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FROM DOMINATION TO PARTNERSHIP:
THE PERSPECTIVES OF RUSSIAN-CENTRAL-EAST
EUROPEAN RELATIONS

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is the analysis of the relations between Russian Federation and the Central and East European countries¹ after the termination of the bi-polar conflict (mainly in the period from 1991 to 1997) and the perspectives of their development within the medium-term outlook. The analysis is focused on the evaluation of the international context, conceptual and action level of foreign policy of the Russian Federation toward the CEE countries.

The present study is an attempt to delineate the answers to the following main issues: How does Russia perceive the CEE region after the bi-polar conflict? What is the place of CEE countries in the Russian debate on foreign policy? What has been the development of, and what may the policy of Russia be like in relation to the CEE countries in the medium-term perspective? What shall be the position of Russia like in the architecture of new security in Europe? What place may the CEE countries have in the Russian foreign strategy? What are the objectives of Russian foreign policy in relation to the CEE countries? Which of the domestic actors in Russia and in what way shape the policy of Moscow toward the CEE countries? What tools have been employed by Russia in its relations to the CEE countries and what tools may it employ in the future? Does Russia mean for the CEE countries a "domestic-policy alternative" (in the sense of modeling both political and economic transformation) and also a "foreign-policy one" (in the sense of international and security orientation)? What will the CEE region look like after the first wave of both NATO and EU enlargement and what role Russia shall play therein? All of the above questions are of key importance for the formation of a new system of European security architecture.

The analysis departs, *inter alia*, from the explanation of the following theses:

After the dissolution of the USSR in the year 1991, Russia was immersed in its internal problems. The country found itself in an almost permanent political crisis due to the confrontation between the President and the opposition Parliament. The issues of the competencies of the distribution of power and the shape of the political system were in the center of attention. Foreign policy found itself on the margin of public interest. Russia did not remain indifferent only to the former Soviet republics (the so-called "Near Abroad countries", predominantly due to the issue of new Russian minorities) and the leading countries of the world from which it was hoping to win help in solving its economic problems. After a long time, the CEE countries became for the Russian political élite a part of the "Far Abroad countries". The Russian foreign-policy reflection was engaged more with global issues of the international position and the new geo-political mission of Russia than with partial problems of the relations with the CEE countries.

Despite the fact that in the years 1992 and 1993 new essential treaties were signed between the Russian Federation and the CEE countries, the relations between them were not included within the priorities of the Russian foreign policy. In those treaties, Moscow dissociated from the post-war policy of the USSR in the given region and declared its interest in mutually convenient economic cooperation. However, it was due to the economic reasons that the markets of the transforming CEE countries, which were facing similar problems, were not interesting for Moscow. The disappearance of the COMECON and of the existing system of economic relations radically, by one half, decreased the volumes of mutual trade. The markets of the developed

¹ hereinafter the "CEE"

countries have acquired a much greater significance for both Russia and the CEE countries. The new post-communist élite groups in the CEE countries displayed hardly any interest in the development of political relations with Moscow, rather, having learned their lesson from the still quite alive communist past, they were acting contrary to that. On the one hand, the bi-lateral relations between the CEE countries and Russia, were becoming standardized, while on the other hand, one could witness the economic and political alienation due to objective factors. On the level of declarations, the official Russian policy departed from the assumption that the process of rapprochement of Russia and the CEE countries to Western integration structures shall be running in parallel. Despite the above, Russian policy toward the CEE countries within that period of time was formed to a greater extent by the influential economic interest groups than by the official policy. It was mainly the Russian monopolies which were striving to maintain their positions in the CEE markets even after the dissolution of the COMECON (e.g. gas concern Gazprom), crude oil companies, the military-industrial complex (Rosvooruzheniye), etc.

The political significance of the Central European countries was rediscovered in Moscow only after the emergence of the implementation of the plans to enlarge NATO eastwards. In the autumn of 1993, "new Russia" was born from the viewpoint of domestic policy, a new military doctrine was adopted, a strong presidential regime was formed, whereas the Parliament had to be content with merely a marginal political position. President Yeltsin managed to suppress the opposition Parliament by the armed forces and power structures. These internal changes resulted consequently in the activation and hardening of the Russian foreign and security policy in European affairs, within the post-Soviet territory, and within the CEE region. The role of the so-called state power structures (army and military circles, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Intelligence services) was gaining in significance in the formulation and implementation of the foreign-policy line of thought. After the autumn of 1993, the so-called patriotic forces have become consolidated and these have significantly contributed to shaping the direction of thinking in terms of foreign policy. The geo-political direction considering Russia an Eurasian alternative to the transatlantic world has become to dominate in the professional reflection.

The Russian policy toward the CEE countries has been activated in proportion to the progress in the NATO enlargement eastwards. In the years 1995 and 1996, Russia presented several substantial moves to renew the economic cooperation on both multi-lateral (the former COMECON countries including Albania) and bi-lateral level (Poland and Slovakia). The endeavors to renew the military and military-industrial cooperation have emerged on the table. The Russian energy-supply companies aimfully started to enforce the policy of participation in the privatization of the energy sector in CEE countries and the activity of Russian financial capital there has been on the increase. The reactions in the CEE countries to the Russian economic offers and activities were of various character and depended in an almost direct relation from the success of their integration policy toward NATO and EU. As is evidenced by the case of Slovakia, the less successful they were in their West-oriented policy, the more they embraced the idea of cooperation with Russia.

In the year 1997 a concept of the so-called *asymmetric response* to the enlargement of NATO was formulated in Russian professional circles: Russia should react to military expansion of NATO by its economic expansion into Central Europe. The question remains whether the proposed concept shall become part of official policy of Moscow. In the years 1996 and 1997 Russia clearly demonstrated the steps it is ready to take in case its interests in the process of enlargement of Western structures fail to be considered. The countries, which shall not accede in the first wave, have been offered by Russia to develop a narrow security cooperation, including

security guarantees provided that they will opt for neutrality (e.g. Baltic states and Slovakia). Contrary to that, the countries that will accede to NATO have been threatened by economic sanctions by Russia. In other words, Russia has decided for alternative security policy in the CEE region and one may not exclude that it will attempt at a certain form of "Central-European vengeance" and at establishing a special kind of relations with those CEE countries which do not accede NATO in the first wave.

Russia disposes of a sufficient raw-material potential to be able to refuse the modernization of its economy according to the Western model. State capitalism with the almighty oligarchy, supported by the absolute dominance of the executive power in the political system headed by the President, represents an alternative model of political and economic transformation in the post-communist CEE. Considering the incompleteness of political and economic transformation in the CEE countries and fragility of new democratic state institutions, there exists a real threat that, under specific circumstances, the Russian model of transformation may become attractive for the anti-reform and anti-Western political forces in the region. This factor may gradually be finding its expression not merely in domestic but also in foreign policy of the CEE countries. Russian economic activities have been complemented by the ideological ones with which the Russian policy - after a brief "ideological intermission" - once again approached the Central-European élites. This time, the case in point is the idea of cultivating the brotherhood among Slavonic nations, which could create a counter-balance in Europe in relation to the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic world, etc. The Russian model of the political system, as well as the anti-Western oriented idea of brotherhood among the Slavs, addresses in the Central Europe predominantly the circles of nationalistically and authoritatively oriented political forces.

The present-day post-bipolar CEE does not form a single complex unity, rather, it consists of three main sub-regions: Baltic region, the so-called Visegrád countries, and the Balkan. The present paper deals preferably with the analysis of relations between the Russian Federation and the Visegrád countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia) due to two main reasons:

1. Visegrád countries, except of Slovakia, are the hottest candidates for the accession to NATO and EU in the first wave of enlargement. This is why the policy of Russia toward these countries best illustrates the whole-European context of the Russian policy in relation to CEE.
2. The comparison of the relations between Russia and Slovakia on the one hand, and to the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary on the other one enables the best generalization of the Russian Central-European policy, characterization of its interests, and employed tools in the implementation of same. As to the efficiency and content of the Russian foreign policy, one has to consider two differing types of the relations between Russia and Central-European countries within one and the same CEE sub-region.

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2. Foreign policy debate in Russia and Central Europe

2.1. A search for the lost national (and geopolitical) identity

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia fell into a deep economic, political and social crisis. In the period covering the years 1990 through 1994, the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Russian Federation, compared to the GDP of the RSFSR (as part of the former USSR), fell down by over one half.² Due to the economic decline, the incomes with 30 per cent of the population decreased under the threshold of living minimum and, according to official criteria, more than one half of the population find themselves in the social group of "low income" and "poverty".³ After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia experiences in the same way a grave political crisis and one is not entitled to claim that it is definitely over. The country experienced one of its critical peaks in the autumn of 1993 when it found itself on the verge of civil war. After the adoption of the super-Presidential Constitution in December 1993,⁴ each successive presidential elections are pregnant with the emergence of a similar situation. Along with the Soviet regime, communist ideology perished as well, and after 70 years of atheism, Orthodox emerged as incapable to automatically fill in the emerged vacuum of ideologies and values. In relation to the problems experienced by Russia after the dissolution of the USSR, one may frequently encounter in the sources the notion of "Smutnoye Vremya" (Time of Troubles) which Russia, reportedly, is facing for the third time in its history (previously in the years between 1598 and 1613 and from 1917 to 1921).⁵

Toward the close of the year 1991, Russia in its European part found itself within the borders of the end of the 16th century.⁶ Its territory was diminished by 25 per cent compared to the territory of the former USSR, and the number of population decreased by approximately a double. 25 million ethnic Russians all of a sudden appeared off the border without changing their domicile.⁷ Wide layers of the society appeared suddenly in a situation of disorientation and helplessness. They started to suffer from a curious kind of fever: the crisis of identity.⁸ Even one year after the dissolution (autumn 1992), 60 per cent of the respondents of sociological research in the Russian Federation were resolute in rejecting the fall of the USSR.⁹ According to Alexander Bykov and some other experts, Russia had traditionally been developing in an extensive manner which has become an attribute of the very existence of the Russian state and the Russian nation.

² Komzin, B.: *Sovremennaya Rossiya. Kuda zhe my idyom?* *Obozrevatel'*, No. 10-12, 1996, pp. 68-72, here p. 70.

³ The data (for the year 1996) according to: *Natsional'nyye interesy i problemy bezopasnosti Rossii. Doklad po itogam issledovaniya, provedyonogo Tsentrom global'nykh program Gorbachev-Fonda v 1995-1997 gg.* Moscow 1997: *Politicheskaya bezopasnost'*, p. 3.

⁴ See Beliaev, S.A.: *The Evolution in Constitutional Debates in Russia in 1991-1993. A Comparative Review.* *Review of Central and East European Law*, No. 3, 1994, pp. 305-319.

⁵ See e.g. Dunlop, J.B.: *Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire.* *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No.4, 1993-1994, pp. 102-114, here p. 103.

⁶ Zagorsky, A.: *Russia and Europe.* *International Affairs*, January 1993, pp. 43-50, here p. 43.

⁷ Harris, Ch.D.: *The New Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview.* *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. 34, No.1, 1993, pp. 1-27

⁸ Torbakov, I.: *Statici a ideológia ruského imperiálneho nacionalizmu.* *Medzinárodné, otázky*, Vol.II, No.1-2, 1993, pp. 102-114, here p. 103.

⁹ Solchanyk, R.: *Russia, Ukraine, and the Imperial Legacy.* *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol.9, No.4, 1993, pp.337-365, here p. 339.

character.¹⁰ This is why the Russian élite, as a consequence of the dissolution of the USSR, experienced an immense geopolitical trauma and psychological shock.¹¹ It once again had to face the inevitability to "self-define itself in the historical time and the given geopolitical space".¹²

After the year 1991, a battle of ideas, which seemed to have been long forgotten and overcome, emerged in full swing concerning the domestic and international orientation of Russia, known from the history of Russia as a contention between the Westernizers and Slavophiles. This contention would not be interesting if it had not created ideological frameworks of forming the foreign-policy thinking in the post-Soviet Russia and had not had any influence on the formation of its foreign policy concept under new circumstances, including the relations toward the CEE countries.¹³ As S. Neil MacFarlane states, "of course, what the Georgians or the Bosnian Serbs think about security, may matter little in the larger scheme of things; but Russia remains one of the great powers in Europe".¹⁴

2.2. Three historical directions of Russian thought and two types of Russian nationalism

The Russian national and external self-reflection, with the exception of the Soviet period, was concentrated in the discussions and the contention of two contradicting directions, the contention having been crystallized especially in the course of the 19th century: Slavophilism and Westernism. Both of the directions were offering contradictory answers to the following questions: what is the Russian society like? Is Russia part of Europe and are the regularities of social development identical? What in fact is the Russian State like, what is its national idea and what is its future?

