy the opposition once it was dislodged from the government. The opposition was banned; its leaders, facing arrest, fled to Afghanistan and Moscow. But these repressive policies merely strengthened the resolve of the most radical oppositionist to prepare for war. Mujahidin from Afghanistan began providing arms, training, and staging areas to the Tajik opposition, particularly to the Islamic Renaissance Party; assistance also came from Pakistani and Arab Islamists.

External conditions, particularly Russian and Uzbek fears over the instability and radicalism in Tajikistan and the growing links between elements of the Tajik opposition and Islamist groups in Afghanistan, complicated matters. Russian ultra-nationalists pushed for

10 While the other parties in the opposition have retained their original names in exile, the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) as such no longer exists. Instead, the Movement for the Islamic Revival of Tajikistan (MIRT) has been formed, bringing together the members of the IRP as well as the followers of the Qazi Akbar Turazonzoda, Tajikistan’s chief cleric, who threw his support behind the opposition during the civil war. MIRT is chaired by Sayid Abdullo Nuri, with Turazonzoda as first deputy chair, and Mohammed Sharif Himmatzoda (a leader of the former IRP) as deputy chair. The various components of the Tajik opposition come together as one delegation during negotiations aimed at settling the civil war.

11 Rashid, Resurgence, pp. 177-184.
intervention, as did hard-liners within Russia’s government. Uzbekistan both solicited Russian intervention, and, encouraged by Moscow, intervened militarily to protect the traditional holders of power in Tajikistan. Uzbek intervention and support was a major factor in the triumph of the Leninabad-Kulob bloc; indeed the People’s Front entered Tajikistan from Termez in Uzbekistan, launching a two-pronged offensive against Tajikistan’s capital (Dushanbe) through Kurghan Teppe and Gissar.

In November 1992, a nominally multinational peacekeeping force (with units from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan) of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was assembled at Russia’s initiative to garrison the Tajik-Afghan border. Its multilateral veneer, notwithstanding, this operation was (and remains) essentially a Russian affair; and the bottom line is that Yeltsin’s Russia’s, having repudiated communism, now guarantees the survival of Tajikistan’s communist rulers. Russian troops, who number 25,000, have clashed intermittently with Tajik opposition forces and their Afghan mujahidin supporters and, on occasion, have attacked targets within Afghanistan itself. 12

The war in Tajikistan has killed some 40-60,000 people, created 500,000 internal refugees, and consigned 60,000 others to like status in northern Afghanistan. Peace talks held during 1994 in Moscow, Islamabad, and Teheran have yet to create a settlement; nor have efforts by the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Tajikistan’s November 1994 elections have not addressed the major sources of tension either. The opposition parties, which have been banned, could not participate, the mass media were controlled by the government, and the election as president of Emomali Rakhmonov, a Kulobi, has not been well received by the traditionally-dominant Leninabad elite. 13

12 For example, in July 1993, Tajik fighters and Afghan mujahidin crossed the Tajik-Afghan border, and attacked Russian outpost, killing 30 Russian troops. Moscow responded by sending 10,000 more troops and staging artillery and air attacks against northern Afghanistan; according to an official Afghan note of protest these operations killed and wounded "more than 300 people." Ministerstvo inostrannikh del Afganistana preduprezhdает: 'narod ne ostanetsia ravnodushnym,'" Nezavisimaja gazeta, July 21, 1993, p. 3. Russian troops in Tajikistan include the 201st Motor Rifle Division, which has long been stationed in the country and border guards sent in from late 1992.

13 The Leninabadi candidate was Abdumallik Abdullajonov, a former prime minister. Russian and Uzbek intervention, presented (with considerable success) to the outside world, as necessary to stem the spread of Islamic fundamentalism from Tajikistan to the rest of Central Asia has involved a common purpose: the protection of dependent ruling elites and the quest for stability. But the partnership has now come under strain. Moscow looks askance at the prospect of a Tajikistan dominated a pro- Uzbek Leninabadi elite and, therefore, supported Rakhmonov in the elections. To remind Rakhmonov of Uzbekistan’s continuing importance as a power broker, the Uzbeks have put out feelers to the Tajik opposition, even suggesting that the next round of peace talks be held in Tashkent. I am grateful for Sergei Gretskey for these insights.
II. Determinants of Regional Security

(A.1) Russia’s Preponderant Power

The gulf between Russia and Central Asia in the standard indices of power (size, population, GNP, and military might) is depicted in Table 1. These crude measures do not reflect the asymmetric economic interdependence between Russia and Central Asia, Russia’s higher level of technological development, and its imperial relationship with Central Asia since at least the mid-nineteenth century (earlier in the case of Kazakhstan). It is legitimate to ask whether Russian power is hollow given the many problems that afflict the Russian military: rampant draft evasion, cuts in defense spending due to economic difficulties, the decline in the upkeep and modernization of armament, and the cutbacks in training for ground forces and pilots. However, given Central Asia’s minuscule and poorly-equipped military forces, its extreme dependence on Russia, and numerous economic problems, it would not take much by way of Russian military power to make a difference. Russia’s military role in Tajikistan, the Transcaucasus, and Chechnya demonstrates this.

(A.2) Russia’s Political Dynamics

Russian preponderance provides the means for a neo-imperial policy, but in itself does not make it inevitable. Neo-imperial policies will result from the combination of superior power and the strength of pro-imperial coalitions within Russia’s state and society. The likelihood of neo-imperialism will be even greater if ultra-nationalist/pro-imperial forces actually control state power.

True, not all governing elites in Russia favor such a policy; nor is there much enthusiasm among Russian citizens to spend blood and treasure in resurrecting the empire.\footnote{Nevertheless, pro-imperial elites may mobilize public opinion on behalf of such policies. In democracies, public opinion seems far more effective in terminating protracted, costly wars in which victory appears impossible rather than preventing the resort to war.} But most of Russia’s leaders have adjusted their rhetoric and policies as neo-imperial elites have sought to discredit them with accusations of feebleness in asserting Russia’s special rights in its strategic periphery. The elites advocating a neo-imperial policy are of four types: 1) those whose preferences are institutional in origin, deriving primarily from their positions in national security bureaucracies, principally the armed forces and the intelligence and security services;\footnote{An example is Defense Minister Pavel Grachev. His hard-line positions on policy toward the former Soviet republics are bound up with the institutional influence of and resources given to the armed forces. This is also true of other senior officers, such as General Alexander Lebed, the outspoken, former nationalist commander of the 14th Army stationed in Moldova’s separatist trans-Dniester region. In an interview with Michael Gordon, Lebed proclaimed: “I’m not sure Russia can get used to its present borders.” “As Its World View Narrows, Russia Seeks a New Missions,” The New York Times, November 29, 1993, p. 10. When the Russian government signed an agreement with Moldova in the fall of 1994 to withdraw the 14th Army in three} 2) those...
who do not hold formal posts within the executive branch of the Russian state, but who have influential positions in society (intellectuals, journalists, and political leaders) and whose attitudes toward Russia's periphery stem from ideological nostalgia for empire and superpower status;\(^\text{16}\)

3) those who do not yearn to recreate the Soviet Union, or a formal Russian empire, but whose outlook on Russia's southern periphery has cultural roots in the so-called Eurasian intellectual tradition associated with Petr Savitsky, Nikolai Trubetskoi, George Vernadsky and others;\(^\text{17}\)

4) those who favor reforms to democratize the polity and 'marketize' the economy, but whose strategic orientation emphasizes Russian preeminence in the former Soviet republics.\(^\text{18}\)

The existence of such coalitions alone will not guarantee a neo-imperial Russian policy toward the periphery. Far more important is the extent to which governing democratic elites feel compelled by their weakness to engage in appeasement and accommodation toward them. This is precisely what Russia's leaders have done to avoid being outflanked by ultra-nationalists who have successfully manipulated the symbolic appeal of a virile defense of Russian interests and ethnic Russians in the former Soviet republics. For example, soon after it became clear that the December 1993 Russian parliamentary elections constituted a major success for both Vladimir Zhirinovsky and the communists, Yeltsin distanced himself from the liberals and reached out to nationalist groups on foreign policy issues. His spokesman noted that Yeltsin would work with Zhirinovsky and the communists, inasmuch as their ideas "quite correspond to the social aspects of the President's policies, that is, the social policy of the state. patriotism, making Russia

\(^{\text{16}}\) Several prominent ultra-nationalists exemplify this category: Alexander Prokhanov, right-wing nationalist and editor of the newspaper Den', which was banned following Yeltsin's victory over the Russian parliament in September 1993 (Den' now appears as Zafira; former Vice President, Alexander Rutskoi, who now heads the Derzhava ("Great Power") movement; and Vladimir Zhirinovsky, whose appeals to Russian nationalism and calls for the restoration of lost power and territories have been the core of his political message. See his autobiography, Poslednii brosok na iug (Moscow, 1993), esp. pp. 103-108.

