

Russia Cautiously Looks To New U.S. Cooperation In Changed World

by Rachel Douglas

What if Russian-American collaboration, jolted to a new level by the violent attack on New York and Washington, went beyond an immediate response to that event? Could it become the initiating force for a new order of relations among nations, adequate to the promise, as well as the perils, of the 21st Century? For reasons of history and national culture, Russia and the United States are uniquely positioned to provide such an impetus.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has shown that he is thinking in such a direction, by his statements and actions since Sept. 11. In the first of his two telephone calls to U.S. President George Bush on Sept. 12, Putin's spokesman Aleksei Gromov revealed, the two heads of state agreed that Russia and the United States should "be closer to each other," in the face of a common threat from the new irregular warfare. At the same time, Putin and numerous Russian sources are warning of precipitous action against the wrong enemy.

The first order of business was to douse the danger that traditional warfare would flare. Less than two and a half hours after planes hit the World Trade Center, Putin completed an emergency meeting with his "force" ministers, the chiefs of the Defense Ministry and security agencies. As a result of their decisions, the Russian Air Force revised a strategic aviation exercise that had been under way since the previous week, eliminating flights toward NATO countries and all test-firing of missiles.

Putin then plunged into non-stop phone diplomacy with Commonwealth of Independent States members, as well as the West. The Interfax press agency unofficially announced, that Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov may attend the Sept. 25 meeting of NATO defense ministers in Italy, under the formula "19 + 1"—all NATO members plus Russia. Already on Sept. 13, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council issued an unusual joint statement from its ambassadorial meeting in Brussels. It said: "While [the NATO] allies and Russia have suffered from terrorist attacks against civilians, the horrific scale of the attacks of 11 September is without precedent in modern history. . . . NATO and Russia are united in their resolve not to let those responsible for such an inhuman act go unpunished. NATO and Russia call on the entire international community to unite in the struggle against terrorism. . . . NATO and Russia will intensify their cooperation . . . to defeat this scourge."

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visited Secretary

of State Colin Powell in Washington on Sept. 19, bringing "specific proposals" for action against the perpetrators of the attacks. U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton and Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage went to Moscow on Sept. 17-18, the latter for consultations with General Trubnikov, as co-chairmen of a bilateral working group on Afghanistan-based terrorism.

'The World Has Changed'

On Sept. 14-15, Vladimir Putin made a previously scheduled state visit to Armenia. Speaking in Yerevan, Putin said, "The situation in the world has changed, but not because of the acts of terrorism. It changed a long time ago, only we didn't notice this. The tragic events in the United States have merely confirmed these changes. . . . Terrorism has become one of the main threats in the modern world, and we cannot fail to react to that." Then he cautioned, "We, of course, should not act like bandits who strike furtively. We must carefully weigh our decisions and take these decisions on the basis of reliable facts, which we possess. . . . I would like straightaway to warn against putting all the blame onto someone, against finding a scapegoat. . . . The old security system was not tuned to prevent such threats. We must draw conclusions from what has happened and develop this system."

Former Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov, who advises Putin on foreign policy, said in a Sept. 15 interview that most people have not yet grasped these changes in the world (see *Documentation*).

Russian officials fanned out across Central Asia, to the five former Soviet republics that are adjacent to or in the vicinity of Afghanistan, a likely target of U.S. military strikes. Premier Mikhail Kasyanov and his fellow heads of state of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russia, and China) pledged "an uncompromising fight to root out this global danger," calling it terrorism. Russia's 201st Motorized Infantry Division, stationed in Tajikistan, was put on heightened alert status on Sept. 16.

On tour in Central Asia, Chief of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff Gen. Anatoli Kvashnin cautioned against the U.S. attempting air strikes against Afghanistan, not to mention a ground operation on its "extremely inaccessible" terrain. Afghanistan war veteran officers Ruslan Aushev, Alexander Rutskey, and Boris Gromov, all of them now

ected governors of Russian provinces, published blood-curdling reminiscences to warn against a ground war in Afghanistan. Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences Anatoli Gromyko, in a Sept. 19 *Izvestia* interview about the qualms his late father, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, had when the U.S.S.R. invaded Afghanistan in 1979, recalled that that country has been “a cemetery for foreign armies.” “America may land in a confrontation with the Islamic world,” Gromyko warned, “especially if it starts bombing long-suffering peoples, like the Iraqis, or attacks Lebanon, Syria, Libya, and Palestine. If Washington wants to wage a Third World War, rather than an anti-terrorist action, this is not the path for our people to take with the United States.”