Slavophiles¹⁵ departed from the idealization of Russian history and the belief in the glorious future of Russia. They tended to emphasize special character of Slavonic (mainly Russian) culture and rejected the development of Russia according to the European (Western) model of civilization. They considered the following to be the ground of Slavonic social system: 1. the Russian Obshchina (community settlement) as a model of patriarchal self-government; 2) stability and real hierarchy of the existing state power; 3) live and integral Orthodoxy. The slogan which was closest to the expression of the Slavophile doctrine was this: Orthodoxy - authoritarian government - nationality. In their opinion, Russia was predestined to play a leading role in the Slavonic world and, at the same time, a role of a savior of liberal and rationalist Europe shaken by wars and revolutions. Within the framework of nationalism, **Panslavism**¹⁶ came to existence,

¹⁰ Bykov, A.: Na perekryostke mirovogo razvitiya. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No.2,1993, pp. 96-104, here p. 97; see also Arbatov, A.: Rossiya: natsional'naya bezopasnost' v 90-ye gody. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No.7, 1994, pp. 5-15; Kortunov, S.: Kakaya Rossiya nuzhna miru? Pro et contra, Zima 1997, pp. 21-37, and others.

¹¹ For a survey of responses, see e.g. Rossiya v poiskakh idei. Analiz pressy (ed: A.Rubtsov). Grupa konsul'tantov pri Administratsii Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii. Moscow, 1997.

¹² Natsional'nyye interesy i problemy bezopasnosti Rossiya..., op.cit.; Predisloviye, p.1.

¹³ See Arbatov, A.: Rossiya: natsional'naya bezopasnost' v 90-ye gody. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 7, 1994, pp. 5-15, here p. 5.

¹⁴ MacFarlane, S.N.: Russian Conceptions of Europe. Post-Soviet Affairs, No. 3, Vol. 10, 1994, pp. 234-269, here p. 235.

¹⁵ The most significant representatives: Aleksey Khomyakov, brothers Ivan and Konstantin Aksakov, brothers Ivan and Pyotr Kireyevsky and others.

¹⁶ The most significant representatives: Mikhail Pogodin, Nikolay Danilevsky and others.

which, on the one side, proposed the isolation of Russia from the rest of Europe, and, on the other side, the creation of a new Slavonic state formation, the so-called Great Pan-Slavonic Union headed by Russia. The opposition to Slavophiles was represented by the **Westernizers**¹⁷ who were trying to implement the modernization of Russia according to the Western (European) model, overcoming the traditional stereotypes, backwardness and isolation of the Russian society, active getting closer of Russia to Europe and committing itself in European matters.¹⁸

Both Slavophiles and Westernizers shared the vision of Russia being a strong state and superpower. In this sense, both of them were Russian nationalists. They differed in the evaluation of the condition of Russia, the ways and perspectives of its further development. Slavophiles were emphasizing special Slavonic (read: Russian) ethnicity and its natural leading position in the Russian state, this is why in their case one is entitled to speak of the Russian **ethnic nationalism**. The Westernizers, quite in accordance with their liberal European model, did not consider ethnic factor significant in the multi-national Russia, but the Russian state - empire as such. In their instance, one is entitled to speak of the Russian **imperial nationalism**¹⁹. Later, in the 1920s, the so-called **Eurasianism**²⁰ was added to these two basic directions of Russian thinking.

According to Eurasianists, the territory of Russia represents a special historical cultural, and geographical world (civilization), which belongs neither to Europe nor to Asia, rather, it represents a synthesis of both. Like the Slavophiles, the Eurasianists rejected the idea of the development of Russia according to Western model of modernization. Unlike the Slavophiles, however, they did not consider the Slavs (Russians) exclusive bearers and creators of multi-ethnic Eurasian (read: Russian) statehood. In just the same manner, they did not overestimate the role of Orthodoxy and departed from the fact that a symbiosis of Orthodoxy and Islam was created in Russia (read: Eurasia). In their views, the roots of Russian (read: Eurasian) statehood do reach as far back as the Kiev Russia, but to the Genghis Khan Mongol-Tartar empire of the Middle Ages, which represented the first historical attempt at joining Asia and Europe and the creation of Eurasia. The tradition of Ghengis Khan empire, not the one of the Kiev Russia, was later taken over by the renewed Russian state with the seat in Moscow. Peter I, who "broke through the window to Europe" and was striving to orientate Russia westwards, caused great damage to Russia. Contrary to that, the Soviet Union, which isolated Russia from Europe, returned to the Eurasian tradition of Russian statehood.²¹ Even though the Eurasianists rejected the Western model of the development of Russia, along with the Westernizers they shared the idea of Russia-Eurasia as a multi-national empire. In other words, Russian nationalism in its Eurasian shape may be ranked to the imperial, not ethnic, type of Russian nationalism.

¹⁷ Also the so-called occidentalists. The most significant representatives: Vissarion Belinsky, Timotey Granovsky, Ivan Turgenev and others.

¹⁸ Jarco, J.: Korzenie współczesnego nacjonalizmu rosyjskiego. in: Rosyjskie ugrupowania nacjonalistyczne (ed: L. Szerepka). Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich. Warszawa 1995, pp. 5-12, here pp. 5, 6.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ Its most significant representatives were Russian emigrants effective in Prague and Sofia: Nikolay Trubetskoy, Georgy Florovsky, Pyotr Savitsky, and Pyotr Suvchynsky and others.

²¹ The description of Eur-Asian doctrine on the basis of the analysis of works of its classics, see Lyuks, L.: Yevraziystvo. Strana i mir, No. 1 (55), janvar'-fevral' 1990, pp. 117-127.

2.3. Contemporary shape of Russian debate: starting points for foreign policy

After having abandoned the communist ideology, all of the three historical directions of Russian thought (Westernizers, Slavophiles, and Eurasianists) found their followers and bearers under new conditions.²² From the viewpoint of the present analysis it seems important, how the representatives of these directions see the solution of not merely domestic, but predominantly international problems which the post-Soviet Russia is facing.

2.3.1. Last Soviet and new Russian Westernizers

The Soviet administration headed by Mikhail Gorbachev in the second half of the 1980s was remaining faithful to the "European" tradition of Marxism and approached the solution of problems of the Soviet society in full accordance with the Western models: gradual introduction of the elements of the freedom of expression and conscience, market economy, and democratization of political life. In foreign policy, Gorbachev attributed a decisive significance to the relations with the developed democratic countries of the West. His initiative of a "new political thinking" in international relations aimed at eliminating the tension of the cold war and a vision of creating a "common European house". MacFarlane characterizes Gorbachev's foreign policy in the context of the contemporary foreign policy of Russia as "early liberal internationalism".²³ In any case, in the time of perestroika, both in discussions in Russia and in political practice, there clearly dominated the traits characteristic for the traditional Russian Westernism (*zapadnichestvo*).

The policy of the first Russian government in the conditions of the new Russia headed by the liberal Gennadiy Gaydar may be defined as a clear continuation in the spirit of the best traditions of Westernism in both domestic and foreign policy. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Kozyrev, even became a symbol a personification of the *neo-Westernism* in the post-Soviet Russia. In an article for the NATO Review (February 1993), Kozyrev expressed his own understanding of the Russian foreign policy as follows: "Our principal task is to create favorable conditions for the transformation of Russia. Our main guidelines in achieving this aim are to: join the club of recognized democratic states with market economies, on a basis of equality (...)"²⁴ In a discussion on the concept of Russian foreign policy, mentioning the Russian national interests, Kozyrev said: "Of course, our national interest is - and I am fully convinced of this - that we have

²² More on the directions of Russian thinking, their characterizations, classifications, etc., see: Confino, M.: Solzhenitsyn, the West, and the New Russian Nationalism. *Journal of Contemporary History*, No. 3-4, September 1991, pp. 611-636; Daniel, W.: The Vanished Past: Russia's Search for Identity. *Christian Century*, March 7, 1993, pp. 293-296; Jonson, L.: The Foreign Policy Debate in Russia: in Search of a National Interest. *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1994, pp. 175-194; Laqueur, W.: Neo-Paganism and the myth of a golden age. *New Times*, No. 39, 1992, pp. 12-14; Löser, G.P.: Shaping Actors, Shaping Factors in Russia. *Forward Studies Unit - European Commission*, May 1997; MacFarlane, S.N.: Russian Conceptions of Europe. *Post-Soviet Affairs* No 3, Vol. 10, 1994, pp. 234-269; Rieber, A.Y.: Russian Imperialism: Popular, Emblematic, Ambiguous. *The Russian Review*, Vol. 53, July 1994, pp. 331-335; The Theme of Russian Identity in Contemporary Russian Thought. *Russian Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 31, No. 4, Spring 1993; Simon, G.: Russia's Identity and International Politics. *Aussenpolitik III/1997*, pp. 245-266; Tuminez, A.S.: Russian Nationalism and the National Interests in Russian Foreign Policy. in: *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (ed: C.A. Wallander). *The John M. Olin Critical Issues Series*. WestviewPress, 1996, pp. 41-68, etc.

²³ MacFarlane, S.N., op. cit., p. 241.

²⁴ Kozyrev, A.: The New Russia and the Atlantic Alliance. *NATO Review*, No. 1, February 1993, Vol. 41, pp. 3-6, here p. 3.

to develop relations with the leading country of the West (USA - the author) as close as possible, and in perspective we have to strive for relations of alliance" ²⁵ Kozyrev, like Gorbachev before him, believed that Moscow would become a global partner of the United States in world politics.²⁶ In the ideas of Kozyrev and the Russian liberal government, the democratic Russia should have become an engine of reforms in the post-Soviet area and a guaranty protecting human rights within CIS region. In other words, after the dissolution of the USSR, Russia should have become for the CIS countries what the United States were for the countries of Western Europe after the World War II.²⁷

MacFarlane evaluates the foreign policy of Russia in the early years of Yeltsin Presidency as a classical model of "liberal internationalism".²⁸ In the years 1992 and 1993, Kozyrev's position marked a shift toward "realism", also under the pressure from national opponents of the Russian *Westernism*.

2.3.2. Neo-Slavophilism or radical Russian nationalism

According to Gerd P. Löser, the contemporary "(...) Russian nationalism is fed mainly by economic and social misery, as well as nationalism of other CIS-republics".²⁹ The traditional Russian Slavophilism found its followers in the contemporary radical Russian nationalism.

One should stress, however, that in this case the issue is that of Russian *ethnic* nationalism which, in contrast to the *imperial* nationalism (sometimes the so-called *statism*), considers the Slavonic (read: Russian) nation a bearer and creator of the traditions of the Great Russia.³⁰ The Russian neo-Slavophiles clearly reject the modernization of Russia according to the Western model. They consider the national-religious revival and the renewal of the social role of the Russian Orthodoxy the only alternative to the communist totality and Western liberalism. They see the perspective of the development of a New Russia in the return to the traditions of tsarist Russia in accordance with a new shape of an old doctrine: tradition - Orthodoxy - sobornost'.³¹ They dissociate themselves from both the Soviet period of Russian history and the contemporary the so-called *Soviet patriotism*. In the spirit of the Slavophile and the Panslav doctrines, they reject to consider Belarussians and Ukrainians independent ethnic nations.³²

They consider West the greatest threat for the security of both statehood and culture of Russia, they blame it for the dissolution of the Soviet Union and continuing geopolitical intrigues against

²⁵ Diskussiya o tom, kakoy byt' vneshney politike Rossii. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 5-22, here p. 7.

²⁶ The so-called *soupravleniye* with USA, see Bogaturov, A.: Yevraziyskiy ustoy mirovoy stabil'nosti. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 34-46, here p. 37;

²⁷ Panarin, A.: Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn' i yevraziystvom. Svobodnaya mysl', No. 11, 1993, pp. 3-15, here p. 7 ; Dunlop, J.B.: Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire. Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 108, No. 4, 1993-1994, pp. 603-634, here p. 616.

²⁸ MacFarlane, S.N., op. cit., p. 242-245.

²⁹ Löser, G.P.: Shaping Actors, Shaping Factors in Russia. Forward Studies Unit - European Commission, May 1997, here p. 27; see - Nationalist temptations, pp. 25-28.

³⁰ On the differences between Russian nationalists and Russian statistes see Dunlop, J.B.: Aleksandr Lebed and Russian Foreign Policy. SAIS Review, Winter-Spring 1997, pp. 47-72, here p. 50.

³¹ On the notion of "sobornost'" see Tulaev, P.: Sobor and Sobornost. Russian Studies in Philosophy, Spring 1993, Vol. 31, No. 4, s. 25-53.