\(^{\text{17}}\) Eurasianism, developed during the 1920s and 1930s by Russian emigres writing from various disciplinary perspectives, consisted of many complex strands and was not a mere fig leaf for imperialism: indeed, the Eurasians vehemently condemned the cultural hubris and universalist pretensions of European colonialism. See I. A. Isaev, "Utopisty ili providtsy?" in I. A. Isaev, ed. Puti Evrazii: Russkaia intelligentsia i sud'by Rossi (Moscow: Russkaia kniga, 1992), pp. 3-26. Nevertheless, the view that Eurasia, led by Russia, had a distinct identity, culture, and destiny was not without imperial connotations. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "The Emergence of Eurasianism," California Slavic Studies, Vol. III (1967), p. 57. On contemporary Eurasianism, see Karen Brutents, "Russia and the East," International Affairs (Moscow), Nos. 1-2 (1994), esp. pp. 42-43. An influential figure in Russian politics whose views embody Eurasianist themes is Sergei Stankevich.

\(^{\text{18}}\) An example is Vladimir Lukin, the former Russian ambassador to the US who is now a member of the Russian parliament and chair of its International Affairs Committee. See Lukin "Our Security Predicament," Foreign Policy, No. 88 (Fall, 1992), pp. 57-75; and "No More Delusions: Reform in Russia Will Never Fit the American Ideal," Washington Post, March 4, 1994. Another example is the political analyst and presidential adviser, Andranik Migranian.
great." With the elections having demonstrated the strength of the right wing, Yeltsin called for Russians abroad to be granted "special status," no doubt recognizing that ultra-nationalists such as Zhirinovsky had successfully tapped public concerns in the election campaign about the Russian diaspora. Yeltsin also sought to dispel allegations of neglecting Russia's strategic interests in the ex-Soviet republics to court the West.

Democratic reformers in the Russian leadership have also been responsive to hard-line coalitions within the state, realizing that the allegiance of the armed forces and the Ministry of Defense--and other institutions responsible for security and intelligence--is needed to thwart future challenges by extremist red and brown forces. The influence of the armed forces is reflected in Russia's new military doctrine which, at both the strategic and operational level, aims at Russian predominance in the former Soviet republics and enumerates the means needed to achieve it.

The calibration of policy toward Russia's periphery to court nationalist elites has created a strategic consensus embracing most individuals likely to shape Russian foreign policy (formally or informally). It is reflected in the imagery that characterizes Russian discourse on Central Asia, includes those categorized in the West as reformers and democrats, and explodes the standard dichotomies of "liberal" versus "conservative," "reformer" versus "reactionary," and civilian "doves" versus military "hawks." The entrenchment of this consensus reflected in the way in which the former Soviet republics, referred to as the "near abroad" (blizhnee zarubezh'e), are treated in Russia's strategic discourse. While acknowledging the formal independence of the ex-Soviet republics, this discourse is suffused with presumptions of special Russian rights, interests, "obligations," and "responsibilities," depicts Russia's juridical and geopolitical borders as separate categories, and asserts the fact and desirability of a Russian preponderance overshadowing all other powers.

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20 Yeltsin made a concerted, but unsuccessful, effort to obtain an agreement providing special status--such as dual citizenship and measures to safeguard access to education in the Russian language and non-discriminatory employment policies--at the meeting of the heads of state of the CIS held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan in December 1993. The New York Times, December 25, 1993, pp. 1, 4.

21 "Voennaia doktrina Rosii," Rossiiskie vesti, November 18, 1993, pp. 1-2; Scott McMichael, "Russia's New Military Doctrine," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 1, No. 40 (October 9, 1992), pp. 45-50. Among the features of the new doctrine (formally adopted on November 2, 1993 through presidential decree 1833) that could portend an interventionist policy are the emphasis on rapid deployment and mobility to deal with conflicts in Russia's periphery and the emphasis on protecting Russians abroad and countering the intrusion of other powers and alliances into the strategic space of the former Soviet Union. Russia's military has also pressed for reinterpretting Article 5 of the CFE Treaty so that Russia can exceed the ceiling on forces in the North Caucasus (and Leningrad) flanks. This would increase the forces available for projection into the southern periphery. Manki Ponomarev, "Uiti ot flangovikh ogrаниchenii: dogovor ob OVSE i realii zhizni," Krasnaia zvezda, October 21, 1993, p. 3.

the (pre-December 1993) Russian parliament’s Committee on International Affairs, observed: "Russia is something larger than the Russian Federation in its present borders. Therefore, one must see its geopolitical interests more broadly than what is currently defined by the maps. That is our starting point as we develop our conception of mutual relations with 'our own foreign countries'." In a similar vein, prominent political commentator Andranik Migranian observes that the former Soviet republics are "sphere of...[Russia's] vital interests" and should be forbidden to form alliances "either with each other or with third countries that have an anti-Russian orientation." Several other reform-minded Russian foreign policy elites have argued that Russia should exercise its traditional geopolitical preeminence in Central Asia. They include Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Georgii Kunadze (who served as Deputy Foreign Minister until being reassigned in 1993 as ambassador to South Korea), former presidential counsellor Sergei Stankevich, and Yeltsin himself. Their views embody a number of themes with a neo-imperial slant: Russia’s right to use its power to safeguard "geopolitical positions that took centuries to conquer;" the call to grant the troops of the Russian-dominated CIS the imprimatur of UN peacekeeping forces; the imperative of protecting the rights (seldom defined) of ethnic Russians in the near abroad, by force if need be; the importance of granting Russians in Central Asia dual citizenship; the support for "mobile rapid-deployment forces" on

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25 On February 28, 1993, Yeltsin asserted that "the time has come for the authoritative international organizations, including the United Nations, to grant Russia special powers as guarantor of peace and stability in this region." ITAR-TASS, December 8, 1993, quoted in Suzanne Crow, "Russia Asserts Its Strategic Agenda," RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 20, No. 50 (December 17, 1993) p. 2. Kozyrev made this proposal at the 48th UN General Assembly on September 28, 1993 and explicitly excluded other countries or organizations from peacekeeping responsibilities in Russia's periphery, arguing that "no other international organization or group of states can replace our peace-making efforts in this specifically post-Soviet space." Quoted in Ibid., p. 4.
27 Kozyrev has lobbied for the concept of dual citizenship during visits to Central Asia despite the open opposition of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. If implemented the provision for dual citizenship could provide Russia a legal basis for permanently involving itself in the entire range of issues that concern the Russian diaspora: language policy, employment criteria, and, in Kazakhstan, the possible quest for territorial
the grounds that they are best suited for safeguarding Russians in the near abroad; the claim that Central Asia's external borders are Russia's as well; and the portrayal of Central Asia as a region of domino states that, absent Russia's military presence, could fall before an Islamic fundamentalist tide.

The reformers' tactical move to the right has strategic consequences: it promotes a discourse toward the near abroad that increases the prospect for neo-imperial policies; the range of options deemed legitimate may be narrowed; and a foreign policy based on cooperation and conciliation may be de-legitimized—particularly as some of its foremost proponents have already been dropped from positions of influence to appease ultra-nationalists. The net effect is that forces within the state capable of countering logrolling by neo-imperial elites and offering alternative paradigms of statecraft have been weakened.

A weak democratic Russian government that is susceptible to the influence of pro-imperial elites, and is itself moving to the right in response, increases the chance of an interventionist Russian policy in Central Asia (providing, as I shall argue, instability obtains in Central Asia itself). But the prospect of neo-imperialism will be dramatically greater if turmoil in Central Asia occurs at a time when a democratic Russian government, having failed to cope with the

autonomy. Together with a national security paradigm that assigns primacy to the defense of Russians in the former Soviet republics and the collective security provisions of the CIS, the implementation of dual citizenship could also strengthen the legal basis for Russian military intervention cloaked in multilateralism.

