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RUSSIAN HARDLINERS' MILITARY DOCTRINE: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

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INTRODUCTION

Some Western leaders and policymakers are remarkably unconcerned about the prospects of a victory by Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov in the Russian presidential elections on June 16. Thinking that a communist return to power in Russia will be no different than it was in Poland or Slovakia, these Westerners appear to believe that a communist victory in Russia will not disrupt the burgeoning "partnership" between Russia and the West.

However, the report translated here paints a different picture. Written by hard-line members of a nationalist-communist coalition that supports Zyuganov for president but maintains close ties with such nationalists as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the document contains advice for Russian military planners that is profoundly disturbing for the United States and the West. No amount of "mirror imaging" in the U.S. or Western democracies can obscure the meaning of Russian hardliners as rendered in their own words.

Among the report's main points:

- X** Russia should be moving aggressively to adopt a nuclear deterrence posture for perceived non-nuclear threats. Strategic nuclear forces should be the highest priority.
- X** Russia should be able to fight at least one full-scale regional war, one smaller-scale conflict, and at least three "peacemaking" operations outside its borders.
- X** The U.S. and NATO remain Russia's enemies. Other foes include Turkey and countries of the former Soviet Union such as the Baltic States.
- X** Russia's armed forces should be drastically reorganized on the basis of smaller, highly mobile units.
- X** Russia should be prepared to undertake military operations to reconquer the New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union. These operations would include seizing command-and-control sites, "eliminating" the political-military leadership, and deporting "some categories" of the hostile population, presumably to the Russian hinterland.

The authors of these positions are analysts who advise the president and the Russian General Staff on military and security matters. One author is Lieutenant General Valeriy Dementyev, who was once Deputy Chief of Armaments in the USSR Ministry of defense, and today is an analyst with the Institute for Defense Research (known by its Russian acronym INOBIS, *Institut oboronnykh issledovaniy*) in the town of Kaliningrad, on the Baltic Sea near the Polish border. The other author is Anton Surikov, a defense analyst formerly associated with the USA-Canada Institute and also an analyst at the Institute for Defense Research. The secretive INOBIS is financed by the Russian General Staff, military-industrial enterprises, and the Atomic Energy Ministry, and conducts classified research. It was founded by senior figures from the KGB and the Russian military-industrial complex. Also instrumental in its founding was Yuri Maslyukov, Zyuganov's chief economic policy maker and the former head of the USSR's Central Planning Authority (the all-powerful GosPlan). INOBIS reportedly enjoys an attentive audience at the Ministry of Defense.

People like Surikov and Dementyev advise Communist Party leader Zyuganov, radical nationalist Zhirinovskiy, and President Boris Yeltsin's Atomic Energy Minister, Viktor Mikhailov. Even if Zyuganov loses the presidential elections, the views expressed in this report will influence Russian military and security policy. Many in the Russian armed forces and security services support a more aggressive stance for Russia—a viewpoint clearly expressed in this document.

ARMY REFORM AND SECURITY: Conceptual Theses of the Strategy of Reforming The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation

by Valeriy Dementyev, Lieutenant General (Ret.) and Doctor of Technical Sciences, and Anton Surikov, Doctor of Technical Sciences

Deterrence and Defense

The defensive character of the policy of the Russian Federation (RF) in the military area and the absence in Russia of aggressive intentions was proclaimed in the *Basic Provisions of the Military Doctrine of the RF*, unveiled in 1993.¹ This thesis, however, is in need of clarification in terms of the precise tasks that the Armed Forces face. Among them, first of all, three basic tasks should be singled out:

- ✓ The Armed Forces must have the capability to deter effectively the threat of nuclear attack on Russia and on the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which have signed the agreement on collective security. In this, the talk is exclusively about deterrence, because national military thought acknowledges the impossibility of victory in a global nuclear conflict on the strategic level.
- ✓ The Armed Forces should be aimed both at deterring a large-scale military attack on Russia and the CIS by foreign governments or a coalition thereof using conventional armaments, and deterring and repelling military aggression from the outside that has more limited goals. Deterrence of such threats can be nuclear.
- ✓ The Armed Forces must have the capability to conduct local wars and carry out peacemaking operations, primarily within the bounds of the former USSR, taking into account that the former Soviet Union is a zone of Russian vital interests and home to 25 million ethnic Russians. Currently, the Russian Federation is conducting two local wars on the territory of the former USSR—in Chechnya and Tajikistan. Besides that, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are fulfilling peacemaking functions that are in fact deterring Georgia and Moldova from commencing aggression towards Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Trans-Dniester.² Taking into account the practices of 1990-1996, the demand must be put forward, in part, for the capability to wage local wars within the bounds of the former USSR. The Armed Forces should be able to take part simultaneously in at least one local war of high intensity, at least one “slow” local war, and at least three “frozen” local conflicts and peacemaking operations.