³² See e.g. Aksiuchits, V.: Westernizers and Nativists Toady. Russian Studies in Philosophy, Vol. 31, No. 4, Spring 1993, pp. 83-94.

Russia and its legitimate interests. In their opinion, Russia has to be able to respond to these activities from the West, it must not let itself be "driven out to Asia", it must renew its position of a super-power and, first of all, it must win the war of "Russian political and cultural legacy" in the post-Soviet territory. The renewal of the Great Russia is in the interests of global stability, otherwise the whole-world catastrophe would emerge, etc.³³ According to the author of the "Manifest of Russian Nationalism", Eduard Limonov, the existing frontiers in the post-Soviet area do not correspond to reality and must be revised in accordance with the two criteria as follows: 1) minimalist one: where the Russian nation lives, there is Russian territory (...); 2) maximalist one: where the people live who consider themselves to be a part of the Russian civilization, there is the territory under Russian protection"³⁴

The politically most influential representative of this line is Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia (LDSR). Its leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, formulated clearly the policy of LDSR in relation to the CIS: "The LDPR advocates the recreation of the Russian state within the frontiers of the former USSR".³⁵ The idea of the creation of the Russian Union is being pushed forward by another from among the significant leaders of contemporary Russian parliamentary policy and the leader of the Russian All-National Union, Sergey Baburin.³⁶ The argumentation of the representatives of this direction found its most observable manifestation in influencing the official policy in two of the foreign-policy matters: 1) the protection of rights of new Russian minorities in post-Soviet area especially, and also the Russian policy toward the countries of "Near Abroad" generally; 2) the Russian policy toward the Balkan conflict, and especially it relates to the support of "spiritually akin Orthodox Serbs".³⁷

2.3.3. Eurasianism (geopolitics and realism)

The representatives of the Russian emigration who had to leave Russia after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and who elaborated the foundations of the Eurasian concept, had no idea how immense ideological profit it will serve to those from whom they had had to flee. A "gentle flirt" with people's Bolshevism, not-overestimating the role of Orthodoxy in the Russian history, the

³³ A good illustration of foreign-policy thinking of this direction are the texts by Nataliya Narochmitskaya: Russia belongs to neither the East nor the West. The World needs and will need it as precisely Russia. *International Affairs*, August 1993, pp. 122-128 ; *Tendentsii v mirovom sootnoshenii sil gosudarstv i tsivilizatsiy, v izmenenii geopoliticheskogo polozheniya Rossii, v politike gosudarstv i ikh soyuzov, voyenno-politicheskikh blokov i mezhdunarodnykh organizatsiy*. in: *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh* (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina). Rossiyskaya Akademiya Nauk, Institut mezhdunarodnykh ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh issledovaniy. Moskva 1995, pp. 241-260; *Rossiia i russkiye v mirovoy istorii. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, No. 3, 1996, pp. 75-86, etc.

³⁴ Limonov, E.: *Manifest Russkogo Natsionalizma*. Sovyetskaya Rossiya, 12.07.1992. Quoted according to Torbakov, I.: "Statici" a ideológia ruského imperiálneho nacionalizmu. *Medzinárodné otázky*, Vol. II, No. 1-2, 1993, pp. 102-114, here p. 106.

³⁵ *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 10.12.1993. Quoted according to MacFarlane, S.N., op. cit., p. 247.

³⁶ Baburin, S.: *Rossiysky Soyuz kak geopoliticheskaya zakonomernost'*. in: *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh* (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina). Rossiyskaya Akademiya Nauk, Institut mezhdunarodnykh ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh issledovaniy. Moskva 1995, pp. 133-139. For survey of political organizations and periodical press of that direction see *Rosyjskie ugrupovania nacionalistyczne* (ed: L. Szerepka). *Osrodek Studiów Wschodnich*. Warszawa 1995, pp. 82-94.

³⁷ For more see Hoppe, H.-J.: *Moscow and the Conflicts in Former Yugoslavia*. *Aussenpolitik*, III/1997, pp. 267-277 ; Romanenko, S.: *Rossiia i Serbiya: poisk novoy identichnosti posle raspada SSSR i SFRJ*. in: *Etnopoliticheskiye konflikty v postkommunisticheskom mire*. *Chast' I*. Rossiyskaya akademiya nauk, Institut mezhdunarodnykh ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh issledovaniy. Moskva 1996, pp. 78-106.

"international character" of the Great Russia-Eurasia, historical and geopolitical continuity of the USSR with the tsarist Russia, reasoning of the global Eurasian mission of Russia³⁸, all that are the traits which enabled the disoriented Russian communists to regain the *world-view* ground under their feet. The Russian communists, as well as the wide layers of the Soviet bureaucracy, were not prepared to spiritually digest the traditional concepts of Westernism and Slavophilism, since they were neither stout Orthodox believers nor the confessors of *narrow-minded* Russian ethnic nationalism, nor the followers of patriarchal values of the tsarist Russia. Eurasianism and geopolitics appeared to have been the most suitable ideological compromise between Marxism and Russian traditionalism which found shelter in the womb both *Soviet patriots*, the post communist conservatives, and the Russian *gosudarstvenniki* (statists). Anatoliy Torkunov expressed this in quite a telling way: "The geopolitical view of the world has become almost the most popular one in Russia, since it filled the vacuum emerged after the crash of the Leninist doctrine on transferring the class struggle onto the international arena".³⁹

According to the geopolitical doctrine of Eurasianism, the bipolar conflict of East-West merely fogged the essence of the real global civilization conflict. The content of the world history is formed by the competition of a "harbor-like" Atlantic and "continental" Eurasian civilization. The leading force of the former is the United States, of the latter Russia. International system is based on the balance of forces and harsh competition between the centers of military-political and economic power. Russia is a world super-power which is only temporarily weakened by the enforced Western reforms and by the inability of its foreign-policy establishment to defend the Russian interests. The reforms implemented in accordance with the liberal Atlantic model cannot succeed in Russia, just on the contrary, they are an obstacle to the development of Russia.⁴⁰ The program of modernization of Russia should depart from a new *Russian idea*, which must be a symbiosis of three elements: socialism - spirituality - science.⁴¹

One of the ideational representatives of the Russian Eurasian geopolitics is Konstantin Pleshakov, according to whom Russia performed in its history two geopolitical missions: 1) it saved Europe from Asian dominancy (13th century); 2) as part of Mediterranean (Byzantine) civilization, it colonized northern parts of Eurasia, and by reaching the borders of China, it unified Europe with Asia on the dry land. Russia finds itself on a threshold of its third mission in history, the purpose of which is safeguarding the stability in the *continental Eurasia*. No other country may perform this mission. According to Pleshakov, the USSR has been disintegrated, however, the post-Soviet space remains a unified civilization entity from the geopolitical, political, economic, cultural, and intellectual viewpoints.⁴² The heart of this space is Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. The relations with these countries, not with the West, have to be a priority for the Russian foreign

³⁸ Jarco, J.: Korzenie współczesnego nacjonalizmu rosyjskiego. in: Rosyjskie ugrupowania nacjonalistyczne (ed: L. Szerepka). Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich. Warszawa 1995, pp. 5-12, here pp. 9-10.

³⁹ Natsional'nyye interesy vo vneshney politike Rossii. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 3, 1996, pp. 3-23, here p. 16.

⁴⁰ For more on the discussion see e.g. Bykov, A.: Na perekryostke mirovogo razvitiya. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 96-104; Kortunov, S.: Kakya Rossiya nuzhna miru? Pro et Contra, Zima 1997, pp. 21-37; Kosolapov, N.: Novaya Rossiya i strategiya Zapada. Stat'ya pervaya. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 1, 1994, pp. 5-18; Stat'ya vtoraya, No. 2, 1994, pp. 5-15; Stat'ya tret'ya, No. 3, 1994, pp. 42-51; Kosolapov, N.: Rossiya: v chem zhe vsyo-taki sut' istoricheskogo vybora? Stat'ya pervaya. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 10, 1994, pp. 5-15; Stat'ya vtoraya, No. 11, 1994, pp. 5-18; Panarin, A.: Mezhdunarodnyy atlantizm i yevraziystvom. Svobodnaya mysl', No. 11, 1993, pp. 3-15; Pozdnyakov, E.: Russia is a Great Power. International Affairs, January 1993, pp. 3-13, etc.

⁴¹ Podberyozkin, A.: Russkiy put'. Dukhovnoye nasledie. Moskva, dekabr' 1996, p. 32.

⁴² See Pleshakov, K.: Russia's Mission: The Third Epoch. International Affairs, January 1993, pp. 17-26.

policy. A zone of conflicts runs along the line of Moldavia - Kavkaz - Central Asia. In that zone, Russia has to defend its interests and not to allow the foreign super-powers to penetrate there. Consolidation and stabilization of CIS corresponds to the vital interests of Russia.⁴³

MacFarlane views this line of Russian thought as an example of a realistic approach in foreign policy which is situated somewhere in the middle between the Westernizing liberal internationalism and radical nationalism. The Russian Eurasianists admit the cooperation with the West, since from their angle of vision, the contradictions are not of priority significance for the Russian interests. The sphere of vital interests of Russia is primarily limited to the post-Soviet space⁴⁴

The *Eurasian* geo-political concept became a domineering line in the Russian debate on foreign policy in the years 1992 through 1997. The political forces of the center, including the former communists, became its proponents, avowing pragmatic principles in the structure of the state (statism). As to their political program, these forces find themselves between liberalism and radical nationalism.⁴⁵ One should emphasize, however, that especially in the period between 1991 and 1993, both the adherents of Eurasianism and radical nationalism pretty frequently did find common language in articulating their criticism of the official Russian foreign policy. Kozyrev's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to face permanent criticism from the *patriotic block* and, let it be added, with ever lesser success on the formers part.

2.3.4. Patriotic consensus and its consequences for Russian foreign policy

In the direct proportion to the growth of dissatisfaction with the government of the pro-Westernizing Yeltsin liberals and the formation of intra-political opposition in the year 1992, the significance of the debate on foreign policy in Russian politics was growing. In the opinion of Alexey Arbatov, Kozyrev's Ministry created an impression in Russia in the year 1992 of an unending string of unilateral concessions to the West on such issues as UN sanctions against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, START 2 negotiations, trying to become member of NATO, G7, an endeavor to joining the American Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and coordination of export of missile technology to India, readiness to give over to Japan the Southern Kurils in return for investments, and the like. In Arbatov's view, a turning point in the Russian debate on foreign policy was the non-implemented visit of President Yeltsin in Japan in August 1992 which had been cancelled a few moments before the scheduled departure for Tokyo. In this case, President Yeltsin for the first time openly yielded in foreign policy to the intense nationalistic campaign.⁴⁶

In other words, - from the viewpoint of domestic policy, - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided enough "food" for the Russian post-communist as well as non-communist patrioti opposition, both of which were still traumatized by the disintegration of the USSR. On the other hand, the Russian opposition finally came to understand in August 1992 that the issues of foreign

⁴³ Ibidem. A similar logic of the explanation of Russian interests see also in Bogaturov, A.: Yevraziyskiy ustoyimivost' mirovoy stabil'nosti. *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, No. 2, 1993, pp. 34-46; Razuvayev, V.: Russia and the Post-Soviet Geopolitical Area. *International Affairs*, August 1993, pp. 109-116. For a survey of reactions on the Euroasian idea in other post-Soviet states see Yevzerov, R.: "Yevroaziatskaya ideya" v nezavisimyykh gosudarstvakh. *Obzor p materiyalam pechati. Svobodnaya mysl'*, No. 14, 1993, pp. 43-54.

⁴⁴ MacFarlane, op.cit., pp. 247-250.

⁴⁵ See Torbakov, I., op. cit.