See Kozyrev's remarks in "Vneshniaia politika," p. 2; and those of Deputy Foreign Minister, Sergei Krylov, as cited in RFE/RL News Briefs, (December 6-10, 1993), p. 2.

See Yeltsin's remarks at an August 1993 meeting with the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to discuss joint strategy toward the Tajik civil war. The Economist, August 5, 1993, p. 36; and The New York Times, August 8, 1993, p. 17. Also, interview with Kozyrev in RFE/RL Research Report, Vol. 3. No. 28 (July 15, 1994), p. 38, during which he noted that "we do not have borders other than the former Soviet borders."

On Yeltsin's warning about the danger of Islamic fundamentalist tide in Central Asia, see The New York Times, August 8, 1993, p. 17. In July 1992, Deputy Foreign Minister Georgii Kunadze argued that a Russian withdrawal from Tajikistan would lead to the following result: "Islamic extremism and the forces of chaos in general [will] move through Tajikistan and enter Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, which are not far from Kazakhstan. Before we could react those forces would be on Russia's doorstep...." Interview with Vera Kuznetsova ("Tadzhikistan: posledniaia voina SSR ili pervaiia voina Rosii? politika MIDa: mezhdud fatal'nost'iu i veroiatnost'iu"), Nezavisimaja gazeta, July 29, 1993, pp. 1, 3. Kunadze's scenario is strikingly similar to that depicted days earlier by Defense Minister Grachev and underscores the emergence of a strategic consensus that transcends "liberal" versus "conservative" dualisms. See Roman Zadunaiskii and Aleksandr Rybakov, "Tadzhikistan: neob'avlennia voina," Rossiiskie vesti, July 20, 1993, p. 1. On Islamic fundamentalism, also see Lukin, "Our Security Predicament," p. 62.

Critics of hard-line policies toward the ex-Soviet republics (and toward non-Russian nationalities within the Russian Federation), such as Deputy Foreign Minister Fedor Shelov-Kovedyaev and Galina Starovoitova, have been eased out of policy-making positions. Starovoitova, a close Yeltsin adviser on nationality issues lost her position in November 1992. Her influence declined during the year and she was a frequent target of criticism from the ultra-nationalist opposition. Shelov-Kovedyaev also resigned in 1992 for similar reasons.
challenges of economic crisis and political instability, is replaced by an authoritarian, ultra-
nationalist alternative. Given the uncertainties of Russia’s post-Soviet transition, this possibility, 
while by no means inevitable, cannot be ruled out.

(B.1) Regional Imbalance and Irredentism

The gap in power between Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian states is striking. It has 
49 percent of the region’s Muslim population. And, as Table 1 indicates, its overall 
population is twice that of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan combined, while its GNP 
exceeds the total for these three countries. What makes this imbalance consequential is the 
danger of irredentist conflict, a legacy of Soviet-era state formation. With the iron hand of the 
Soviet state no longer present, this latent source of conflict could become manifest, particularly 
between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Uzbeks constitute 24 percent of Tajikistan’s population (Table 2), and are concentrated in 
the Leninabad, Gissar, and Kurghan Teppe regions (adjacent to Uzbekistan), where they account 
for 30-40 percent of all inhabitants. The danger of conflict between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan 
will become particularly acute if the continuing turmoil within Tajikistan gives rise to movements 
in the Leninabad region determined to secede and join Uzbekistan. (In 1992, as the Tajik civil 
war unfolded, Leninabad threatened to do just that.)

The existence of 934,000 Tajiks in Uzbekistan means that tensions between Uzbeks and 
Tajiks in Tajikistan could spill over into Uzbekistan. A fear of the ripple effects of chaos in 
Tajikistan was an important motive for Uzbekistan’s intervention against the anti-communist 
opposition in the Tajik civil war. Nationalists within the Tajik opposition emphasized the 
promotion of Tajik culture and the Tajik language. Uzbekistan’s president, Islam Karimov, feared 
that such ideas might find a receptive audience among Uzbekistan’s Tajik population, and that a 
nationalist government in neighboring Tajikistan might support the political and cultural 
autonomy of Uzbekistan’s Tajiks.

For their part, Tajik nationalists fear that Uzbekistan could use its superior power on behalf 
of the Uzbek diaspora—a concern reinforced by an Uzbek tendency to view Tajiks as Persianized

32 Calculated from data in Central Asia Monitor, No. 3 (1992), p. 39
33 First Book of Demographics, Table B-3, pp. B-7-B-8; International Institute for Strategic Studies, The 
35 For the number of Tajiks in Uzbekistan, see Central Asia Monitor, No. 3 (1992), p. 40. Tajiks in 
Uzbekistan belonging to the Samarkand Society claim that the true number of Tajiks in Uzbekistan is 3.5 
Uzbeks and to question the legitimacy of the Tajik state itself.\(^{37}\) In response, Tajik intellectuals assert that Tajiks have a separate identity (and a more refined culture) and they worry about the prospect of an aggressive pan-Turkism emanating from Uzbekistan.\(^{38}\) Another example of the nexus between identity and security is the status of Bukhara and Samarkand. Tajiks regard both cities as historic centers of Persian culture lost to Uzbekistan in the Moscow-directed process of state and boundary creation during the 1920s; Dushanbe, Tajikistan’s lackluster capital, is seen as poor compensation.\(^{39}\) This issue is currently dormant, but it could become politically flammable in the future.\(^{40}\) Karimov no doubt noticed that nationalists in the Tajik opposition raised the issue of Bukhara and Samarkand.\(^{41}\)

The smaller Central Asian states look askance at “recharged Uzbek nationalism,” "increasing Uzbek ethnic assertiveness," Uzbekistan’s larger size, population, and "greater social cohesion."\(^{42}\) These qualities were demonstrated during its intervention in the Tajik civil war, an event that featured another development with potentially far-reaching significance for the region: Russia’s reliance on Uzbekistan as regional gendarme. As noted earlier, with Russian encouragement, Uzbekistan provided arms and logistical support to the Tajikistan People’s Front, the fighting arm of the pro-communist forces. But it also intervened directly with aircraft, helicopters, and armored personnel carriers, using the local Uzbek population as both a rationale and a resource. Once the anti-communist opposition was dislodged from power by the end of 1992 and a pro-Uzbek government based on the Leninabad-Kulob nomenklatura was installed, Uzbekistan trained its intelligence and security services.\(^{43}\) The Tajik Defense Minister, Major

\(^{37}\) Until 1929, Tajikistan was part of Uzbekistan—first as an autonomous region (from 1924), then as an autonomous republic (from 1925-1929). Olivier Roy notes that, “[a]lthough Tashkent has made no territorial claims, it apparently has never accepted the independence which Tajikistan gained in 1929.” Roy, Civil War, pp. 11, 25.

\(^{38}\) Atkin, "Religious, National and Other Identities," pp. 51-53.

\(^{39}\) While the 1924 border demarcations placed Bukhara and Samarkand within Uzbekistan, Tajiks formed "at least" 75 percent of the population of the two cities according to the 1920 census, while Uzbeks accounted for only 4 percent. Rotar, "Mina," p. 3. For historical background, see Donald S. Carlisle, "Soviet Uzbekistan: State and Nation in Historical Perspective," in Beatrice F. Manz, ed., Central Asia in Historical Perspective (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), pp. 116-119.

\(^{40}\) Rotar’, "Mina.”


\(^{42}\) Rashid, Resurgence, pp. 97-98. Roy, Civil War, pp. 10, 11, 15, 25-26. Roy points to the "rise of Uzbekistan as the main power of formerly Soviet Central Asia, mainly at the expense of the Persian-speaking Tajiks.”