In the following *Documentation*, we present warnings from the Russian strategic thinkers and politicians Primakov and Aleksei Arbatov, and from military and intelligence analysts speaking through the press. Their theme is that the United States may overlook, at its peril, the nature of what hit on Sept. 11, the likelihood of the next attack, and the potentially disastrous consequences of a military “flight forward” response.

Documentation

Russian Analyst: ‘Target Was Civilian Population’

A Sept. 14 interview by the Russian news service Strana.ru with Andrei Kosyakov, a former aide to the Chairman of the Subcommittee for Monitoring Intelligence Service Activities, under the Supreme Soviet of Russia (1991-93), is excerpted here in translation.

Q: What shows that the attack in the U.S. was planned over a long time?

Kosyakov: First of all, people with professional flying skills were selected. There were at least four such agents [one for each plane], and they most probably each had a back-up, because of the high probability that the planned pilot could be injured during the hijacking. Secondly, all participants in the operation were prepared for martyrdom, and such people are not easy to find. Finally, the departure of four aircraft from four [sic] different points occurred at intervals of minutes. That means that the distances, times of flight, and schedules were calculated beforehand, and flights were chosen that could reach the strike targets within the most convenient interval of time. This is all quite complicated to calculate, considering that the airliners also had to be seized.

Q: Some analysts say, that only a state could do this.

Kosyakov: The preparation time has to have been months. And the organization must be quite powerful. In our view, the participation of some state, is doubtful. . . . Not a single secret service would accept such casualties. They train their members in a different way. Now, if Bush had been killed, then one might suspect the secret service of some country. But in this case, the target was the civilian population. . . .

Q: Do you think there will be new attacks?

Kosyakov: Unfortunately, I think we must prepare ourselves for new acts of terror, in a different form, but just as effective. Our estimates indicate that ships could be used to ram hydroelectric infrastructure. Imagine a dam being hit by a passenger ship, or a tanker with two or three thousand tons of oil. It would inundate a couple of cities with a population of a million and a half, plus burning oil on top. Or another possibility: train lines under the Hudson River, which could be exploded from above or below. And water would rush into the tunnels.

Q: You say the attack will be in America?

Kosyakov: Yes. First of all, the terrorists want to demonstrate their skill. Secondly, . . . what would have prevented the terrorists from also simultaneously blowing up a couple of automobiles in Europe, if they are preparing to carry out actions all over the world? No, the target was America, and the civilian population in particular.

Q: But some analysts say, that if Bush had been in the White House on Sept. 11, then the one airplane would have fallen onto his residence, rather than the Pentagon.

Kosyakov: This is unlikely. In that case the White House or Pentagon, rather than the civilian population, would have been the first targets to be hit. For, clearly, after a first successful attack, the probability decreases that the later ones will succeed. As you know, the last of the attacks failed. I mean the plane that crashed near Pittsburgh. . . .

But I want to repeat: The fact that the terrorists are not claiming responsibility, indicates that they will strike again and again. Until the second stage is reached—the stage of global conflict. This is the goal of all these actions. At that point they will reveal their authorship, in order to obtain a mobilization reserve.

Q: How could the U.S. secret services sleep through this?

Kosyakov: . . . Half a year ago, Israeli intelligence carried out an exercise with the use of aerial objects for carrying out terrorist acts. For sure, the Americans had some information about these exercises. But it did not even occur to them to apply this experience for their own purposes. . . .

And that is why [Russian President] Vladimir Putin says, that the intelligence services of all nations should work together.

Q: What is the probability that American intelligence will be able to find the leader of this operation?



Russian President Vladimir Putin (right) talks with Speaker of the State Duma Gennady Seleznyov.