⁴⁶ Arbatov, A.: Rossiya: natsional'naya bezopasnost' v 90-ye gody. *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya*, No. 7, 1994, pp. 5-15; here p. 9.

policy may become an effective weapon in the battles of domestic policy against the liberal government of Gaydar. In December 1992, Yeltsin, under the pressure of opposition, industrial magnates, and traditionally conservative army circles, revoked Gennadiy Gaydar from the post of the Russian Government Prime Minister. Having appointed in the post a *pragmatist* and moderate conservative, Viktor Chernomyrdin, the President demonstrated a shift in his own political position toward centrism in domestic policy and toward moderate nationalism in foreign policy. The position of Kozyrev in Chernomyrdin's government was not any longer identical with that taken in Gaydar's government. His possibilities to continue in the foreign policy of previous period started to be getting narrowed.⁴⁷

Kozyrev's foreign policy became subject of systematic criticism from Eurasianistic positions for the first time by the then Yeltsin's State Counselor Sergey Stankevich. In his articles published in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (28 March, 1992) and *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* (23 June, 1992), he accused Kozyrev of neglecting Russian thousand years' interests in the Baltic Region, Moldavia, and Georgia. In Stankevich's opinion, instead of unsuccessful Euro-Atlantic policy, Russia must strive to achieve "permeable border and tight allied relations in the economic and military sphere with the CIS countries. Rather than developing its relations with the West, Russia should orientate on strengthening its relations with the so called "second echelon" countries, like China, India, Mexico, Brazil, and South Africa."⁴⁸ Stankevich's criticism aroused great interest and provoked a series of subsequent responses, articles, and papers carried in a similar tone, the authors of which included the then Yeltsin Counselor Adranik Migranyan, Chairman of the Committee of the Supreme Soviet for international relations, and later on the ambassador of Russian Federation to the USA, Vladimir Lukin, and others.⁴⁹

What was significant about the above criticism was the fact that it was not merely a criticism from the political opposition leaders, but the one from Yeltsin's background. Under the pressure of nationalism and Eurasianism, Kozyrev's policy at the turn of the years 1992 and 1993 marked a significant shift toward realism. The official document, which reflected the above shift, was the Foreign Policy Concept approved by President Yeltsin in April 1993. The Concept was prepared under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Security Council, Supreme Soviet Committees, experts from the Ministry of International Economic Relations, the Ministry of Defense, and the Foreign Intelligence Service. The document for the first time clearly distinguishes between the Russian interests and the policy of its relations to the developed democratic countries of the West, the CIS territory, and the former Warsaw Pact countries. Apart from making reference to a unique "Eurasian potential of Russia", the document admits the existence of potentially different interests between Russia and the West in general, and in Central and Eastern Europe especially. The priority of the relations with the post-Soviet CIS republics follows clearly from the wording of the document.⁵⁰

Some time in the year 1993, the beginning of the end to the *romantic period* in Russian-Western relations and an emergence of a new *realistic* Russian foreign policy may be looked for.

⁴⁷ Rahr, A. - Krause, J.: *Russia's New Foreign Policy*. Arbeitspapiere zur Internationalen Politik 91. Forschungsinstitut der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e.V. Bonn 1995, p. 6.

⁴⁸ Quoted according to Dunlop, J.B.: Aleksandr Lebed and Russian Foreign Policy *SAIS Review*, Winter-Spring 1997, pp. 47-72, here p. 53.

⁴⁹ See MacFarlane, op. cit., pp. 248-250.

⁵⁰ See *Russia's Foreign Policy Concept*. in: Rahr, A. - Krause, J.: *Russia's New Foreign Policy*. Arbeitspapiere zur Internationalen Politik 91. Forschungsinstitut der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e.V. Bonn 1995. Appendix, pp. 42-74; for comment see - MacFarlane, op.cit. 252-255.

significant shift toward realism was caused, among other factors,⁵¹ by a marked prevalence of Eurasianism in the Russian debate on foreign policy. One should emphasize here that the CEE Visegrád countries in this debate prior to the year 1993 hardly belonged among its key themes.

2.4. Central Europe in the Russian foreign policy debate

With the onset of realism in 1993 the relations among the former partners from the Warsaw Treaty once again got into the center of attention of the official Russian foreign policy. The above mentioned Foreign Policy Concept was the first signal in this direction. According to Irina Kobrinskaya, the key change occurred as late as in the second half of the year 1993 of which the following testify: 1. The letter by President Yeltsin to the leaders of the Western countries containing the Russian rejection of NATO enlargement; 2. Publication of the material "Perspectives of NATO enlargement and the interests of Russia" (November 1993) which was prepared by the Foreign Intelligence Service; 3. Adoption of the new military doctrine (also in November 1993).⁵² All of the three materials expressing the standpoint of the official state institutions, turn attention to the CEE countries in relation to the issue of NATO enlargement. In other words, *the main cause of the change of a vague system of Russian foreign policy toward the CEE countries was predominantly the question of NATO enlargement. Russia has not approached the CEE countries because it considered them partners worth its attention by themselves, but to prevent them from acceding the NATO.* A great number of Russian politicians and experts are lagging behind the official policy toward the CEE countries at least two years. According to Przemyslaw Grudzinski, it was as late as 1995 that Russia "rediscovered" Poland and other CEE countries.⁵³ This does not mean, of course, that Russia had forgot the CEE countries prior to the year 1995, they in Russia merely had not attributed them the relevant significance in the foreign policy. The attention of foreign-policy debate was concentrated on a new answer of the old question: What is Russia in fact like and where is it to head for? The relations with the USA and with the former Soviet republics were in the center of attention.

One may see the differences among the three essential directions of Russian thinking in the attitude to the question of CEE region for Russia and its interests. Each of these was focused on different aspects and aims of the Russian foreign policy.

2.4.1. The old-fashioned Neo-Panslavism

As has been mentioned, the contemporary Russian radical nationalism follows up with the traditions of Russian Slavophilism (Russia as the center of special *Slavonic* civilization and its ideological branch, Panslavism (unification of the Slavonic world)⁵⁴ The old Panslavic doctrine

⁵¹ See Rahr, A. - Krause, J., op. cit, pp. 4-7.

⁵² Kobrinskaya, I.: Rossiya - Tsentral'naya Yevropa - NATO. in: Rossiya: novyye parametry bezopasnosti. Nauchnyye doklady Moskovskogo Tsentra Kamegi. Vypusk chetvyortyy. Moskva 1995, pp. 8-40, here p. 24.

⁵³ Grudzinski, P.: Report: Poland-Russia. Discord and Cooperation. Center for International Relations at the Institute of Public Affairs. Warszawa 1997, p. 38.

⁵⁴ See e.g. Dragunskij, D.: Strašidlo panslavizmu. Os, No. 3, 1997; Kappeler, A.: Some Remarks on Russian National Identities (Sixtieth to Nineteenth Centuries). Ethnic Groups. Special Issue, Vol. 10, No. 1-3, 1993, pp. 147-155; Kis, R.: Istorychna lohika moskovskoho mesiyanstva. Istorychnyy ta strukturno-funktsional'nyy pidkhyd. Ukrayinski problemy, No. 3, 1994, pp. 79-89; Rieber, A.Y.: Russian Imperialism: Popular, Emblematic, Ambiguous. The Russian Review, Vol. 53, July 1994, pp. 331-335; Solchanyk, R.: Russia, Ukraine, and the Imperial Legacy. Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1993, pp. 337-365; Szporluk, R.: Belarus', Ukraine and The Russian Question: A Comment. Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1993, pp. 366-374, etc.

has been revived in the new circumstances predominantly in its relation to the following two issues: 1) the relations of Russia with Belarus and Ukraine;⁵⁵ 2) crisis in Yugoslavia. The latter question is directly related to the ideas of Russian nationalists concerning the relations between Russia and CEE *Slavonic countries*. One should add here that neo-Panslavism in its modern form has brought no revolutionary new arguments developing the old Panslavic doctrine. It is rather a nostalgic attempt at pouring old wine in a new bottle. Therefore, more intriguing at present seem to be the attempts at practical implementation of the doctrine of Panslavism than is their ideational contents well known from the past.

In May 1993, the founding convention of the Congress of Spiritually Akin (Eastern-Christian) Nations (which is an international non-governmental organization) took place in Belgrade. Precisely the year after, in May 1994, the 1st convention of the Congress took place in Yalta, Crimea, attended by the representatives from Armenia, Crimea, Nagorno Karabakh, Sub-Dnester region, the Republic of Serbia, Serbian Krayina, Russia, Northern Ossetinia, Ukraine, Ethiopia, and the Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. Moscow was elected the seat of the Congress and Oleg Rumiantsev⁵⁶ became its chairperson. The Congress Secretariat issued a declaration of the 1st convention which, inter alia, says this: "The nations and countries of the Eastern-Christian space inevitably have to unite their efforts today in the matter of revival of their spiritual coordination on the basis of their common historical origin, national cultures, and humanism, in the matter of putting an end to unending armed conflicts, as well as to commence the *re-building the system of collective security* (italics mine)"⁵⁷ The creation of five boards has been approved by the convention: 1) for improving the international coordination, 2) for improving the cooperation in the sphere of science and culture, 3) for the revival of the spiritual space and improving the role of the Orthodox Church, 4) for economic cooperation, 5) for creating a common information space.⁵⁸

Naturally, the doctrine of Panslavism could not have been left unnoticed by the LDPR leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. In the beginning of April 1994, the 5th Congress of LDPR took place in Moscow, which extended his term in the post of the party leader till the year 2004. The very second day of its proceedings, the Congress turned into the *World-Wide Slavonic Congress*, which decided on the creation of the organization called *The Union of Slavonic Nations*, within the framework of which the so called Slavonic parliament and the so called Slavonic Government shall be active. The Congress delegates elected Vladimir Zhirinovskiy chairperson of the Slavonic Parliament and Alexander Sterligov, the leader of the Russian National Assembly, became the Prime Minister of the Slavonic Government.⁵⁹ In his opening address, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy called for the "creation of *the East European commonwealth of Slavonic nations from the Adriatic up to the Kurils*" (italics mine). "This will be the most significant economic-military-

⁵⁵ Rich, V.: An East Slavic Union?. *The World Today*, March 1995, pp. 48-51.

⁵⁶ Oleg Germanovich Rumiantsev, born on 23 March, 1961 in Moscow. He worked as research fellow at the Institute of Economy of the World Socialist System with the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. At the time of pre-election campaign in 1989 he was an adviser to Academician Oleg Bogomolov (Director of the Institute, at present the Institute of International Economic and Political Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences). In 1990 he was elected Member of Parliament of the RSFSR. Biographical data may be found on the Internet page: *Natsional'naya sluzhba novostey* (National News Service).

⁵⁷ *K okonchaniyu raboty I Assamblei Kongressa dukhovno-blizkikh (Vostochno-Khristianskikh Narodov)*. Sekretariat Kongressa, May 1994, p. 1.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem.*, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Alexander Sterligov is former KGB's general.

political union in the world... Sacred Russia in the East-European Union shall enter the 21st century, which shall be the century of vigor of Slavonic element.⁶⁰

Zhirinovskiy made use of the 5th State Duma tribune to disseminate his Panslavic opinions, which is testified to by the following facts: in the years 1994 and 1995, the Russian Duma performed 76 votes pertaining to the foreign policy. LDPR was initiative in calling 15 votes on the matters of foreign policy, four of which pertained the situation in Yugoslavia (including a petition to revoke A. Kozyrev from his post of the Minister for his policy in that issue), three of them pertained to the development of relations and integration with Belarus, and one dealt generally on "The cultural, political, and economic cooperation among the Slavonic nations".⁶¹ Three votes in the Yugoslav question were called for by Ziuganov's CPRF (Communist Party of RF). However, what indeed deserves attention is that "Yugoslavian" initiatives of the CPRF were oriented specifically to criticism of the NATO activities in solving the conflict on the Balkan.

In other words, the Panslavic resentment is not strange to the Russian Eurasianists, however, this is prevalingly limited to the post-Soviet space. Therein lies the difference between the Eurasians and the Russian radical nationalists in their contemporary attitude to Panslavism. Radical nationalists are the only ones who follow up with the tradition and ideational message of the Central- and South-European Panslavism of the tsarist Russia. Panslavism serves as their tool for demonstrating decisive anti-Western attitudes and as an "historical" folklore employed in domestic-political battles, which sound so sweet to the Russian ear. The ideas of Panslavism only find some echo with the part of some Serbian and partly Slovak nationalists.⁶²

Neither LDPR nor CPRF, nor any other political party from among the Russian opposition or coalition did call for voting in the 5th Duma pertaining to the development of relations with the Visegrád countries. Nationalist Russia forgot not only about its former main *Slavonic* allies from the Warsaw Treaty and COMECON - Czechoslovakia and Poland. The first to turn attention to the CEE countries in the new circumstances were, paradoxically, the intellectual representatives of the so-called Westernizing orientation.

2.4.2. Europe-oriented Westernizers

As a matter of fact, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Andrey Kozyrev was oriented westward, however, it tended to see predominantly the United States of America on both its geographical parts. Kozyrev himself expressed this in a symbolic way in his polemics with Eurasianists calling for the need to turn eastward: "If we look at the map, it shall not be difficult to see that our closest Eastern neighbor is the United States of America. They are our Eastern, not Western neighbor."⁶³ However, those of the Russian Westernizers who did not identify the West with the United States and considered the development of relations with Western Europe of prime importance for Russia so found out that there do exist between Russia and Western Europe the "forgotten former allies" from the Eastern Block.

⁶⁰ • TK, TA SR, 5 April, 1994.