General Alexander Shishliannikov, is a Russian from Uzbekistan and was Karimov's candidate for the job. The net result of the extensive Uzbek involvement in Tajikistan has been the creation of a Tajik regime that, by its own admission, is beholden to Uzbekistan.44

Ethnic tensions could also spark conflict between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, where Uzbeks make up 13 percent of the population (see Table 2) and are concentrated in the regions adjoining Uzbekistan. The most likely scenario would be a renewed flare-up of violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan's Osh province, which is 26% Uzbek. In March 1993, Uzbekistan conducted an unauthorized military exercise in the sensitive Osh region—a reminder to weaker Kyrgyzstan that Uzbek ethnic and strategic interests are backed by superior power.45

Irredentist Uzbek nationalism simmers in southern and western Kyrgyzstan. In Osh, Uzgen, and Jalalabad, tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks have prompted the declaration of states of emergency. Kyrgyzstan's Uzbeks have organized campaigns for greater political representation and, in 1992, demanded a referendum to decide the future affiliation of the areas in which they are concentrated. In response, the Kyrgyz nationalist organization Osh Aymagy mobilized, tapping the resentment of Kyrgyz over the relative economic advantages traditionally enjoyed by the Uzbeks.

(B.2) Political Institutionalization and Social Mobilization

Central Asian leaders must build post-Soviet regimes—a network of institutions, rules, and procedures—that provide stability and generate administrative efficacy. The inherently difficult process of political institutionalization is aggravated by the sudden collapse of the ideological and institutional pillars of the Soviet system that provided stability for so long. None of Central Asian states has inherited the Soviet Union's ability to establish order through amalgamated coercion, cooptation, and socialization; they all face the post-totalitarian predicament of diminished capacity. Worse still, political institutionalization must proceed amidst unprecedented levels of social mobilization as (internal and external) political, cultural, religious, and economic forces shape public attitudes. Not only will such forces not emanate solely from the state, but—as Tajikistan's civil war shows—they may energize movements from below that challenge its right and ability to rule.

The sources of social mobilization in Central Asia are numerous. One is Islam, which, not surprisingly, has made a dramatic and overt resurgence. Islam was brought to Central Asia in the

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44 At a meeting of the five Central Asian states held on January 4, 1993 at the initiative of Uzbekistan, a treaty of cooperation between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was signed—in effect, a codification of Tajikistan's dependent status—and the Tajik leader, Emomali Rakhmonov, remarked that Uzbek President, Islam Karimov, was "like a father to...the entire Tajik people." Megapolis-express, January 13, 1993, p. 6, trans. in CDPSP, Vol. XLV, No.1 (February 3, 1993), pp. 1-5.

45 Central Asia Monitor, No.3 (1993), p. 3.
7th century by the Arab conquerors; the region contains some of the most renowned traditional centers of Islamic culture and learning; and Islam was never erased as a cultural and religious force despite over 70 years of effort by the Soviet regime. Islam's open reemergence in the post-Soviet era is signified by the sprouting of mosques and madrasahs, the vast increase in the printing and distribution of the Koran, and the increased salience of the religion as a source of self-definition and public orientation for people casting about in the post-Soviet void. These manifestations of Islam are often facilely regarded as precursors of "Islamic fundamentalism"; but in Central Asia, as elsewhere, Islam is diverse. Official Islam, which continues its Soviet-era posture of dependence upon and deference to the state, remains; but its influence and legitimacy are being challenged by other variants that are not creatures of the state: the secretive and mystical Sufi orders long established in the region; Wahhabism (being propagated by charitable societies from Saudi Arabia that have financed mosques and madrasahs); the banned Islamic Renaissance Party; and Islamist organizations from Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan.

Nationalist and democratic movements, some operating under severe political restrictions or secretly in the face of bans, constitute a second source of social mobilization. They include Birlik and Erk (Uzbekistan), the Democratic Party and Rastakhiz (Tajikistan), Agzybirlık (Turkmenistan), and Alash (Kazakhstan). These organizations offer political platforms combining nationalism, elements of reformist Islam, and the promotion of indigenous languages and culture.

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47 "Islamic fundamentalism" does not accurately describe the heightened role of Islam in Central Asia for many reasons. Islamic fundamentalist movements (those wedded to the creation of polities embodying the tenets of the Koran and the shari'a) are relatively weak except in areas like Uzbekistan's portion of the Ferghana Valley. Islam does provide a sense of identity and community, but this does not necessarily lead to support for fundamentalism. The rootedness of Islam varies considerably. It is a much weaker force in the traditionally nomadic cultures of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The political potency of Islam is weakened not only by its diversity, but also by the allegiances to clan, tribe, and region. Finally, Soviet-era modernization has created a substantial secular intelligentsia. See Elizabeth E. Bacon, Central Asian Under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 41-48; Edward Allworth, "The New Central Asians", in Allworth, ed., Central Asia: 120 Years of Russian Rule (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), pp. 562-563; Kaiser, "Nations and Homelands," pp. 286-287.

A third source is ethnic organizations and protest groups that seek to influence policies on privatization, language, and political recruitment. The Samarkand Society in Uzbekistan, Azat and Lad in Kazakhstan, and Ashar and Osh Aymagy in Kyrgyzstan exemplify such movements. Finally, there are external forces (people, goods, ideas, investment, and benchmarks for comparison), certain to become more important with modern Central Asia's unprecedented exposure to economic and cultural influences from Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and the West.

These internal and external influences alongside economic problems and demographic pressures could exacerbate popular dissatisfaction toward the nascent states. Inflation, unemployment, and falling production are now the norm in Central Asia and will remain so for the foreseeable future as local economies undergo major adjustments. These adjustments cannot be avoided: they will result either from purposeful, albeit painful, reforms undertaken by governments, or from crises created by leaders clinging to a crumbling status quo amidst sharp reductions in subsidies from Moscow. These painful economic changes will be aggravated by Central Asia's high population growth rate and a demographic pattern, typical of developing countries (and one that makes for instability), where 70 percent of the population is under 30 years of age.

Central Asian regime are coping simultaneously with an array of formidable tasks: state building, creating political legitimacy, national integration, and accommodating pressures for political participation and economic justice. The burden has been added to by the combination of economic dissatisfaction and social mobilization. In response, the more authoritarian leaders with Soviet-era instincts have severely limit political opposition and even resorted to outright repression. Yet this involves an inherent risk. As the Tajik civil war shows, opposition forces

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49 The Samarkand Society promote the rights of Uzbekistan's Tajiks; Azat is a nationalist Kazakh organization with strong anti-Russian overtones; Lad represents the interests of Russians in Kazakhstan, particularly on language, culture, and the campaign for dual citizenship; Ashar and Osh Aymagy have sought to defend the interests of ethnic Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan.


51 In 1990, these subsidies accounted for half of the budgets of Central Asian states. Maxim Shashenkov, Security Issues of the Ex-Soviet Central Asian Republics (London: Brassey's for the Centre for Defence Studies, 1992), p. 10. According to a former official in the Russian Council of Ministers, Andrei Illarionov, the subsidies were even higher, amounting to between 40 to 70 percent of the GNP of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan in 1992. Georgii Vachnadze, "Vlast' deneg," (Part II), Rossiiskie vesti, February 1, 1994, p. 4.

52 Rashid, Resurgence, p. 57.

denied outlets for within-system participation could turn to extra-systemic, revolutionary means.\textsuperscript{54}

The degree to which Central Asian states are exposed to social mobilization will vary. Turkmenistan, with its rigid political controls, muzzled opposition, and quiescent citizenry is the least exposed. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, with their relatively open polities, have created a context for social mobilization, but the process of democratization, if successful, could channel it into institutions and organizations that operate within the political order. Uzbekistan’s authoritarian government has all but snuffed out the opposition, but faces the prospect of economically-and ethnically-rooted instability that could assume extra-systemic forms given the severe political restrictions on political opposition. Tajikistan, its very territorial integrity threatened by civil war, is the most exposed. The current absence of significant upheaval in most Central Asian countries is not a reliable predictor of future trends. Central Asia’s political development is still embryonic, and vast changes are underway or in the offing in every sphere of life. The contest between political institutionalization and social mobilization has only begun.