Kosyakov: The probability is high. There are people, there are the apartments where they were located, and so there is a trail, of course. Through the perpetrators, the organizer may be found.

Q: And who is it? Bin Laden?

Kosyakov: Hardly. Sure, some conversation of his was intercepted, where someone reported about hitting two targets. That would indirectly support his involvement. But he is not the ideologue. He is too visible. Those who could organize all this are too clever, to be so visible.

Arbatov Warns Of ‘The Next Phase’

Aleksei Arbatov is deputy chairman of the Russian State Duma’s (lower house of parliament) Committee on Defense. His Sept. 19 press conference on the situation one week after the attacks on New York and Washington, was transcribed by Federal News Service.

There is no doubt that the barbaric operation in New York and Washington was carefully planned and took a long time to prepare. Naturally, those who prepared it knew that the United States would respond in a robust way, using the most modern weapons, excluding perhaps, mass destruction weapons.

It stands to reason that these people have given careful thought to the next phase of the operation. They could not have confined themselves to planning just the first series of terrorist acts. Most definitely they have prepared another series of acts. And they have stand-by plans for a series of actions in response to the American strikes. And in line with the logic of escalation, these actions should be even more horrible than those carried out at the first phase as an unprecedented provocation with regard to the United States, aimed at provoking the United States to some tough actions.

I am not sure whether Washington and Moscow are giving enough thought to this. Is the United States prepared well enough, not for air-lifting troops to South Asia, but to ensuring its own security and that of its allies at least against the next stage of the escalation which, I suspect, has been prepared by those who have conceived of this diabolical operation which reveals the highest degree of such diabolical skills?

Primakov: ‘Many People Don’t Comprehend’

Yevgeni Primakov, the former Prime Minister and former Foreign Minister of Russia, gave the interview excerpted here, to Moskovsky Komsomolets on Sept. 15.

Many people still obviously don’t comprehend the profound nature of specific changes that should take place inside the entire global order after this outrage. They keep saying that the United States must take its revenge on the terrorists. It goes without saying that terrorists must be liquidated; moreover, the anti-terrorist struggle must involve force. However, one should not respond with terror to terror, because this would only entail additional violence and terror.

One can say that existing or projected state-security systems have proved completely ineffective. It turns out that a decision to double the defense budget, the mightiest military alliances, as well as the most effective air-defense systems, can’t cope with the terrorist threat. Besides, the latest tragedy shows only too clearly that anti-terrorist missions should not be entrusted to secret services alone. You see, they simply don’t have the required information for preventing similar situations. Naturally enough, various national secret services must coordinate their activities more effectively. . . . We must study ways of defusing the entire international situation, also trying to more effectively coordinate the activities of countries in their efforts to settle the aforesaid conflicts. Believe me, there still exists a colossal untapped potential here, provided that every power stops thinking about its own interests alone.

What we need is special international anti-terrorist legislation. I’m not very happy about the “rogue-state” concept, the more so as it has acquired a false meaning at this stage. Some countries are now referred to as rogue states just because they don’t tread in the wake of other countries’ policies. However, any countries found guilty of financing or covering up terrorism must become real rogues. The world community must turn its back on them.

Q: Some politicians think that these acts of terrorism can trigger a global clash of civilizations.

Primakov: These discussions are both erroneous and highly dangerous. Should we wage an all-out war against Islam? How can one make such statements? By the way, Muslims account for 20% of Russia’s entire population. On the contrary, we must unite positive elements of religions and nationalities for the purpose of fighting terrorists. Quite a few Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, and Iran, disapprove of Afghanistan’s Taliban regime.

Q: Many people think that possible U.S. strikes against Afghanistan meet Russian interests, as well.

Primakov: They seem right, at first glance, because the Taliban have, among other things, displayed a threatening aggressive attitude toward the Central Asian republics of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. Such possible strikes would also weaken terrorist accomplices in Pakistan and other countries. Still I oppose attacks against any specific country because, as I have already said, this can spark off another wave of terror. . . . To my mind, our direct involvement in an [anti-Taliban] operation on Afghan territory must be ruled out. We should not forget our previous Afghan experience. However, this doesn't mean that other means for backing U.S. anti-terrorist efforts should be renounced.