⁶¹ See Gusev, L. - Grigoryeva, Y. - Aksenova, L.: V Gosudarstvennaya Duma: analiz gososovaniy po vneshnepoliticheskim voprosam. Issledovaniye CMI MGIMO, No 7, Moskva, aprel' 1996, pp. 7-12.

⁶² For more details on the problems of „Central European Panslavism“ and the present „case of Slovakia“ see Chapter 4 of this study.

⁶³ Diskusiya o tom, kakoy byt' vneshney politike Rossii. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 5-22, here p. 6.

For the sake of illustration, let us have a look at the study by Alexander Zagorsky, "Russia and Europe" published in January 1993. Indulged in polemics with the Eurasianist Sergey Stankevich, Zagorsky puts down: "Regretfully, our Eurasianists (...) devote too much attention to geopolitical possibilities and ignore the economic reality. The chief capacities, just like the infrastructure of Russia, are concentrated in its European part (...). Neither the demographic situation nor the level of development of infrastructure, nor really effective, not merely potential economic capacities of Siberia and the Far East, give a chance to count on the inflow of private capital, neither the hope for its rapid return (...). This is why the road of Russia to the world economy may not obviate Europe. This is the shortest (...) and the best way."⁶⁴ Elsewhere in the study he states: "(...) sovereignization of the former republics caused geographic moving away of Russia from Europe. Accessibility, dependability (and the price) of continental communications with Europe are directly dependent from the condition of the relations of Russia with its closest and farther neighbors in the West - Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic states, Poland (...). Practically all of the European republics of the former USSR unequivocally define themselves as European countries, not as part of a broader Eurasian space (...). As early as in the year 1992 the tendencies became obvious predominantly on the part of the European partakers to separate themselves from the CIS (...). The CIS is ever more being transformed into a Russian-Central-Asian union (etc.)."⁶⁵ Zagorsky indicated that the Eurasian concept shall consequently lead to "Asiatization" of Russia. He merely expressed in other words what Roman Szporluk named as "de-Europeization" of Russia.⁶⁶

Zagorsky indicated the perspective significance of the CEE countries for the development of the relations between Russia and Western Europe, emphasizing their significance of *transit*. Irina Kobrinskaya, also criticizing the Eurasian concept, pointed out the significance of the CEE countries for the Russian interests and their unjustified neglecting in the foreign policy of Russia. She delineated the possibilities of cooperation between Russia and the CEE countries in two main directions: 1) exerting a pressure on the Western post-Soviet neighbors of Russia - chiefly Ukraine and Belarus; 2) providing for the transit of Russian energy supplies to Europe and bringing Russia closer to the European economic area. In the former case, Russia should make use of the relations with the CEE countries for: 1) the renewal of international economic contacts, which were interrupted after the disintegration of the USSR; 2) the prevention of forming the buffer zone around Russia; 3) the internationalization of the most complicated and most controversial problems in the relations between Russia and ex-Soviet republics. In the latter case, Russia with the help from the CEE countries might achieve at least partial introduction of Western standards of trading in its own economic relations with the post-Soviet republics. At the same time, Kobrinskaya noted that the CEE countries made a far greater progress toward integration into the European economic space and the development of relations with them could at least be useful for Russia, striving to achieve identical objectives⁶⁷

The "Europe-oriented" Russian Westernizers, indulged in polemics with the Eurasianists, pinpointed as the first in the Russian debate on foreign policy after the disintegration of the USSR the significance of the CEE countries for Russia. Of course, for the Russia, which from their point of view, wishes to become an "European Russia" and engage itself into European integration

⁶⁴Zagorsky, A.: Rossiya i Yevropa. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 1, 1993, pp. 47-56, here pp. 55-56.

⁶⁵ Ibidem., pp. 47-49.

⁶⁶ Szporluk, R.: Belarus', Ukraine and The Russian Question: A Comment. Post-Soviet Affairs, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1993, pp. 366-374, here p. 371.

⁶⁷ Kobrinskaya, I.: Russia's Home and Foreign Policies. International Affairs, October 1993, pp. 42-50, here p. 45-46.

processes. In their arguments, they most frequently emphasized the significance of transit of the CEE countries for trade of Russia with Western Europe, the possible utilization of the relations with the CEE countries for exerting pressure on the Western post-Soviet neighbors of Russia (especially Ukraine and Belarus), just like Russia's coming closer to the developed world. One should add, however, that Europe-oriented Westernizers were, though their understanding of the aims and tools of Russian foreign policy, much closer to the spirit of European Westernism in the interpretation by Mikhail Gorbachev than that one by Andrey Kozyrev. In the Russian foreign-policy debate, they by far did not represent a majority stream.

2.4.3. Central European dilemma of Russian realists

The main problem encountered by the Russian realists in their reflections on CEE might be formulated as follows: does it correspond to the Russian interests that the CEE region becomes a buffer zone between Russia and Western Europe

The adherents of the concept of "Russia as an Euro-Asian bridge between the Atlantic and the Pacific" came to the same conclusion as Europe-oriented Westernizers: it does not correspond to the interests of Russia that the CEE region becomes a buffer zone. This is not because Russia is a European country and should strive for integration in European structures, but because CEE as buffer zone disables Russia from performing its function of a Euro-Asian bridge to Western Europe. Apart from this, according to the Eurasian doctrine, Germany sooner or later becomes the main geopolitical partner of Russia in Europe and the relations with Germany must therefore be included within Russian priorities.⁶⁸ Both "European Westernizers" and Eurasianists emphasized the significance of *transit* of CEE for Russia.

Alexander Bykov was one of the first to have pointed out this fact: "(...) due to the disintegration of the USSR and COMECON, Russia is separated from Western Europe by two zones of countries which, depending on the circumstances, become either a bridge or a double sanitary cordon. Is it one or the other, we will have to pay a high tax on that - both economic and political. The window to Europe, which our forefathers paid for by a lot of blood, has become considerably smaller and has in fact changed into a small slot compared to the giant body of the country spreading eastward to the Pacific Ocean."⁶⁹ Russia must renew its transportation infrastructure in direction to Europe and Bykov expressed his belief that the CEE countries modify their attitude to Russia: "In the beginning, the decline of mutual commercial exchange was supported by their (CEE countries - the author) endeavor to put an end to "Soviet hegemonism", to re-orientate trade relations westward. However, the euphoria began to fade away pretty soon due to *inertia of economic structures* (in the CEE countries; note and italics mine), and, first of all, it found the West unprepared to open its markets for those countries, not to speak of their being engaged in West-European process of integration as members enjoying equal rights."⁷⁰ Vladimir Razuvayev⁷¹ and some other authors notified of the necessity to gain control over the transportation infrastructure providing access of Russia to European markets.

⁶⁸ See e.g. Vyatkin, K.: Rossiya i Germaniya: potentsiyal sotrudnichestva. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 4, 1994, pp. 103-108.

⁶⁹ Bykov, A.: Na perekryostke mirovogo razvitiya. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 96-104, here p. 99.

⁷⁰ Ibidem.

⁷¹ Razuvayev, V.: Russia and the Post-Soviet Geopolitical Area. International Affairs, August 1993, pp. 109-116.

The view that the CEE region must not become a buffer zone between Russia and Western Europe, as to *the development of economic contacts and providing transit of Russian commodities to the European markets*, has become dominating among the Russian realists regardless of whatever aspects of the Eurasian doctrine they might have adhered. However, the Russian realists arrived to a completely different opinion when considering the CEE region in the security terms.

Aleksey Arbatov tellingly formulated this position: "Withdrawal of the Russian armed forces from the center of Europe by one and a half thousand kilometers, from Magdeburg to Smolensk, gave rise to an unusual strategic vulnerability: for the first time in hundreds of years, the region of Moscow has changed from being a deep rear to a front line. On the other side, however, this is an unprecedented advantage, which resides in branching in long distances the armed forces of Western states and Russia. The administration and industrial center of Russia is now unreachable even by the most up-to-date tactical military air forces and non-nuclear missiles, which are at the disposal of the military strongest countries of the West. The corridor many hundreds of kilometers wide exists from the viewpoint of both parts and leaves the Russian armed forces and military objects out of the limits of reachability of Western forces and their means of attack. *Preserving and contractual confirmation of such division is one of the most significant tasks of the Russian strategy of national defense...*" (italics mine).⁷² In Arbatov's words: "Providing a neutral and non-nuclear status, independence, and sovereignty of the "double zone" of the East European countries and the Western republics of the former USSR must become one of the corner-stones of a new system of European security (...). Western Europe, the USA, and Russia must become guarantors of neutrality and security of those countries (...)."⁷³ A similar attitude may be found in the analysis of the Moscow Institute of National Security and Strategic Studies: "It is desirable, of course, that East and Central Europe remains, in the military-political sense, a "gray zone", a kind of geopolitical amortizer just in case of an unforeseeable development of situation in the space between Russia and Western Europe".⁷⁴

In other words, the dilemma whether it is convenient that CEE becomes for Russia a buffer zone, have been answered by the Russian realists in a double manner: 1) as to the economic relations with Western Europe: no; 2) as to the military-security relation with Western Europe: yes. The conclusion, to which the Russian realists have arrived during the debate on the issues of foreign policy, influenced significantly the official policy of Moscow to the CEE countries in the 1990s, which debate was characteristic for the above delineated economic and security *bi-trackiness*. It should be emphasized here once again that just like in the case of official policy, the Russian experts devoted their more intense attention to the CEE region only when encountering failure of Russian policy to achieve the status of neutrality for the CEE countries and to prevent the process of NATO enlargement.

As has been mentioned above, this only happened sometime in the year 1995. On the one hand, the increased attention did not lead to formulating principally new attitudes or finding principally new arguments. On the other hand, from the year 1995 a tendency has been manifested to justify the significance of the relations of Russia with the CEE countries as partners worth attention "an

⁷² Arbatov, A.: Rossiya: natsional'naya bezopasnost' v 90-ye gody. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 8-9, 1994, pp. 5-18, here p. 12.

⁷³ Ibidem.

⁷⁴ Evolyutsiya struktur voyennoy bezopasnosti: rol' i mesto Rossiyi (geopoliticheskiy aspekt). Institut natsional'no bezopasnosti i strategicheskikh issledovaniy. Moskva 1997; Problema obespecheniya voyennoy bezopasnosti Rossii s severoatlanticheskogo napravleniya, p. 5.

such", not merely in the relation to the West. In this attitude one may observe a certain measure of nostalgia for the "old block times".

In January 1995, an international conference was held in Moscow on "Russia and Central Europe in the new geopolitical relations" which was organized by the Institute of International Economic and Political Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences).⁷⁵ The Director of the Institute and the State Duma deputy, academician Oleg Bogomolov, attempted to formulate in his presentation five essential factors which could contribute to the development of relations between Russia and the CEE countries under new conditions: 1) both Russia and the CEE countries share common transformation problems and the experiences of the CEE countries could be instructive for Russia; 2) vicinity of the Russian market for the CEE countries and the impossibility of a sudden change of the system of distribution of labor which has been formed within COMECON; 3) both Russia and CEE are faced with the problems of penetrating onto third markets, including the markets of developed countries and might coordinate their respective efforts; 4) the CEE countries have an extraordinarily great geostrategic significance for the national security of Russia; 5) in the CEE countries there exist numerous groups of population which share friendly relations to Russia and a part of political élites is oriented toward the cooperation with Russia.⁷⁶

Should one wish to sum up the Russian debate on the CEE region, one could present four basic attitudes: 1) "geopolitical frightening" the Central Europeans from the part of the Russian nationalists by the former's being swallowed up by the West, Germany, etc., if they do not join Russia closely, etc.⁷⁷; 2) calling for coordination of the "European policy" of Russia with the CEE countries from the part of the Europe-oriented Westernizers; 3) on the first sight a contradicting endeavor to reach military neutrality of the CEE countries from the part of the Russian security strategists and, at the same time, an endeavor from the part of Eur-Asianist realists to prevent the formation of the economic buffer zone which could mean an obstacle for Russia's trading with Western Europe; 4) a call for reviving multilateral relations with the CEE countries as partners worth attention "by themselves" from the part of the post-Soviet nostalgists.

In any case, in the debates on CEE among the *moderate* Russian realists, an opinion prevailed, that: "It is illusionary to count with the fact that this region could be returned, even though some countries, once again in the "zone of influence of Russia".⁷⁸

⁷⁵ The conference proceedings were published in the volume *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh* (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina). Rossiyskaya Akademiya Nauk, Institut mezhdunarodnykh ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh issledovaniy. Moskva 1995.

⁷⁶ Bogomolov, O.T.: *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya i Vostochnaya Yevropa*. in: *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh* (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina), pp. 5-12, here pp. 7-8.