Russia's Enemies

The thesis of the *Basic Provisions* is that Russia has no outside enemies. Experience has demonstrated the falseness of this thesis. Because of Russia's weak government and the progressive degradation of its military and economic potential, outside enemies are making themselves known in a bolder and more open fashion.

1 This is a declassified version of Russia's official military doctrine, adopted after the army helped Boris Yeltsin to crush the rebellion at the Supreme Soviet in October 1993 [editor's note].

2 Abkhazia and South Ossetia are integral parts of Georgia, while Trans-Dniester is a part of Moldova [editor's note].

Currently, Russia's basic probable enemies remain the United States and the NATO countries. The United States has a vast nuclear missile potential which, if used, can destroy Russia as a state. It was created with the goal of nuclear blackmail of the USSR and was oriented mainly at carrying out a first nuclear strike. At present, in spite of ongoing reductions within the framework of START 1, orientation toward a first strike not only has not disappeared, but actually has been increased. This is due primarily to the policy of the [American] authorities, particularly the U.S. Congress, toward revision of the ABM Treaty of 1972 and creates the prerequisites for development and subsequent deployment of a strategic ABM system by the year 2003.

In contrast to the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization, not only has NATO, led by the USA, not been dissolved, but the decision already has been made to enlarge it. NATO's infrastructure, despite the reduction of personnel and armaments taking place under the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, is still oriented toward actions in an eastern direction. The preservation of its basic military infrastructure gives it an opportunity to build up its troops quickly should such a decision be made. Although, as of today, the potential of NATO conventional forces is not sufficient to conduct a large-scale offensive operation against the Russian Federation similar to Hitler's invasion of 1941, over time these forces can be augmented and advanced to the borders of the Russian Federation. In this light, the plans for NATO eastern expansion look clearly aggressive. Moreover, in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary measures are now being taken to adapt the infrastructure, airport network, communications, etc., for NATO use. One Hungarian airport, without prior permission, has been turned into an American military base.

It should be noted that the experience of the U.S. and NATO in the Persian Gulf in 1991, and in the former Yugoslavia in 1995-1996, demonstrates that the [Western] bloc today has sufficient potential to carry out military operations with limited goals on the periphery of post-Soviet territory. In this scenario, the greatest danger is presented by aggression from three possible directions: first, because of Norway's recent decision to expand NATO military activity in the north of the country, from the north against the Russian Federation's Northern Fleet on the Kola peninsula; second, in connection with the discussion about creating a 60,000-strong Baltic Corps from German, Danish, and Polish detachments, from the northwest in the form of military intervention by NATO in case of a conflict between Russia and the Baltic countries; and third, in light of the calls being heard to grant the countries of the Caspian basin NATO security guarantees similar to those given to the countries of the Persian Gulf, from the south, where the key role is assigned to a member of NATO —Turkey.

Turkey possesses an army of 600,000. Its navy is already bigger than the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Turkey has unilaterally altered the status of the Black Sea straits, threatening Russia's interests. It has voiced numerous military threats toward Russia's ally Armenia with regard to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey is attempting to attract into its sphere of influence the Turkish-speaking and Muslim regions of the former USSR. It has been proven that Turkish officials supported [President] Dudaev's illegal military detachments in Chechnya. They also assisted the "Gray Wolves" organization in Azerbaijan and a number of other nationalistic military detachments throughout the CIS.

Japan, which is an ally of the United States and has territorial claims against the Russian Federation, might also be considered a potential enemy of Russia. Today, Japan does not have sufficient military power to start an aggressive military operation against Russia in order to take the islands of the Southern Kurils by force, but it does have the necessary potential to expand its Armed Forces quickly.

China and Iran Are Not Enemies

Obviously, the fact that Russia and China are neighbors must not be ignored when planning the development of the Armed Forces. At the same time, the military policy of the Russian Federation should be formed with extreme caution with respect to China. The U.S., seeing China as a potential enemy, is interested in creating a military confrontation between Russia and China.