Q: What can you say about the possible use of U.S. nuclear weapons against the Taliban?

Primakov: This must be prevented from happening. The use of tactical nuclear weapons would induce terrorist cells to do the same. Therefore I hope that the U.S. side won't do this.

'Five Scenarios Of American-Islamic War'

Analyst Sergei Sokut's article was in the Sept. 14 issue of Nezavisimaya Gazeta, which serves as an outlet for sources within the Russian military and intelligence, a role distinct from its ownership by the avowed political enemy of President Putin, Boris Berezovsky. The translation appeared on Strana.ru.

The United States and NATO have begun working on plans for a retaliation operation against international terrorist Osama bin Laden and his allies based in Afghanistan. American and British newspapers have based these reports on sources in the Pentagon.

An analysis of the military-political situation indicates that the most realistic options for retaliation against the terrorist attacks are the following:

1. Inflicting individual nuclear strikes on the terrorist bases;
2. An air and sea operation against separate targets without the use of nuclear arms;
3. Special operations whose mission is to destroy and/or capture the ringleaders of terrorist organizations;
4. A full-scale operation by all the branches of the armed forces to totally wipe out the enemy and to establish control over enemy territory;
5. A combination of the above-mentioned variants.

It will not be so simple for the U.S. leadership to make a choice because it will be necessary to take into account the entire range of political, military, economic, and geographic factors. Let's try to make a brief analysis of these factors.

The Enemy. One has to admit that the enemy (and this implies the targets to be hit) is not definitively known. As of today, there are no definite indications that bin Laden was behind the terrorist attacks. There are grounds to believe that

he was supported by certain secret services, however, it is not known what country they are from or the extent to which they were involved. One may only assume that the Afghan Taliban, Iraq, Sudan, or other states of the Near and Middle East, as well as of North Africa, were involved.

America's Forces. The U.S. Armed Forces today are the most powerful in the world. Nonetheless, it is obvious to specialists that these forces are insufficient to carry out all the above-mentioned operations. Conflicts of recent years have demonstrated that the concept of waging two wars simultaneously in different parts of the globe comes crumbling down. This concept has been at the basis of America's strategy for many years.

Allies. It is clear that Washington's only allies in the planned operation are the members of NATO. Nonetheless, the degree of their real involvement in the conflict will be limited for a number of reasons. First, the region of the conflict lies far from NATO's zone of responsibility. Second, it will be difficult to reach the unanimity that will be needed for conducting joint armed action. Third, as the war in Yugoslavia demonstrated, America's NATO allies are unable to wage a modern non-contact war by themselves. In particular, they do not have enough high-precision weaponry and practically no means of transporting forces. Consequently, the participation of the Europeans in a potential conflict in Central Asia may narrow down only to symbolic military assistance. But at the same time, they are capable of replacing the U.S. forces to be pulled out of the Balkans.

Nuclear Scenario. From a purely military aspect, this variant is very advantageous. First, it is the most operative because it does not require prolonged deployment and sharply reduces the need for pinpoint intelligence. Second, America is capable of inflicting nuclear strikes by itself without any assistance whatsoever from its allies. Third, the use of a nuclear weapon, besides resolving the mission of eliminating bin Laden and his forces, will act as an extremely effective intimidation factor. From the political point of view, however, this option is the least acceptable. Even America's closest allies would hardly approve nuclear strikes. Besides that, they would trigger a deluge of anti-Americanism throughout the world. And last but not least, they would undermine the process of non-proliferation of mass annihilation weapons.

The Pentagon's Favorite Weapon. Practically all the military actions of the U.S. armed forces in recent years were air-sea operations in which ground forces either did not make contact with the enemy in general or performed limited missions after the enemy was destroyed from the air. Nonetheless, there are serious objections to carrying out an operation from the air. The most important of which is the relatively low efficiency when acting against a weak enemy. Unlike Yugoslavia, Afghanistan has practically no vitally important infrastructure installations that, if knocked out, would compel the Taliban to surrender on the conditions of the conqueror.

Special Forces. The U.S. Armed Forces have a powerful and efficient force for carrying out special operations (SF).