⁷⁷ See e.g. Vengerovsky, A.: *Tendentsii yevropeyskoy geopolitiki i priority rossiysskoy vneshney politiki*. in: *Rossiia i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh* (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina), pp. 13-27.

⁷⁸ *Natsional'nyye interesy i problemy bezopasnosti Rossiya. Doklad po itogam issledovaniya, provedyonnoho Tsentrom global'nykh program Gorbachev-Fonda v 1995-1997 gg.* Moskva, 1997; *Vnesnepoliticheskiye priority, VII.3.5, p. 4.*

3. Central Europe in the Russian foreign policy doctrines

The policy of Russian Federation toward the CEE countries in the 1990s was not emerging on a "hollow ground" and had to depart simply from the Soviet heritage. Equally so, the policy of the CEE countries toward the Russian federation under new circumstances could not have ignored the long period of Soviet supremacy after World War II.

From the time of creation of the bipolar system after the end of World War II, one may specify four foreign-policy doctrines of Moscow in relation to the CEE region (two of these are Soviet and two Russian), which correspond to the individual stages of the development of international relations and differ from each other by the aims set, contents, and tools of the Moscow foreign policy. For the sake of clear arrangement and the comparison of the development of Russian policy, expert sources and journalism customarily uses the following names thereof: the Brezhnev doctrine, the Kvitinsky doctrine, the Kozyrev doctrine, and the Primakov doctrine.⁷⁹

3.1. Two Soviet doctrines

3.1.1. The Brezhnev Doctrine

The first doctrine reflected the policy of the Soviet Union toward Central Europe after the World War II up to the second half of the 1980s and corresponded to the conditions of the divided bipolar world after Yalta and Potsdam. One could sum up the essence of the Brezhnev doctrine as follows: *group limitation of sovereignty of the CEE countries and their satellite position in relation to Moscow; competition-free influence of Moscow within the region, including a non-written, but by the third part uninfluencable right of direct military intervention in case of need to protect the political and security interests of the Eastern Block* (e.g. Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, etc.).⁸⁰

The countries, which after World War II got within the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, were enforced a status of allies within the structures of the Eastern Block (Warsaw Treaty, COMECON). The relations to those countries belonged among the priorities of foreign policy of the Soviet leadership. Maintaining the region under the political, ideological, economic, and military control was considered in Moscow one of the most important conditions of the security of the Soviet Union, but also of the entire socialist camp as a whole.⁸¹ Economic and political relations within the Block were subordinated to the military aspects of the global competi

⁷⁹ Akino, Y.- Smith, A.A.: Russia-Ukraine-Visegrad Four: The Kozyrev Doctrine in Action. Institute for East-West Studies. Prague. New York 1993; Goble, P.: Russia: Analysis From Washington - Primakov Offers NATO Both Carrots And Sticks. RFE/RL, 3 March 1997; Póti, L.: From Subordination to Partnership: Hungarian-Russian relations, 1990-1997. Hungarian Institute of International Affairs. Foreign Policy Papers, No. 7, 1997; Simon, G.: Russia's Identity and International Politics. Aussenpolitik III/1997, pp. 245-266. etc.

⁸⁰ Akino - Smith., op. cit., p. 4; Póti, op. cit., p. 14-15; for a survey of crises of regimes in the East Bloc and Soviet political, economic, and military interventions, see Krízový režim sovietskeho bloku v rokoch 1948-1989 (eds: M. Štefanský, M. Zágoršková). Politologický kabinet SAV. Fakulta politických vied a medzinárodných v zohľadnení UMB. Banská Bystrica 1997.

⁸¹ Bogomolov, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

with the West, which, as a matter of regularity, led toward deep deformations thereof. The supremacy of the Soviet Union was an indisputable attribute of the relation within the Block, as well as the relations of the Block members toward third parties. The CEE countries had to subordinate their economic, domestic, and foreign policy to the interests of the Block, better said, to the interests of the policy of the Soviet Union.

3.1.2. Kvitsinsky Doctrine

The second Soviet doctrine reflected the international warming in the era of Gorbachev's "new thinking" in the international relations in the second half of the 1980s and was named after the then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Yuliy Kvitsinsky, who was head of the Soviet delegations in the negotiations on new bilateral treaties with the countries of Central Europe in the beginning of the 1990s. Its essence might be summed up as follows: *the countries of Central Europe cease to be Soviet satellites and are sovereign actors of international relations; they should, however, coordinate with the USSR their foreign and security policy and, as to strategy, they should rather choose neutrality than integration into security structures of the West.*⁸² In other words, they should agree with the status of a buffer zone between NATO and the USSR.

The Soviet reformist leadership headed by Mikhail Gorbachev had exerted endeavors in their foreign policy to terminate the competition with the West with the aim of alleviating the international tension and put an end to arms races so unremunerative for the USSR, so that it became possible to re-orientate the economic resources for solving the ever growing economic crisis. In the opinion of John Rowper and Peter van Ham, "the policy of building a 'comm European house' ... was an attempt to enlarge the economic cooperation on the Continent and, at the same time, a maneuver in pursuing the traditional aim of the USSR, endeavoring to exclude the United States and Canada from the future all-European projects in the field of economy, politics, and security."⁸³ It appeared impossible to reach the above aim in relation to Western Europe without a change of policy toward the CEE countries.

The first indication of a change of attitude of the Soviet leadership in relation to the allies within the Eastern Block appeared in Mikhail Gorbachev's draft resolution to the plenary session of the Political Committee of the CPSU in the summer of 1986, "On Some Topical Issues of Cooperation With the Socialist Countries". The material departed from the thesis that is necessary to start building a system of political relations with the allies on the basis of real equality and to enable the communist parties in the socialist countries to independently solve the issues of their development. According to the proposal, none is entitled to enjoy any special position within the socialist commonwealth, etc.⁸⁴ Gorbachev declared "the freedom of choice" for the CEE countries in the administration of their domestic affairs as a principally new attitude of the Soviet policy to the allies on the UN General Assembly session on 7th December, 1988. On the other hand, he also stressed the need to continue in the coordination of the foreign and security policy

⁸² Akino - Smith., op. cit., p. 4.

⁸³ Rowper, J. - Ham, P.v.: Zapadnaya politika Rossiya. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, No. 11, 1994, pp. 81-91, here pp. 81-82.

⁸⁴ Shmelev, B.: Otnosheniya Rossii so stranami Tsentral'noy Yevropy i interesy yeyo natsional'no-gosudarstvenno bezopasnosti. in: Rossiya i Tsentral'naya Yevropa v novykh geopoliticheskikh real'nostyakh (eds: V. Kiselyev, L. Shishelina), op.cit., pp. 326-335, here p. 327.

of the USSR with the CEE countries⁸⁵ Voluntary withdrawal of the Soviet foreign policy from the mainstream of the Brezhnev doctrine - the right to interfere in the interior affairs of the allies - undoubtedly made the communist élites in the Central Europe feel uneasy and, at the same time, the withdrawal supported the determination and the growth of civic protest movements, which resulted into civic revolutions and the fall of communist regimes in the year 1989.

For the new élites which gained power in the CEE countries at the turn of the years 1989-1990, the Soviet Union was the main cause of the lack of liberty of national life and an *artificial*, forceful introduction of totalitarian regimes. It is just natural that the new political élites departed in constructing their relations with the USSR from presenting a claim to withdraw the Soviet troops, the presence of which on the territories of the CEE countries was a direct and the most tangible manifestation of Soviet supremacy. The greatest activity in this direction was exerted by Czechoslovakia which raised a claim to withdraw the Soviet troops as early as in November 1989, immediately after the fall of the communist regime. In January 1990, prime ministers were negotiating this issue and on 26th February, 1990, the Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Václav Havel signed a treaty in Moscow on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of Czechoslovakia. According to the treaty, the majority of the troops withdrew Czechoslovakia by 31st May, 1990 and the entire withdrawal process was completed on 1st July, 1991.⁸⁶

Hungary too had itself inspired by the resolute Czechoslovak steps. The treaty on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary was signed on 10th March, 1990, provided that the withdrawal process shall be completed, just like in the case of Czechoslovakia, on 1st July, 1991.⁸⁷ With Poland, things were a bit more complicated, since the withdrawal of Soviet troops had to be coordinated with their withdrawal from Germany. The treaty on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland was signed on 26 October, 1991, provided that within 18th November, 1992, the majority of Soviet troops shall have been withdrawn and by the end of the year 1993 even the last service troops supporting the military transportation from Germany shall have been withdrawn from Poland.⁸⁸

Apart from the withdrawal of troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Gorbachev offered another significant piece of evidence in the year 1990 that he really means it when he speaks of the termination of the cold war and the construction of a "common European home". This was concerned with the meet-half-way attitude of the USSR in the issue of unification of Germany and removal of the symbol of the cold war - the Berlin Wall. In July 1990, on the "2+4" negotiations (FRG, GDR, USA, USSR, France, Great Britain) an agreement was reached, according to which the unified Germany avowed to abide the border on the Oder-Nisa line. On 12th September, 1990, an treaty was signed in Moscow, in which Moscow agreed that the unified Germany (including the former GDR) becomes a NATO member. On 3rd October, 1990, a unified German state emerged also *de iure*.⁸⁹ Peaceful unification of Germany meant a final full

⁸⁵ Medvedev, V.A.: *Raspad. Kak on nazreval v "mirovoy sisteme sotsializma"*. Mezhdunarodnyye otnoshniya, Moskva 1994, p. 27.

⁸⁶ The demand that the Soviet troops leave the country belonged among chief slogans after the velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia (17 November, 1998). For the process of negotiations see Šedivý, J.: *The Pull-out of Soviet Troops from Czechoslovakia. Perspectives*, No. 2, Winter 93/94, pp. 21-37.

⁸⁷ Cotte, A.: *East-Central Europe after the Cold War Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary in Search of Security*. University of Bradford, 1997, p. 95.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

stop for the cold war and at the same time it put a question mark concerning any further existence of the Warsaw Treaty (WT).

In the negotiations within the WT in the months of June through November 1990, the leaders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland started to coordinate their attitudes as to the membership of their respective countries in the Eastern military pact and its future. In September 1990, in the Polish town of Zakopane, a meeting of the Ministers of Defense of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland took place for the first time after World War II, this time without the presence of the representative of the USSR. A critical moment in the development of attitudes of the CEE countries in relation to the future of WT was the engagement of Soviet troops in solving the crisis in Lithuania in January 1991. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the three countries convened in Budapest to jointly judge the use of Soviet armed forces in Lithuania and, simultaneously, to express their support to the Baltic republics in their endeavor to gain independence.

However, a truly historical significance of the Budapest summit of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland was in the formulation of a requirement that the WT military structures be dissolved by 1st July, 1991 and the military pact as such be dissolved during the course of the subsequent year. In February 1991, the Czechoslovak President Václav Havel, the Polish President Lech Walesa, and the Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Anta convened in the Hungarian city Visegrad to give the cooperation among the three CEE countries a systematic character - in the spirit of Havel's slogan of a "joint coordinated return to Europe". A consultative forum emerged known under the name of Visegrád Group. In the issue of further development of the relations with the USSR it seemed important that the Visegrád countries agreed to coordinate their respective policies toward both the USSR and the integration structures of the Eastern Block - WT and COMECON.⁹⁰

It was becoming ever more obvious from the logic of international development at the turn of the years 1990 and 1991 that neither the Warsaw Treaty nor COMECON shall have long life in the newly emerged international situation. The Soviet Union, shaken by its own interior conflicts, had neither the political will nor real tools to be able to prevent the disintegration of the Eastern Block. In April 1991, the Soviet leadership resigned under a joint pressure from the Visegrád Group and agreed to the disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty as of the beginning of July 1991.⁹¹ A similar fate struck COMECON. On 28th June, 1991, the COMECON membership countries adopted on the last, 46th session in Moscow, a decision on the extinguishment of COMECON as of 26th September, 1991.⁹² By the extinguishment of the Warsaw Treaty and COMECON, the Eastern Block ceased to exist.

After the unification of Germany and "letting the GDR loose", Gorbachev's foreign policy came under a strong pressure from the "hard-liners" in Moscow. Gorbachev's policy was considered "capitulation", "confused retreat", "giving up the strategic positions in Europe", etc.⁹³ After such criticism, the Soviet diplomacy started to condition their agreement with the Warsaw Treaty

⁹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 127-128.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 97. The Warsaw Treaty was symbolically dissolved on the date of completion of withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

⁹² On COMECON disintegration see Morozov, V.I.: *Sud'ba imushchestva SEV: pravovyye aspekty. Gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 8, 1993, pp. 116-121.