(B.3) Economic Dislocations and Political Instability

The pressures of social mobilization in Central Asia will be aggravated by the political hazards of economic transformation. Economic efficiency in the region requires a transition from economies featuring administered prices and state-subsidized enterprises to ones based on markets and private property. Markets may bring efficiency and welfare in the long run; but what matters, as Karl Polanyi demonstrated, is the disruptions they create in the short run.\textsuperscript{55}

Dismantling inefficient state industries and farms and freeing prices could promote political instability for several reasons.\textsuperscript{56} The nomenklatura could resist, fearful that its jobs, privileges, and very raison d’être could evaporate if the state relinquishes control over the economy. Even while promoting aggregate growth, markets may widening the gap between haves and have-nots and erode the legitimacy of regimes. Market forces could also expand the (already substantial) ranks of the unemployed. Those who lack jobs—and those who have them but feel trapped by a Sisyphean battle against inflation—could constitute a pool of discontent available for political mobilization. The unrest involving Kazakh coal miners, Uzbek students, and Turkmen youth noted earlier show how inflation, shortages, and unemployment can breed instability.

\textsuperscript{54} Aleksei Malashenko, "Islam nepobezhdennyi: musul’manskaia tsivilizatsiia v svete Tadzhikskikh sobytii," Nezavisimaja gazeta, July 21, 1993, pp. 1, 3.


\textsuperscript{56} The success of market reforms in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Estonia does not mean that Central Asia will have a similar experience. These four countries have advantages that Central Asian states do not: far lower rates of population growth, economies that are not characterized by a cotton monoculture, the lack of dependence on ethnic Russians for technical skills, and a briefer exposure to the Soviet model.
Given the political hazards of economic reform, most Central Asian states have sought to avoid it. This is particularly true of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, where the power of the anti-reform nomenklatura is particularly strong. Uzbekistan is a late starter and a slow mover, and the foes of reform within the establishment remain strong. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan lead the pack in economic reform (although the privatization of land remains a sensitive problem yet to be tackled). But the economic status quo in Central Asia cannot endure. However slow and variable the move to markets proves to be, the old order under which the state owned the economy, set prices, and allocated goods and services simply cannot survive. The Soviet system that supported that arrangement has vanished; with due allowance for national variations in style and speed, the influence of market forces will assuredly increase. The desire for foreign aid, efforts to lure foreign investors, and the sheer inefficiency of the existing economic model will ensure this; so will the end of subsidies from Moscow. The resulting dislocations could breed domestic instability, which, in turn, could foster radical movements, imperil regimes, and trigger external intervention.

The capacity of Central Asian states to deal effectively with the political fallout of economic change varies. Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, both rich in energy and politically stable are well placed to attract foreign investment. At its Tengiz and Karachaganak fields, Kazakhstan has 100 billion barrels in oil reserves and 2.4 trillion cubic meters of natural gas. If it can maintain its relatively open polity, adopt consociational policies to accommodate its Russian population, and use its energy revenues to improve economic conditions, Kazakhstan can execute a successful post-Soviet transition. Turkmenistan’s gas deposits total 8.1 trillion cubic meters. Despite its shortage of arable land and water, abundant rural poverty, and authoritarian polity, it could utilize its substantial revenues from natural gas exports (currently estimated at $1,500 per capita) to coopt and defuse potential sources of domestic tension in the manner of the Persian Gulf states. Uzbekistan has Central Asia’s largest internal market, a relatively well developed industrial base, and abundant raw materials (natural gas, oil, coal, and gold). Foreign investors are interested in it for these reasons. But its leaders have tended to drag their feet on economic reform until recently, sit atop festering social and economic problems, and have increased the likelihood for radical movements by virtually eliminating the possibilities for legal opposition. Political instability could both prevent it from realizing its potential to attract foreign investment and, by increasing the influence of conservative forces, block economic reform. Kyrgyzstan and

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57 On consociational policies, see Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977). Lijphart defines consociational democracy as an arrangement under which elites representing the most important segments (religious, ethnic, economic, etc.) of society cooperate so as to provide the maximum access and representation to the segments.

58 Rashid, Resurgence, pp. 128, 201.
Tajikistan, Central Asia's poorest countries, are less likely to succeed. Of the two, Kyrgyzstan has the better chance: its government presides over a remarkably open polity and is committed to restructuring the economy; but it is hampered by a small internal market, a mainly mountainous terrain, an ill-developed road and rail network, and a location that complicates access to global markets. Tajikistan, saddled with continuing civil war, political repression, and a ruling elite opposed to economic reform, is the region's economic basket case.

III. Post-Imperial Scenarios

The determinants of security just presented generate four scenarios for Russian-Central Asian relations that illustrate the symbiosis between the nature of politics within Russia and the degree of stability in Central Asia. Russian capacity is a constant, a background condition in all four scenarios. The variables are Russian disposition, a function of Russia's domestic politics, and the sources of peripheral instability, which provide the opportunity for intervention. Thus Russian neo-imperialism (as shown by the Tajik civil war) will result from the convergence of capacity, disposition, and opportunity. The scenarios rest on three assumptions. First, other scenarios (a Balkanized Russia for instance) are of course always imaginable; I have chosen four that I consider to be the most plausible based on the current realities in Russia and Central Asia. Second, I consider the variable of Central Asian regime type to be far less central than the variable of stability. As the U.S. record in Central and Latin America demonstrates, what great powers desire above all in their peripheries is stability and an acceptance of their strategic interests. Regime type matters only to the extent that it imperils these requirements. Thus, what is critical for Russian policy in Central Asia is whether local regimes respect Russia's sphere of influence, not whether they are democratic or not. Third, in scenarios 3 and 4, I note the salience of nationalism within Central Asia, but I consider it a derivative of stability (or the lack thereof). In other words, the background condition for the type of nationalism that will threaten Russia's interests is instability, itself a function of the degree of irredentist conflict, social mobilization, and instability created by economic dislocations. Figure 1 depicts four scenarios for Russian-Central Asian relations, incorporating the interaction between systemic and domestic conditions as specified above. Each scenario is then spelled out.

59 To use Michael Doyle's terminology, neo-imperialism depends on the concatenation of systemic, dispositional, and pericentric conditions. Doyle, Empires (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986). Discussions with Alex Motyl were invaluable in clarifying my ideas on this aspect of the analysis.
**Scenario 1: Good Neighbors.** Democratic reformers securely control the Russian state in this scenario, and Central Asia is stable. Because Central Asian leaders maintain internal order, retain close ties with Russia, and tailor their policies with its interests in mind, the likelihood of Russian neo-imperialism is virtually nil. Despite the strategic consensus in Russia noted previously, relative to hard-line ultra-nationalist groups, Russia's democrats appreciate the internal and external costs of imperial policies: the diversion of economic resources, a domestic political environment favorable to opponents of democracy and reform, and troubled relations with the West that endanger the prospects for aid, investment, and membership in Western economic institutions. In this scenario, they hold power securely, and the pressure of domestic coalitions favoring neo-imperial policies is, therefore, manageable. There may be a contrast in domestic structure between center and periphery--some Central Asian states will be authoritarian, others more open--but this should not affect Russian policy. Although Russian democratic reformers do not share the political agenda of Central Asia's authoritarian leaders, they see them as known quantities, forces for stability, and advocates of close ties with Russia. Whether Central Asian regimes are democratic or authoritarian is less significant than whether they are able to maintain a level of stability sufficient to allay Russia's fear of turbulent frontiers and their pursuit of policies that minimize tensions between the Russian diaspora and ethnic Central Asians.

**Scenario 2: Living Quietly Next to the Bear.** In this scenario, democracy in Russia has succumbed to the combined pressures of political instability and economic failure, and authoritarian ultra-nationalists have taken power. Stability prevails in Central Asia, and the region's leaders are mindful of Russia's strategic interests. The likelihood of Russian neo-imperialism is low, but greater than in Scenario 1.

Although a powerful Russia now has ultra-nationalists at the helm, in the absence of instability in Central Asia, neo-imperial policies are by no means inevitable. There is no upheaval within Central Asian countries out of which anti-Russian nationalism could emerge, and there are no turbulent frontiers under assault or infiltration by hostile forces from outside the region. To be sure, the political orientation of Russia's ruling elite and preponderant Russian power could lead
to intervention without opportunity. Opportunities could be manufactured, and minor incidents could lead to intervention more easily than in a democratic Russia where the restraints of parliament, public opinion, and the press will be more effective. Thus neo-imperial policies cannot be ruled out; but the absence of peripheral upheaval and its concomitant, radical nationalism, makes it unlikely.