They number more than 45,000 men and have powerful logistics. They are mobile and have a high level of combat readiness and combat capability. In certain conditions, the SF could be supported by air-mobile units and detachments of the 18th Ground Corps. Nonetheless, the use of the special force in Afghanistan is complicated by a number of factors. In the opinion of the U.S. Command, the SF are capable of acting to a depth of up to 700-800 kilometers. This is the range of their transport capabilities and this is the radius of action for the tactical air force without which large-scale operations on Afghan territory are impossible. What happens to the SF when they have to act to a greater depth could be seen in the abortive raid to liberate hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran after the Islamic revolution in Iran.

Similar to the air-missile scenario, the SF will not be able to totally undermine the terrorist foundations. The SF cannot control the territory for a long period of time. At best, the special forces may wipe out or capture the main nucleus of the terrorist organization.

Big War. A full-scale war with the establishment of control over the greater part of Afghanistan's territory and destroying terrorist bases in other countries could solve the problem that is seen in the United States today. However, on the way to occupying Afghanistan, you should consider the experience of Great Britain and the Soviet Union. In their time, they were unable to solve this task, which didn't seem to be so complicated at the beginning.

In any case, in order to carry out such an operation, it will be necessary to deploy several hundred thousand men in close proximity to Afghanistan. And this once again raises the problem of finding new allies. Moreover, strategic deployment in itself, as was seen from the Desert Storm operation, will take a minimum of half a year even with the maximum of effort.

Purely military problems are dwarfed by the political problem. In reality, there are only two regions where a joint armed group from an anti-terrorist coalition could be deployed. They are Pakistan and the Central Asian republics of the CIS. In both instances, Washington will have to achieve a change in the political course of the potential allies.

Islamabad will have to turn 180 degrees in its policy toward the Taliban, and possibly estimate the reaction of its rival, India, and its ally, China. Russia, whose stand will be the key factor in allowing U.S. forces into post-Soviet territory, will have to make a very difficult choice with consequences difficult to foresee. These consequences will determine the country's vector of development for many decades, if not centuries.

Incidentally, most likely the subjects mentioned in the process would not be able to adopt such far-reaching decisions. This being the case, Washington's most probable tactic will be an air operation combined with limited SPF action, and it will be up to the future leaders of the West and Russia to solve the problem of world terrorism.

European Leaders Warn Against 'Flight Forward'

by Mark Burdman

Amidst the lust for vengeance and war being whipped up by CNN and a slew of deranged policymakers in the United States in the wake of the Sept. 11 atrocities in New York and Washington, a number of prominent figures in Europe have raised their voices, trying to inject a counter-trend of sanity into the situation. These individuals, while in solidarity with the United States, are terrified, that what 2004 Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche has characterized as a tendency toward "flight forward" in leading U.S. quarters, could plunge the world into disaster. They are concerned that precipitous action could be taken, on the basis of unproven allegations and false trails of investigation.

These European figures include current and former senior figures in government, military experts, and senior newspaper commentators.

There is an intense desire in Europe to avoid the "clash of civilizations" between Islam and the West, or between the "West and the rest," that has been advocated by American geopoliticians such as Harvard University's Samuel Huntington and former U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The "clash of civilizations" concept is regarded as dangerous and insane, and one which threatens to create religious wars in Eurasia akin to what informed Europeans know as the 17th-Century's Thirty Years' War. It must also be kept in mind, that European nations have large Muslim populations on their soil, and if this situation heads in the berserker direction teleguided by Cable News Network (CNN) and promoted by American neo-conservative and related elements, then there will be unforeseeable domestic consequences, throughout Europe.

Andreotti: Beware 'Emotional Reactions'

Perhaps the most striking reaction among prominent Europeans, has been that of former Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti. Andreotti is one of the world's most tried and tested politicians, with extensive experience in matters of defense, intelligence, and terrorism. He was already a member of the Italian government in 1945, and has been Prime Minister seven times, as well as, variously, Minister of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Economy. He was Prime Minister in the 1970s, when Italy was battered by a "strategy of tension," highlighted by the 1978 kidnapping and assassination of former Prime Minister Aldo Moro, an action which, informed