⁹³ See e.g. Medvedev, op. cit.; *Kontseptsiya natsional'noy bezopasnosti Rossii v 1995 godu* (eds: Podberyozkin, A.I., Lyutov, I.S., Yeremenko, I.N., Zyuganov, G.A., Kozhemyakin, V.N., Kondauronov, A.P., Lun'kov, A.G., Sultanov, Sh.Z., Shtol', V.V). *RAU-Korporatsiya. Obozrevatel'*, No. 3-4. Moskva 1995 and the like.

disintegration by the so called "security clauses" into new bilateral treaties with the CEE countries. In other words, unlike the Brezhnev's doctrine, which imposed group limitation on the CEE countries' sovereignty, Kvitinsky doctrine was an attempt at bilateral limitation of the CEE countries sovereignty in the security policy⁹⁴ The aim of these clauses was to prevent the CEE countries from repeating the "fate of the GDR", although in another form, and become members of the Western security structures. Adoption of such clauses was directed not merely against the potential membership of the CEE countries in NATO and WEU, but it presupposed that the CEE countries shall not even enter into negotiations or commence consultations with those organizations on security topics.⁹⁵ The Soviet Union agreed to the unification of Germany by disintegrating the structures of the Eastern Block, however, it rejected complete loss of control on the security policy of its former allies in CEE.

In the years 1990 and 1991, Soviet diplomacy held bilateral talks on the texts of new treaties with the CEE countries, in which it was trying to enforce security clauses, however, in the case of the three Visegrád countries, it encountered a joint coordinated attitude and a principally negative standpoint. The outcome was a failure of the Soviet diplomacy in the implementation of the Kvitinsky doctrine in practice. In the view of Andrew Cottey, the coordination of diplomacy of Visegrád countries achieved greatest success in the period of 1990 and 1991 in relation to the USSR in two key issues: 1) liquidation of the Warsaw Treaty; 2) refusal to include the "security clauses" in the new bilateral treaties.⁹⁶ The Kvitinsky doctrine departed for the history of Soviet diplomacy along with the disintegration of the USSR after the coup-d'etat in August 1991. Disintegration of the Soviet Union, along with approximately at the same time emerged crisis in Yugoslavia caused that Visegrád countries arrived at the final choice for the strategy of approaching and, in perspective, full membership in the security structures of the West.⁹⁷

3.2. Two Russian doctrines

3.2.1. Kozyrev Doctrine

Russia had to respond to the dissolution of the Eastern Block, the Soviet Union, and the termination of the bipolar conflict under the essentially changed conditions. The essence of the foreign policy of the first Minister of Foreign Affairs of RF, A. Kozyrev, may be summed up as follows: *Russia must avoid international isolation; it may avoid the isolation only by approaching the Western security structures in parallel with the Central European countries; in this process, the CEE countries must not be granted preference; at the same time it is necessary to create a Pan-European security system stretching from Baltic to the Ural to which NATO will be subordinated, as well as the principle that Russia must become integral part of any institutionalized security system in Europe.*⁹⁸ The development of international situation, which

⁹⁴ Póti, op. cit., p. 14.

⁹⁵ Cottey, op. cit, p. 97; also the so-called "anti-coagulation clauses" - see Kobrinskaya, I.: Rossiya - Tsentral'naya Yevropa - NATO. in: Rossiya: novyye parametry bezopasnosti. Nauchnyye doklady Moskovskogo Tsentra Karnegi. Vypusk chetvyortyy. Moskva 1995, pp. 8-40, here p. 13.

⁹⁶ Only in case of Romania the Soviet diplomacy succeeded in including the "security clause" in the text of the bilateral treaty, however, due to the disintegration of the USSR at the end of 1991 the bilateral Soviet-Romanian Treaty has not become a new "Central-European precedens". See Cottey, op. cit., p. 131.

⁹⁷ Ibidem, p. 130.

⁹⁸ Akino - Smith, op. cit., pp. 4 - 6.

shall not be in line with these principles, shall mean a new division of and confrontation in Europe.

Under the Kozyrev doctrine we are having in mind here the Russian foreign policy in a for which had been attained under the pressure from Russian nationalists and realists during the Russian debate on foreign policy issues in 1992 and 1993 (see Chapter 2). On the one hand, the Kozyrev doctrine for the first time clearly distinguished the post-Soviet countries of East Europe ("blizhneye zarubezhiye") from the CEE countries ("dal'neye zarubezhiye"), however, by its understanding of the international position of Central Europe it was almost a step backward, compared to the Kvitsinsky doctrine. According to László Póti, "the Kozyrev doctrine goes one step further and does not want to implement the similar Russian goals by way of explicit prohibition in bilateral treaties, but instead it wants to put the problem (approaching the CEE countries to NATO and Western structures - author) into a wider framework and to postpone it in time. It qualifies for the category of indirect limitation."⁹⁹ This may convincingly be illustrated by the wording of the MFA RF document entitled "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation", which was published in January 1993: "The strategic task at the current stage is to prevent East Europe from turning into a sort of buffer zone isolating us from the West. On the other hand, we cannot allow the Western powers to force Russia out of the East European region, which is already becoming a reality. This is a task which is well within our powers, considering that the states of East Europe, despite their noticeable and somewhat artificially emphasized recent political distancing from Russia, are economically, and to a significant degree also in a cultural-humanitarian respect, still oriented as before toward Russia and the other CIS countries. The primary task is to secure the positive changes which have been achieved in the course of high-level contacts, on the path toward restoring mutual trust, and to establish deideologized, equal relations with the countries of East Europe. Energetic measures in restoring economic ties are especially important".¹⁰⁰ Whereas the Kvitsinsky doctrine was of a more conditional than recommendational character of the policy of Moscow in relation to the Central European countries, duly respecting their sovereignty, characteristic of the Kozyrev doctrine were the notions like "prevent", "not to allow", and the like, which were approaching the denial of the right of sovereign decision-making to the Central European countries.

The point of departure of RF to the issues of building the security structures in Europe after the disintegration of the Eastern Block and the USSR, in accordance with the spirit of the Kozyrev doctrine, may be illustrated by the formulations presented by the chairperson of an influential and opinion-making Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, Sergey Karaganov, and the then Deputy Minister of the Foreign Affairs, Nikolay Afanasyevsky. As to the policy of Russia in the question of NATO enlargement, Karaganov stated: "Russia must insist on the parallel accession to NATO along with the Central European countries. Moscow has to present a choice before NATO: either you admit Russia, or you openly favor its isolation".¹⁰¹ In his presentation on the conference "Russia in Europe: New Security Challenges" (Moscow, March 1994), Afanasyevsky clearly formulated Russian standpoint: "Russia cannot accept an organization in which it had not the right to equal vote safeguarded in taking decisions. Even less acceptable is the perspective of creating a special security zone on the basis of NATO/WEU with the exclusion of Russia... The cooperation must be aimed at eliminating old lines of confrontation and preventing the emergence

⁹⁹ Póti, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ See Rahr - Krause, op. cit.: Appendix, p. 63.

¹⁰¹ Karaganov, S.: Rossiya vmeste so stranami TsVYe v NATO. Moskovskije novosti (Národná obroda, 17.09.1993).

of new ones. In the post-confrontation era, one may only accept the space between the Atlantic and the Ural as a historical and geographical framework for solving the security issues in Europe".¹⁰²

The only existing organization which would optimally suit the Russian interests in the new circumstances and would correspond to the above given ideas - including the decision-making mechanism - was the OSCE (formerly CSCE). By way of regularity, the aim of the Russian diplomacy was to achieve a condition in which all of the remaining main regional organizations, which have got anything to do with the European security issues (as are defined in the MFA RF document entitled "The Program of Increasing the Effectiveness of CSCE" of November, 1994: CIS, NACC, EU, Council of Europe, NATO, WEU), be coordinated by the OSCE.¹⁰³ The original idea on the foreign-policy mission of Russia headed by Gaydar's liberals was that the democratic and in reforms successful Russia becomes in the post-Soviet space a gravitational force, attracting the other post-Soviet republics¹⁰⁴ This was one of the reasons why Russia put across the acceptance into CSCE of all of the former Soviet republics, including those in Central Asia. By "Asianizing the CSCE", Russia followed several aims: 1) to become a more significant partner to the West in putting across the CSCE principles within the territory where the role of Russia was irreplaceable (or at least it appeared like that in the year 1992), in consequence of which its role as a strategic partner of the West was to increase; 2) to obtain a possibility of implementing active policy in the post-Soviet territory in the defense of rights of Russian minorities, in putting across democratic reforms, and in implementing peace-keeping missions; 3) by extending the territorial range to increase the significance of the CSCE as a key international security institution as such.¹⁰⁵

Kozyrev's foreign policy departed also from a conviction that Russia will be able to gradually acquire a status of the world super-power, relying on the strategic partnership with the United States of America. Russia was remaining a nuclear world power and was convinced that the United States will need in Europe a strong and stable Russia, going on in implementing its reforms, which will be able of becoming a true partner, at least in the process and control of international disarmament and in perspective also in global security¹⁰⁶ The more so, because in January 1993, the Presidents G. Bush and B. Yeltsin signed the START 2 treaty (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks), in compliance with which both Russia and the USA undertook to decrease the number of strategic nuclear warheads by the year 2003 in two stages to the level: Russia - 3000,

¹⁰² See Chebanov, S.: Rossiya v Yevrope: novyye vyzovy bezopasnosti. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 1, 1995, pp. 42-54.

¹⁰³ Programma povysheniya effektivnosti SBSYe. Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Del Rossiyskoy Federatsii, 1994.

¹⁰⁴ Dunlop, J.B.: Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire. Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 108, No. 4, 1993-1994, pp. 603-634, here p. 616.

¹⁰⁵ Alekseyev, A.: Bezopasnost' ot Atlantiki do Urala i daleye. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 57-65; Khel'sinki. 20 let spustya. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 8, 1995, pp. 60-67; on Russia's peace-keeping within CIS area see Gol'ts, A.: Mirotvorcheskiye operatsii - sredstvo realizatsii natsional'nykh interesov Rossii. in: Rossiya: novyye parametry bezopasnosti. Nauchnyye doklady Moskovskogo Tsentra Karnegi. Vypusk chetyvortyy. Moskva 1995, pp. 42-64.

¹⁰⁶ For the explanation of the attitude toward the Western partners within the above period of time see Kozyrev, A.: The New Russia and the Atlantic Alliance. NATO Review, February 1993, No 1, s. 3-6; Kozyrev, A.: Nonproliferation of Mass Destruction Weapons: The Record, Challenges and Prospects. International Affairs, December 1993, pp. 3-12; Kozyrev, A.: The Lagging Partnership. Foreign Affairs, No. 3, Vol. 73, May/June 1994, pp. 59-7; Kozyrev, A.: Russia and NATO: A Partnership for a United and Peaceful Europe. NATO Review, No. 4, August 1994, Vol. 42, pp. 3-6.

the USA - 3500 pieces. The policy of Bush and Clinton administration was indeed Russocentric in the given period of time and the discussion of NATO enlargement eastward was taking place rather in diplomatic and expert lobbies than it would have been subject of real policy. The United States, by exerting pressure on Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus to give over their nuclear warheads to Russia pursuant to Lisbon protocol to the START 1 treaty of 1992, were confirming Moscow in their conviction on the rightfulness of the chosen foreign-policy line.¹⁰⁷

3.2.1.1. Regulation of treaty relations and the "case of Slovakia"

It appears inevitable to add that the new foreign policy of Russia formulated in the spirit of the Kozyrev doctrine at the turn of the years 1992-1993 had not been manifested clearly in signing the new bilateral treaties with the Visegrád countries. The treaties had been signed prior to achieving the domestic "realistic" consensus in the Russian foreign policy. The Visegrád countries developed their diplomatic success in the negotiations with the Soviet Union in the years 1990 and 1991, and Russia, being the legal successor to the USSR, without any major obstructions or procrastination agreed to signing new bilateral treaties still in the year 1992, of course, without Kvitsinsky's "security clauses". In January 1992, the essential treaty was signed with Poland, in April 1992 with the Czechoslovak Federation, and in November 1992 with Hungary. In the treaties, the signatories dissociated themselves from the Soviet past and expressed their predominant interest in the development of mutually convenient economic cooperation. The Visegrád countries at the summit in Krakow in October 1991 undertook, among other things, to proceed with the coordination of their respective policies in relation to the Soviet Union, and they abided to the attitude in practice when signing new treaties with Russia¹⁰⁸ A new situation emerged after the disintegration of the Czechoslovak federation on 1st January, 1993, with the Czech Republic (CR) and the Slovak Republic (SR) having emerged. A need arose to sign new bilateral treaties with Russia which would replace the principal Czechoslovak treaty of April 1992, this being *already under the circumstances of the new Russian policy toward the CEE countries having been formulated*.