Scenario 3: Democratic Russia/ Turbulent Periphery. In this scenario, democratic reformers govern Russia while instability mounts in Central Asia. Regimes are rendered vulnerable by post-Soviet economic transitions gone awry and face rising challenges from nationalist and Islamist forces who mobilize disgruntled masses. Now the likelihood of Russian neo-Imperialism is significantly increased. Here, the synergism among all of the central and peripheral conditions specified in Section II increases the likelihood of Russian intervention. While Russia’s democratic reformers continue to recognize the costs of intervention, political instability in Central Asia increases domestic pressures for action. Neo-imperial coalitions in Russia’s state and society campaign for the defense of ethnic Russians and Russian state interests in an area of historic hegemony. Imperial discourse is used by ultra-nationalists for political mobilization and also becomes a powerful cognitive influence on state policy as turmoil in Central Asia presents the specter of an unstable frontier, the rise of anti-Russian political forces, and an endangered Russian diaspora. Some democrats break away and stake out interventionist positions that intersect with those of nationalist politicians and hard-liners in the military and the intelligence agencies. The “defection” of such individuals and pressure from nationalists, combined with the institutional leverage of the military and intelligence services, pushes opponents of intervention to the right. Persistently dovish officials come under fire from ultra-nationalists, lose influence, or are dismissed. The net result of pressure by pro-imperial groups, tactical shifts by democrats, and the isolation or departure of critics of intervention is that domestic coalitions opposed to neo-imperialism become fractured and ineffectual. The disparities of power within Central Asia allow regional powers (Uzbekistan), citing endangered ethnic kin and the threat of spreading upheaval, to intervene in unstable countries. As in the Tajik civil war, preponderant Russian power is mobilized by such regional hegemons and by imperial coalitions in the center. The disjuncture between ethnic and state boundaries in Central Asia makes for an environment conducive to nationalism, and instability produces an exclusivist, ethnic variant. Powerful regional states

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60 This scenario essentially manifested itself in Tajikistan from the summer of 1992: Russia has acted to defend Tajik governments led by ex-communists (first Rakhmon Nabiev, then Emomali Rakhmonov) against a diverse coalition of nationalists, democrats, and Islamists.

and nationalist movements push for unity with fellow nationals in other states. Opposition movements denied opportunities for participation inside the system use nationalism as a mobilizational strategy against ruling elites; the travails of the economic transition breed resentment that is tapped by Islamists or nationalists who blame life's rigors on a privileged, exploitative, or simply different, "other."63

Central Asian ruling elites under threat from radical forces and discredited by wayward post-Soviet economic transitions use ethnic nationalism to bolster their legitimacy and to undercut the appeal of radical challengers. They adopt discriminatory policies (covering culture, political recruitment, and access to economic benefits) that increase the creeping sense of foreignness already felt by the Russian diaspora.64 Even Central Asian leaders who traditionally opposed exclusivist nationalism now favor policies designed to increase the representation of the titular nationality in positions of political and economic power and to promote its language and culture. The growth of nationalism is reflected in the replacement of the Cyrillic alphabet: the emphasis on local languages for education and employment, the reemergence of texts, writers, and cultural motifs65 stressing indigenous identity and traditions; the renaming of towns and provinces; burgeoning interest in Islam and local historical heroes (Babur, Timur, the Basmachi), a rise of revisionist-nationalist historiography,66 and the "invention of tradition" by states to build state


legitimacy and societal cohesion. Local Russians react to these manifestations of nationalism with anxiety, indignation, and vocal opposition.

Scenario 4: Hypernationalism on All Sides. In this scenario, Russia’s democratic reformers, having failed to halt political instability and economic deterioration at home, are displaced by authoritarian nationalists, while discredited Central Asian regimes battle rising challenges from nationalist or Islamist opposition forces. The chances of Russian neo-imperialism are now exceptionally high. Peripheral conditions mirror those in the previous scenario. In the center, groups wedded to reasserting Russian imperial interests now control the state. Their predisposition toward neo-imperial policies is reinforced by peripheral instability that begets ethnic nationalism. Ultra-nationalist Russian groups call for the defense of vital interests (friendly regimes, stability, and the security of the diaspora). They dramatize the danger posed by chaos in a strategically vital region, alliances between radical forces and their external patrons, and the vulnerability of imperiled Central Asian leaders who have been dependent upon Russia and deferential to its interests. Once again, dominant Central Asian states intervene to stem (or to take advantage of) instability in neighboring states, while supporting Russian intervention to restore order.

For their part, Russian nationalists in Central Asia become more militant, anticipating greater support from Moscow. Yet the reaction of Central Asia’s Russian diaspora to exclusivist nationalism is not uniform. Russians (and other Slavs) living in Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan resort to emigration. The response is different in Kazakhstan, the earliest area of Russian settlement in Central Asia, where 6.2 million Russians constitute 38 percent of the population. Many Russians think of northern Kazakhstan as part of Russia.

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69 This has already occurred in Tajikistan. Of the 380,000 Russians living in Tajikistan, 300,000 left by the end of 1993, while 30,000 of Kyrgyzstan’s 916,558 Russians departed in the first half of that year. Rotar, "Refugees," p. 13; RFE/RL News Briefs. (October 11-15, 1993), p. 9.
70 Central Asia Monitor, No. 3 (1992), p. 39. Kazakhstan’s demographic balance is shifting due to the entry of Kazakhs from Russia and Mongolia, and the substantially higher birthrate among Kazakhs. A net reduction in the Russian population is also likely: in 1993, for example, 200,000 Russians left, while 160,000 entered to settle. See interview with Nazarbaev, "Ne budem delit’ na ‘svoikh i chuzhikh’," Komsomolskaia
Russians constitute the majority in provinces of Kazakhstan that adjoin the border with Russia; and ultra-nationalist and Cossack groups have established links with some of Kazakhstan's Russian organizations. For these reasons, secession, not emigration, becomes the mode of protest chosen by Kazakhstan's Russians--particularly in view of the nature of the regime in Russia. As secessionist movements aided by Russia become stronger, simmering ethnic tensions rise to the surface, sparking confrontations between Kazakhs and Russians.

As in the previous scenario, Russian neo-imperialism results from the combination of central and peripheral conditions. The key difference is that superior Russian power is mobilized not by coalition dynamics but by the control of state power by ultra-nationalists. Given their political outlook, lack of concern about Western reactions, and the weaknesses of democratic institutional restraints, Russia's ultra-nationalists react far more aggressively to Central Asian instability and the anti-Russian ethnic nationalism that it breeds than Russian democrats. The danger of escalation to blatant forms of neo-imperialism is significantly higher than in Scenario 3.

IV. Managing Russian Preponderance

The third and fourth scenario raise the fundamental question of what Central Asian states can do in the face of Russian neo-imperialism. Their financial and technical constraints preclude robust military responses in foreseeable future. Without factories capable of producing the weapons and equipment needed by modern armies, they cannot establish independent military formations rapidly, and with the possible exception of energy-rich Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

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72 The following oblasts in Kazakhstan have a Russian population that, in percentage terms exceeds the percentage of Russians in all of Kazakhstan (38%): Qostany (47%), North Kazakhstan (62%), Qaraghandy (53%), Almaty (57%); Aqmola (46%), East Kazakhstan (65%), Pavlodar (45%), Kökshetau (40%). If other Slavs (Belaruscans and Ukrainians) are factored into the calculation, the Slavic percentage of the population of these oblasts ranges from a high of 69% for North Kazakhstan to a low of 51% for Kökshetau. Philip S. Gillette, "Ethnic Balance and Imbalance in Kazakhstan's Regions," Central Asia Monitor, No. 3 (1993), Table 2, p. 21.

73 In November 1994, Cossack groups and Russian nationalist organizations (including Lad) held a demonstration in Almaty demanding a referendum to decide whether Kazakhstan should unite with Russia. They also called for Russian to be accorded the status of a state language on par with Kazakh. RFE/RL Daily Report, (November 22, 1994), p. 2.

buying arms on the world market is not a realistic option. Moreover, there is virtually no indigenous officer corps: Slavic officers constitute 90 percent of the total.