Similarly, the U.S. has a clear interest in the confrontation between the Russian Federation and Iran, another American enemy. The "Islamic threat" to the CIS is used as an argument to promote a similar confrontation. After a close examination of this problem, however, it becomes clear that the extremist movements in the CIS that operate under pseudo-Islamic slogans are relying as a rule not on Iran, but on pro-Western regimes in the Muslim world: Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.

In light of the above, it is not practical to view Iran and China as probable enemies of Russia, at least in the near future, because there are no objective causes for confrontation between the Russian Federation and those countries.

Recreating the Empire

Within the territory of post-Soviet Russia, the main enemies are the forces of aggressive nationalism that operate with support from outside and have armed forces of their own: armies, police, and other militarized detachments of the Baltic states; Dudayev's illegal armed forces; Tajik opposition illegal armed forces; and others. The main causes of conflict involving the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation within the territory of the former USSR are the following:

- ✓ Ethnic discord and genocide of national minorities. Examples of such conflicts where Russian Federation (USSR) Armed Forces were used, directly or indirectly, would be Trans-Dniester in 1992, the Prigorodniy region in Northern Ossetia at the end of 1992, Southern Ossetia in 1991-1992, and Abkhazia in 1992-1993.

In the near future, ethnic conflicts probably will have two major causes. First, as a result of the events of 1991, Russians are a divided people. Therefore, their objective tendency to reunite will become stronger as time goes on. Second, in all former USSR countries, except for Belorussia and perhaps Ukraine, ethnic minorities are subjected to discrimination.³ This is most clearly evident in the Baltic countries where, with the encouragement of Western institutions, human rights violations based on ethnic origin are part of official policy. The Baltic countries seem to be the most potentially explosive in terms of the possibility of new areas of conflict that could involve the Russian Federation's Armed Forces.

- ✓ Attempts by nationalist forces to seize power by armed force or to hold power in some republic of the former USSR. Examples include Tajikistan in 1992-1996, Lithuania in January 1991, Georgia during the winter of 1991-1992 and at the end of 1993, and Azerbaijan in January 1990 and the summer of 1993.
- ✓ Territorial claims against the Russian Federation and illegal attempts to seize sea and inland water resources that belong to Russia. Up to now, direct Russian participation in such armed conflicts has been avoided. But it is not out of the question, particularly because of the Baku government's policy of annexing part of the Caspian Sea, an inland body of water the rights to which should be shared equally by all countries bordering the region. Another potential source of conflict is the part of the Baltic Sea area that belongs to Russia but is claimed by Lithuania. It

3 The old term "Belorussia" is used for what is now Belarus[editor's note].

also is known that the ethnocratic regimes of Tallin and Riga are claiming a part of the Russian Federation's Northwestern territory.

- ✓ The desire of certain forces in the former USSR, primarily in the Baltic countries, to become a part of the NATO alliance. In such cases, one cannot exclude preemptive use of force by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation to stop decisively any practical steps that might be taken by armed nationalist detachments to implement their provocative plans.

Budget Priorities

Obviously, in the near term, reform of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces will be conducted under conditions of deep economic crisis. Thus, the decisive factor in choosing among possible reforms will be that the budget for the Armed Forces and military-industrial complex is limited. One of the main requirements will be to minimize the country's budget for defense. This, in turn, means that the established practice of allocating funds equally among the existing branches of the Armed Forces will have to be abandoned.

It is necessary to determine which programs are crucial to sustaining the Armed Forces' ability to accomplish their main objectives and guarantee their financing. At the same time, it is unavoidable that programs which do not have a high priority will have to be financed from the "leftovers" of the military budget. Despite the importance of the transition to a professional army in the near future, it will be impossible to avoid using the draft to raise manpower. The Armed Forces will have to be reduced to 1.2 million servicemen.

The Main Deterrent: Strategic Nuclear Forces

In resolving the task of nuclear deterrence on the strategic level, the basic role should be played by strategic nuclear forces and systems supporting their combat functioning. Without strategic nuclear forces, Russia cannot exist as an independent, unified state. The task of sustaining them should be given the highest priority and should be fully financed. As of today, [Russia's] strategic nuclear forces face three major problems:

- X **Degradation of strategic nuclear forces.** This concerns primarily the naval component of the strategic nuclear forces, in which the scheduled maintenance of weapon systems is constantly being violated and the operational strength of strategic nuclear submarines has gone down drastically. Since 1990, not a single new strategic nuclear submarine has been launched; considering the life cycle of submarines in the naval strategic nuclear forces, this means they could disappear within 15 years. It is most important to finish the scientific research and test construction work needed to create strategic nuclear submarines of a new generation which will carry new ballistic missiles by the years 2000-2003, as well as to ensure that these strategic nuclear submarines are brought into service at the rate of 2-3 submarines every two years.
- X **Absence of clarity regarding the quantitative framework within which it is planned to develop strategic nuclear forces.** In 1994, START I was implemented. START II was signed but is not yet ratified. With regard to the naval and aviation components of the strategic nuclear forces, the existence of uncertainty concerning the fate of the treaty does not affect seriously their future development. According to START II, the naval strategic nuclear forces can be armed with 1,750 warheads after 2003. Roughly the same quantity was to be allowed under START I. Aviation strategic nuclear forces, which historically have played a very insignificant role in the national nuclear triad, will have 93 heavy bombers with approximately 500 cruise missiles, including 19 Tu-95 heavy bombers and several dozen heavy bombers acquired in Ukraine by agreement. The production of additional heavy bombers is very costly and thus is hardly advisable.

A more complex situation exists in units of the Strategic Rocket Forces (SRF). According to START II, which requires the liquidation of ICBMs with MIRV warheads, the SRF by the year 2003 can rely on approximately 1,000 single-warhead ICBMs. At present, there are 350 mobile SS-25s with single warheads, which are to be replaced in the next few years, as their useful life expires, by "Topol-M" ICBMs. According to the agreement, Russia will have 105 MIRVed ICBMs, which are to be "unloaded" until only one warhead each remains, and 90 single SS-18 ICBMs placed into refitted silos. To support the START II quota for the number of warheads, Russia will have to form more than 10 additional divisions of mobile ICBMs with approximately 500 "Topol-M" ICBMs by the year 2003—in other words, practically double the number of mobile, single-warhead ICBMs. Another possible option is to build new silos for new ICBMs. Even with priority financing, it is very difficult for the SRF to do this within such a limited time frame.

In general, the START II treaty is rather paradoxical. It calls for quick liquidation of more than 200 MIRVed Russian ICBMs, part of which could still be used for another 4-5 years. At the same time, in order to maintain quantitative parity with the U.S., several hundred single-warhead ICBMs should be deployed, and possibly placed into newly built silos, even as some of the old silos are to be destroyed under START II. Note that the United States plans to go from START I to START II in a different fashion. It will eliminate only 50 "MX" missiles, 4 "Ohio" strategic nuclear submarines, and 28 heavy bombers with cruise missiles. The main cuts are to be accomplished by "unloading" the missiles and storing the warheads in special storage facilities. At any moment, this stockpile, which the United States emphatically refuses to destroy, might be put back into operation on U.S. missiles. As a result, taking into account the potential for "quick loading" of these missiles, the U.S. will surpass Russia by 1,000-1,500 warheads.

Russia's refusal to follow START II will bring onto the agenda the issue of supporting MIRVed ICBMs. Analysis proves that this problem can be solved in principle. Different options are available. For instance, additional SS-18s can be purchased from Ukraine. Also, purely Russian MIRVed ICBMs can be designed; a 120-ton liquid fueled missile with 10 warheads could be created in 3-5 years after the appropriate decision. In the next 5-7 years, 300 such missiles can be placed into existing silos. Given these facts, in spite of widespread misconceptions, spending for this project could be quite moderate. At the stage of scientific research and test construction work, the amount would be several percent less per year than the amount allocated to "rebuild" Chechnya in 1996. At the development stage, given that the warheads would be available, production and installation of 300 of such missiles would be three times cheaper than the cost of constructing in the same period 500 "Topol-M" ICBMs in their mobile version or in new silos, as discussed above in relation to START II.

- X **Flaws in the command and control structure of the strategic nuclear forces.** It is proposed, within the framework of measures for development of the strategic nuclear forces, to design in an organized manner a single, self-contained operational command and control system for all groupings of strategic nuclear forces, including support systems, based on the administrative structure developed in the Strategic Rocket Forces. Practical implementation of this proposal could be achieved within a year after the appropriate decision is made. The main reasons such a step is necessary are the increased demands for combat readiness in the strategic nuclear forces, economy of means, and elimination of parallel structures. It would be advisable to transfer the Military Space Forces to the Strategic Rocket Forces to bring under their functional control the Missile Attack Warning System, the Space Control System, the Moscow ABM System, and corresponding testing sites. The naval and aviation strategic nuclear forces (functionally left in the Navy and Air Forces, respectively) also should be transferred to the single operational command and control of the strategic nuclear forces.