Not surprisingly, Central Asia’s present leaders see strategic dependence upon Russia as indispensable; the only choice is the form of this dependence. The first is multilateral, based on a collective security system organized under the aegis of the CIS and led by Russia. Kazakhstan has been its leading advocate, and it is favored by Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan as well. Its juridical foundation was laid in May 1992 by the collective security agreement signed at the Tashkent CIS summit. The provision committing the signatories to eschew security alignments that harm the interests of their partners is particularly important; its practical consequence is to give Russia a legal basis to monitor the security policies of Central Asian states. Russia, after all, does not need allies to pose a threat to Central Asia. The multilateral accord is supplemented by security treaties between each of these countries and Russia, which provide for Russian training and weapons in exchange for access to military installations. Deference to Russian security interests is the tacit part of the bargain. Turkmenistan, in contrast, spurns collective security in favor of bilateral agreements with Russia. These cover joint financing and command of the Turkmen armed forces, Russian access to bases and military facilities, the employment of Russian officers in Turkmenistan’s armed forces, joint patrols of its borders with Iran and Afghanistan, and the provision of Russian equipment and training.75

Both approaches have their logic. The Kazakh version avails of Russia’s power, but seeks to restrain it by embedding it in a multilateral security system. The calculation is that the coils of consensual decision-making will constrain Russian unilateralism. This Lilliputian response to the Russian Gulliver reflects the fact that Kazakhstan is simply more directly exposed to Russian power than any other Central Asian country: Russian account for 38 percent of its population, and it has a vast border with Russia.

By contrast, Turkmenistan enjoys favorable geographic and demographic conditions. It is separated from Russia by a huge swath of Kazakh and Uzbek territory and by the Caspian Sea. It is also ethnically the most homogeneous of the Central Asian republics; Turkmen account for 71 percent of their country’s population, while the ethnic Russian community of 333,892 is among the smallest in Central Asia and accounts for only 9 percent. (see Table 2). Turkmenistan’s bilateral strategy allows it to opt out of the CIS without forfeiting Russian military assistance--

important for the defense of its long borders with Iran and Afghanistan—while avoiding entanglement in Central Asia’s present and future conflicts.

Yet neither model offers a reliable solution to the potential problem of a neo-imperial Russia. Even if the CIS proves effective it will be a Russian instrument, not a restraint on Russian power.

Because no one Central Asian state has the power to ward off Russian domination, the only alternative is multilateral or bilateral alliances. An alliance among Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan is one option; but it would be dwarfed by Russian might, and its very creation is unlikely for several reasons. First, Central Asian states fear that any purely regional security system would be dominated by Uzbekistan. Second, rivalry between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, stemming from a competition for regional preeminence and differences in domestic structure, may overshadow their potential differences with Russia and even prevent the construction of a regional alliance. Third, the Central Asian states have multiple points of dependence on Russia, and Kazakhstan has a long common border—realities that give Moscow considerable leverage to foil the formation of an alliance led by Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan or, failing that, to prevent its becoming effective. Fourth, given Kazakhstan’s demographic composition, a defense strategy directed at Russia could promote ethnic discord and even push the country toward civil war. A Kazakh national security strategy with the deterrence of Russia as its principal aim would amount to the pursuit of external security at the expense of internal stability. Indeed, it may not be a particularly effective way of seeking external security, inasmuch as upheaval within Kazakhstan stemming from conflict between Kazakhs and Russians is the most likely context for Russian intervention.

As an alternative to a regional coalition, Central Asian leaders could ally with relatively powerful neighboring states. Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, and China are the best candidates. Kazakhstan might reconsider its multilateral, CIS-based strategy if disputes with Russia over the status of its Russian population exacerbate its sense of vulnerability. Kazakhstan might then seek common cause with Ukraine, another state exposed to Russian power by virtue of a common border, economic dependence, a large Russian diaspora, and possible territorial claims.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Neither Leonid Kravchuk, Ukraine’s president until July 1994, nor Nursultan Nazarbaev, the president of Kazakhstan, ever raised the issue of a formal alliance. But, during Nazarbaev’s visit to Kiev in January 1994, “the two presidents signed a declaration in which they expressed concern over inter-ethnic conflicts and attempts to destabilize newly independent states from outside.” The wording left little to the imagination. RFE/RL News Briefs, (January 10-21, 1994), p. 24. The election as Ukraine’s president of Leonid Kuchma—an individual committed to closer ties with Russia—would seem to make the question of a Ukrainian-Kazakh alliance moot. In fact, its prospects hinge much more on the nature of future Russian governments and their policies toward Kazakhstan and Ukraine.
Together, Kazakhstan and Ukraine could muster a population of 68.4 million (52.4 million from Ukraine; 16 million from Kazakhstan), a combined GNP of $152 billion ($113 accounted for by Ukraine), and a military force totalling 482,000 (438,000 would belong to Ukraine). Recall from Table 1 that, in contrast, the Russian Federation has 148 million people, a $400 billion GNP, and armed forces totalling 2.03 million. Kazakhstan and Ukraine cannot, of course, mobilize power equivalent to Russia’s, and an anti-Russian partnership would involve risks. Most importantly, the ethnic composition of both countries would create a tradeoff between external security and internal stability. Nevertheless, this strategy would raise the costs of Russian intervention more effectively than any purely Central Asian coalition.

A Central Asian alignment with Turkey or Iran seems unlikely. They have divergent agendas in the region (reflecting differences in culture, domestic political order, and foreign policy orientation) that preclude either an alliance to check Russia or a joint effort to orchestrate and lead a Central Asian collective security system. Neither has the military capacity or strategic ambition to balance Russia, and Turkey has the added disadvantage of lacking direct geographical access to Central Asia. The disparity between scarce Turkish resources and plentiful Central Asian problems has convinced all but zealous pan-Turkic fringe elements in Turkey that the initial aspiration to be Central Asia’s benefactor and guardian was a classic case of reach exceeding grasp. Turkey’s substantial economic dealings with Russia, growing interest in Russian arms, and own exposure to Russian power will also reduce its value as a potential alliance partner. Iran is also poorly placed to counter Russia by virtue of its inferiority in power and abundant economic problems. It, too, has important economic ties with Russia and, in addition, is a major purchaser of Russian arms and civilian nuclear technology. It is not likely to jeopardize these benefits for the uncertain gains and risky enterprise of checking Russia in a

77 Figures from The Military Balance, 1993-1994 (London: Brassey’s, 1993), pp. 98-99, 90-91, 140. These comparisons cannot capture the many intangible, contingent, and contextual sources of power. For example, the population comparisons do not take account of the substantial proportion of Ukraine’s and Kazakhstan’s population that is Russian and the presence of Russians in the officer corps of both countries. Rivalry has not prevented them from drawing the Central Asian states into the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), a long-dormant economic group to which Afghanistan and Pakistan also belong. But, unlike ECO, forging an alliance directed at Russia would not only involve strategic risks, it would also bring out much more sharply Iran-Turkish differences regarding the future political and security order of Central Asia. Moreover, ECO may amount only to a Potemkin village.


region that has long been its sphere of influence. The appeal of Iran, with its Persian culture and Shi'a Islam, will be limited in largely Turkic, Sunni Muslim Central Asia. Moreover, it is associated in the minds of Central Asia’s secular leaders with militant Islam. And the multinational composition of its own population is a vulnerability which, Russia, judging from its strategy in the Transcaucasus, would not flinch from exploiting in retaliation. China could be enlisted as a balancer through an artful Central Asian diplomacy that utilizes its progressively increasing economic stake, desire for stability in the region, and possible competition with Russia. Yet any formal role for China in regional security may be resisted by Kazakhstan, where suspicions of China run deep because of resentment over the fallout from China’s nuclear tests in Xinjiang, the apprehensions stirred by Chinese immigration, and fears of China’s future westward expansion on the strength of now-dormant territorial claims. Moreover, most Chinese forces are arrayed along the northern and northeastern borders facing Russia, making for immense difficulties in power projection and logistics. The Xinjiang-Uigur Autonomous Region in China’s far west, which adjoins Central Asia, is remote from the fulcrum of Chinese power; relatively few forces are stationed there. This complicates a strategy of deterrence via forces-in-place, while intervention from afar is hampered by China’s nascent (although expanding) power projection capabilities and the logistical costs of supplying and reinforcing distant forces.

Furthermore, recent geopolitical changes have altered China’s assessment of Russia’s role in Central Asia. A post-Cold War Eurasia rife with ethnonationalism threatens the integrity of multinational states such as China. Consequently, in contrast to the heyday of Sino-Soviet rivalry, when China and Russia regarded each other’s ethnic diversity as a weakness to be manipulated, a recognition of common interests against radical nationalism has developed between Eurasia’s two multinational great powers. Nationalism among Central Asia’s predominantly Turkic-Muslim

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81 In Tajikistan, the Central Asian country with which it has culturally the most in common, Iran has played a cautious role. It has not sought to undermine Russian interests by throwing its support behind the Islamic Republican Party (now renamed the Islamic Movement for the Reformation of Tajikistan because of a broader membership).

82 See Brown, “Central Asia,” pp. 62-63. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also have unresolved territorial disputes with China; and, like Kazakhstan, depend on Russian forces for securing their borders with China.

83 In recent years, China has sought to beef up its ability to project power by air and sea; but this reflects Beijing’s ambitions in East Asia and is unrelated to Central Asia. Research Institute for Peace and Security (Tokyo), Asian Security 1993-94 (London: Brassey’s, 1993), pp. 104-106.

84 In a 1992 meeting with Qian Qichen, his Chinese counterpart, Kozyrev remarked that "Central Asia should remain a CIS sphere of influence and not a sphere of extremist forces, and, in particular, of Islamic fundamentalism. And in this, I think, we can count on mutual understanding from our great neighbor." Qian responded that Russia and China "have common interests in preserving stability in the Central Asian region," and that Chinese policy toward Central Asia would take into account the close ties that had been established over time between Russia and the region. ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian, 1300 GMT, November 25, 1992, p. 3, trans. in FBIS-SOV, November 27, 1992, p. 9. The adverse implications for Russia of ethnic
peoples could stir irredentism among their kin (7 million Uighurs, 1 million Kazakhs, 375,000 Kyrgyz, and 14,500 Uzbeks) in Xinjiang, a vast and vital area containing much of China’s minerals, petroleum, and nuclear energy.85 Since the early 1980s, anti-Han nationalism has manifested itself, sometimes violently, in the outpost of Xinjiang.86 Neither the Chinese government nor experts on Xinjiang see these episodes as presaging an imminent, serious threat to China’s territorial integrity.87 Yet senior Chinese officials are disturbed by the resilience of nationalism in Xinjiang—no matter how poorly organized and sporadic—and have voiced their concerns openly.88 Thus China may now accept Russia as an enforcer of stability and antidote to ethnonationalism in neighboring Central Asia. The potential threat of Russian power in Central Asia could be balanced by relying on Western states or organizations; but there are no viable candidates. The United States is unlikely to assume responsibility for Central Asia’s security against Russia. There are no vital U.S. national security interests in the region; and, at a time of budget cuts, the opportunity costs are too high given existing military commitments to other regions. U.S. opposition to Russian intervention in Central Asia may be expressed in words and symbolic deeds (meetings postponed, credits delayed), but is unlikely to take the form of military countermeasures. Among extra-regional multilateral organizations, NATO is the obvious candidate, particularly as it contemplates assuming new responsibilities further east. But its dithering on the conflict in the former Yugoslavia hardly inspires confidence; nor does its lack of consensus on whether—and if so how far, and in what ways—it should stretch eastward to assume "out-of-area" commitments. NATO’s discussions on admitting the Czech Republic, Slovakia,
Poland, and Hungary display a keen sensitivity to Russia's vehement opposition, and it is unlikely to reach into the near abroad, an even more vital region for Russia. True, links between NATO and the Central Asian states have been built by admitting them, along with other ex-Soviet states and Eastern Europe, to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Partnership for Peace. But these initiatives are meant to promote consultation, exchanges, and coordination and are not a prelude to concrete security guarantees. Even an ad hoc role for NATO in Central Asia, through participation in peacekeeping operations, for example, would be resisted by Russia, not just by authoritarian ultra-nationalists, but by democrats as well. Although Russia's quest for a special status in the Partnership for Peace failed, its sheer size and strength will enable it to use NATO's new and expanded consultative mechanisms to oppose any undertakings by the alliance that it sees as a threat to its predominance in Central Asia. In theory, the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE) could stake out a role in Central Asian security that restrains Russia, and its decision to admit the former republics of the Soviet Union may set the stage for this. Yet several problems will prevent it from serving as a reliable protector. It is not an alliance or a collective security mechanism, having neither a standing military force nor enforcement powers. While OSCE has developed various procedures for crisis management, conflict resolution, and confidence-building, Russia, as a member, could use the provisions for consensual decision-making to block application of these procedures in Central Asian conflagrations if it concludes that they would undercut Russian interests. If the OSCE's Vienna-based Center for Preventing Conflicts took steps to end hostilities through initiatives on the ground, these would almost certainly be watered down by Russia or blocked by its veto. Moscow sees the future role of OSCE not as constraining Russian conduct but serving, along with an NACC de-linked from NATO, as a Eurasian security regime in which Russia wields a veto and under which NATO, the WEU, and the Russian-led CIS have specific jurisdictions.

V. Implications for U.S. Policy

The legacy of history, the circumstances of geography, and the logic of power guarantee that Central Asia will remain part of Russia's sphere of influence. No regional state, alliance, or outside power or organization can change this reality; nor will changes in the nature of the Russian state alter it. Any realistic U.S. policy toward Central Asia must take account of this

89 Its efforts to mediate the conflict Nagorno-Karabakh conflict illustrate the gap between aspirations and performance.

fact. Yet the disparity in power between Russia and Central Asia does not foreordain a neo-imperial Russian policy. Whether that occurs depends upon the inter-relationship between developments within Russia and Central Asia. A stable, conflict-free Russian-Central Asian relationship is most likely if democracy takes firm root in Russia and the government enjoys legitimacy by improving the lives of citizens. The pressure of pro-imperial elites is apt to be minimized under these conditions, and restraints on neo-imperial conduct—civil society, an effective parliament, the rule of law, and a vigorous press—will become more powerful. 91

No American quick fix can ensure democratization and economic reform in Russia. But the long-term contribution of persistent, varied, incremental, and modest programs of assistance should not be underestimated, particularly as the United States has neither the strategic rationale nor wherewithal for applying a more grandiose strategy of containment to enforce benign Russian behavior in Central Asia. Such a strategy will have an even greater impact if it pools resources and coordinates approaches with major U.S. allies.

The strategy of long-term assistance to ease the post-Soviet transition is appropriate for U.S. policy toward the Central Asian states as well. 92 Instability in Central Asia increases the chances for ethnic nationalism. It follows that U.S. economic assistance and efforts to promote political openness can contribute to ethnic concord. Radical movements and ethnic nationalism are more likely to arise in Central Asia if the region experiences severe economic dislocations and when regimes shut off avenues for within-system participation. A diplomacy that rewards governments that increase opportunities for political participation and are responsive to the concerns of ethnic minorities—Kyrgyzstan’s approach is particularly commendable in these respects 93—is appropriate. In Tajikistan, a policy of engagement that rewards national reconciliation leading to truly open elections can help ease the difficult road to peace. A policy of incentives for openness and reconciliation can be effective because political contacts, economic aid, and investment are sought eagerly by all Central Asian states. If it is to work, however, such

91 Perhaps the only heartening lessons of the war in Chechnya is that democracy, even the imperfect Russian variant, begets a degree of transparency that increases the accountability of those in power.
92 U.S. economic and technical assistance can contribute to Central Asia’s political stability and ethnic harmony. In Kyrgyzstan, for instance, illegal drug trafficking through Afghanistan and Tajikistan has become a serious problem, and the government needs help in areas ranging from surveillance to the treatment of addicts. The United States could also help restructure the defense industries in northern Kyrgyzstan in which many Russians work.
93 The government of Askar Akaev has taken great pains to assuage the fears of the local Russian population. Kyrgyzstan has been receptive to the idea of dual citizenship, a Slavonic University has been created to ease concerns about the future of the Russian language and Russian culture, and, in sharp, contrast to Uzbekistan, there is very little hostility toward Russian among leaders and the average citizens. The removal of Soviet-era monuments and the desire to displace the dominant role of Russian are also far less evident in Kyrgyzstan.
diplomacy must steer clear of sanctimoniousness and grandstanding: few leaders, particularly in newly-independent states, can afford to be portrayed as caving in to public pressure from abroad. U.S. preferences should be communicated quietly and unambiguously, and the message reinforced by rewarding states that pursue policies of openness and inclusiveness.