Russia signed new treaties with the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic in August 1993. During the negotiations on a new treaty with Russia, Slovakia did not coordinate its steps with the Czech Republic, whereby the principle of coordination of foreign policy within the Visegrád group was disturbed for the first time. The Russian foreign policy, implemented in accordance with the Kozyrev doctrine, acquired thus for the first time a chance to achieve diplomatic success and, in a way, to find in the case of Slovakia a "weak link" of the Visegrád group.¹⁰⁹ The debate in Slovakia in relation to signing the treaty with Russia reached white heat.

Security consequences following for Slovakia from the text of the basic treaty with Russia have been summed up by the then Director of the Slovak Institute of International Studies, Svetoslav Bombík, in way as follows: "In the field of foreign policy and security, the treaty forces Slovakia to accept the Russian ideas on the way of building up the European political and security

¹⁰⁷ For the debate on the American policy in relation to Russia and the security in Europe within the given period of time see: Asmus, R.D.- Kugler, R.- Larrabee, F.S.: Amerika a Európa: nová konštelácia, nové NATO. Medzinárodné otázky, 1993, No. 4, pp. 43-63; Bluth, Ch.: American-Russian strategic relations: from confrontation to cooperation. The World Today, March 1993, pp. 47-50; Brzezinski, Z.: Priority: Jevropa, a ne Rosija. Zachid: vikno v Ukrajinu 26/1996, p. 3; MacFarlane, S.N.: Russia, the West and European Security. Survival, Vol. 35, No 3, pp. 3-25; Cohen, W.S.: The Empire Strikes Back. Problems of Post-Communism, January-February 1995, pp. 13-18, etc.

¹⁰⁸ Cottey, op. cit., p. 130.

¹⁰⁹ Akino - Smith, op. cit., p. 7.

architecture (...). This concept makes it more difficult for us to try and accede to the Western security structures, mainly the WEU, but to NATO as well (...). It is systemically included within the remaining articles, containing such formulations like "signatories to this treaty hereby confirm that the security of Europe (...) is connected with the CSCE", they shall "assist in the creation of a unified all-European space in all of its dimensions", they shall "jointly and individually face any respective attempts to once again divide Europe in the economic and social spheres", they shall "develop" mutually convenient cooperation and contacts in the military sphere" (...). This text clearly forces Slovakia to join its own security exclusively with the "all-European" process of CSCE."¹¹⁰

President of the Slovak Republic, Michal Kováč , interpreted the contents of the signed treaty in a different manner. Immediately after signing the political treaty, he declared in the spirit of the Kozyrev doctrine: "The treaty proclaims an endeavor of both signatories to cooperate in creating the all-European economic, political, and security structures... the treaty proclaims an endeavor of both signatories to cooperate in creating the all-European security system and to face the efforts to divide Europe in economic and social spheres into two camps". He also added: "The treaty is not in conflict with the endeavor of the SR to accede to the European economic, political, and security structures".¹¹¹ Less than three months later after signing the treaty, President Kováč , having learned his lesson from the sanguinary crisis in Moscow (October 1993), was much more realistic in giving his opinion: "From the time of the sanguinary attempt at coup in Moscow, Bratislava considers it inevitable to obtain from NATO security-political guarantees. Unless the democratic conditions in Russia and Ukraine are reinforced, the need for increasing security remains topical".¹¹² However, in the meantime Slovakia has avowed not to prefer "regional" security structures (according to the MFA RF definition, NATO belongs among these) in the political treaty with the Russian Federation.

Yuriy Ambartsumov, the then Chairperson of the Foreign Committee of Russian Parliament, during his visit to Bratislava in September 1993, drew attention to an unambiguous interpretation of the treaty with immediate consequences on the security policy of the SR, when reacting on the statement of the MFA SR spokesman saying that the aim of the SR is accession to NATO. In the former's opinion, the treaty excludes a possibility that the SR becomes a member of "any regional pact, NATO included, as we consider it as such".¹¹³ Lack of experience in diplomacy on the part of Bratislava in this specific case may be convincingly illustrated by comparing it to the Czech-Russian treaty, which had been signed very shortly before the Slovak-Russian one. Both SR and CR in signing new treaties departed from the identical text of the principal treaty between • SFR and RF of April 1992. "The Czechs were successful in burying the Kozyrev doctrine implicitly contained in Article 11 (of the principal treaty - author's note), having changed the formulation "to face a new division of Europe" into "contribute to overcoming the division of Europe" (...). By the change of terms, the Czechs neutralized any possible Russian objections against the accession of the CR to NATO which could follow from the treaty"¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Bombík, S.: O • o ide Rusku? Poznámky k pripravenej slovensko-ruskej zmluve. SME, 26 August, 1993.

¹¹¹ Národná obroda, 27 August, 1993.

¹¹² SME, 26 November, 1993.

¹¹³ SME, 23 September, 1993.

¹¹⁴ Akino - Smith, op. cit., p. 7: Interview with Dr. Josef Hajek, 3rd Department Head, Czech Foreign Ministry, 19 November 1993.

In other words, Russian diplomacy, conducted in the spirit of the Kozyrev doctrine, managed to gain its first diplomatic success in case of Slovakia. The Slovak-Russian relations, thanks also to that success, began to develop in other directions than those between Russia and the remaining Visegrád countries.

3.2.1.2. Russian crisis of 1993 and its consequences for foreign policy

A gradual change in the "Russocentrist" American policy may be observed from the end of the year 1993 in consequence of internal dramatic events in Moscow in September and October 1993, when President Yeltsin declared a state of emergency, and with the military support of the army he quelled the opposition Parliament. After the adoption of the new constitution in the referendum of 12th December 1993, the authoritarian presidential regime was introduced in Russia (with the Parliament playing merely a marginal role).¹¹⁵ On top of that, the radical nationalistic LDPR of V. Zhirinovskiy won the parliamentary elections. This showed that Russia was unable within a foreseeable period of time to proceed in its transformation in such a manner as to become, from the viewpoint of values and interests, a fully compatible part of the West Democracy in Russia had to defend itself by extremely undemocratic means.¹¹⁶ The task and the possibilities of Kozyrev's Ministry in formulating and implementing foreign policy of the RF after the autumn of 1993 were diminished in a principal way. The leaders of the so-called power sectors won a much larger space in the creation of the Russian policy than had been the case in the years 1992 and 1993.¹¹⁷ The letter from President Yeltsin to the heads of Western countries on 30th September, 1993 became the first signal of a significant shift in foreign policy. In the letter, President rejected the plans to enlarge NATO by the CEE countries and suggested instead that the security of those countries be guaranteed jointly by NATO and Russia¹¹⁸

Within the above period of time, which substantially influenced further development of domestic and foreign policy of the RF, a new military doctrine was approved. The last one indicated a qualitatively new direction of the Russian attitude to both its own and European security. The work on the text of the military doctrine was completed on 6th October 1993, two days after having shot to pieces the seat of the Russian Parliament. On 2nd November 1993, the Security Council of the RF approved the text of the document, and pursuant to the Presidential Decree No. 1833 of the same date the military doctrine became effective. Of course, it was not the Parliament who discussed and decided on the approval of the military doctrine (which usually is part of good manners in democratic states), since the Parliament was shot to pieces at that time and the new

¹¹⁵ For the analysis see Easter, G.M.: Preference For Presidentialism. Postcommunist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS. *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 2, January 1997, pp. 184-211.

¹¹⁶ See - Anderson Jr., R.D.: The Democratic Prospect in Russia. *Contention*, Vol. 3, No 2, Winter 1994, pp. 145-151; Brown, A.: The October Crisis of 1993: Context and Implications. *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 1993, 9, 3, pp. 183-195; Hofheinz, P.: Russia 1993: Europe's Time Bomb. *Fortune*, January 25, 1993, pp. 18-22; Yergin, D.- Gustafson, T.: *Russia 2010 and What It Means for the World*. The CERA Report. Vintage Books. A Division of Random House, Inc. New York, 1994, and others

¹¹⁷ Maljutin, M.: Power Structures in Russia, Anno 1994. in: *Post-Soviet Puzzles. Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union* (eds.: K. Segbers, S. De Spiegeleire). Vol. III, Baden-Baden 1995, pp. 553-590; McFaul, M.: A Precarious Peace. Domestic Politics in the Making of Russian Foreign Policy. *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Winter 1997/98, pp. 5-35; Porter, B.D.: Russia and Europe After the Cold War: The Interaction of Domestic and Foreign Policies. in: *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (ed: C.A. Wallander). The John M. Olin Critical Issues Series. WestviewPress, 1996, pp. 121-145.

¹¹⁸ On the letter of Yeltsin see e.g. Gazdag, F.: *The Visegrad Countries towards NATO*. Institute for Strategic and Defence Studies. Budapest 1997, p. 30-31.

one was elected as late as on 12th December, but the National Security Council, consisting predominantly of the leaders of the so-called power sectors.

The new military doctrine is characterized in the Introduction as a "document of the period of transition - the period of determining the Russian statehood (...), *of forming a new system of international relations*"¹¹⁹ (italics mine). The aim of the policy of Russian Federation in the period of transition in the sphere of nuclear weapons is the "removal of the danger of nuclear war through refraining from aggression against the RF and its allies".¹²⁰ This means that the aim is not nuclear disarmament but nuclear balance or, respectively, nuclear umbrella which Russia offers to itself and to its allies. No doubt such formulation of the aims of the nuclear policy set before the CEE countries an acute security dilemma: either attempt at accession to NATO or obtain nuclear guarantees for its own security, or accept the offer from Russia to become its allies. Russia gave up the Soviet principle of not using nuclear weapons as first, just the contrary, in the new doctrine it defines in a negative way against whom these may be used.¹²¹ The use of nuclear weapons of RF is possible, according to the doctrine, among the cases, also in case of "the defense of sovereignty against Russia or its allies" (...) and the like, but also "in case of enlargement of military blocks and alliances at the expense of military security of RF."¹²² This last instance directly responds to the endeavors of the CEE countries to become NATO members.

The military doctrine of RF does not leave out the infrastructure implementing the new military-political aims: "Russian Federation attributes predominant significance to the renewal and extension of cooperation of businesses and trade scientific-research institutes on the basis of mutual convenience, which form the defense-industrial potential of the CIS member states".¹²³ The development of military cooperation is presupposed in the doctrine also with the CEE countries, which in this sense are equal to the CIS states. The text says to the letter: "The development of mutually convenient cooperation with member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the states of Central and East Europe".¹²⁴ In the text of the document explicitly given are the CIS and CEE countries, all of the other countries of the world are given in the text as "other". The Russian military-industrial complex has been shown "green light" from the state administration and the newly formulated needs of security and vital interests of Russia require its revitalization, making the dynamism of development more rapid, they even presuppose its "world-wide leading position"¹²⁵

After the Russian autumn of 1993, the discussion of NATO enlargement acquired a qualitatively new dimension since the world has already been acquainted with a "new Russia". In January 1994, on the NATO summit, the program Partnership for Peace was adopted which created a framework for a realistic military-political dialogue between the Alliance and applicants for membership. The President of the USA, Bill Clinton, declared at the summit that the issue of NATO enlargement is not one of "whether" but "when".¹²⁶ The State Department spokesman, Nicholas Burns, reflecting on the American policy in relation to Russia in 1992 and 1993 noted

¹¹⁹ Osnovnyye polozheniya voyennoy doktriny Rossiyskoy Federatsii. Izlozheniye. Moskva 1993, p. 1.

¹²⁰ Ibidem, p. 3.

¹²¹ Ibidem, p. 3.

¹²² Ibidem, pp. 4-5.

¹²³ Ibidem, pp. 21.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, p. 7.

¹²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 18-20.

¹²⁶ See Goldgeier, J.M.: NATO Expansion: The Anatomy of a Decision. The Washington Quarterly, Winter 1998, pp. 85-102, here p. 86.

that "the greatest mistake of both Bush and Clinton administrations made in relation to the new independent states of the former Soviet Union had been remaining for a much too extended period of time on Russocentrist positions, instead of developing important relations with Ukraine and other republics".¹²⁷ In other words, Kozyrev failed to achieve his main aim: to renew strategic positions of Russia in the world policy, including its position in Europe, in its role of a close ally and strategic partner of the United States. However, in defense of Kozyrev it should be said that the essential feature of his failure was not rooted in his lack of diplomatic competence, but predominantly in the domestic development of Russia, which culminated in autumn 1993. After autumn 1993, the main word in formulating the foreign policy of RF did no longer belong to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but to the power structures, which had supported Yeltsin in his domestic struggle with opposition, especially to the Ministry of Defense headed by Pavel Grachov.¹²⁸

The years 1994 and 1995 were not successful for the implementation of Kozyrev doctrine in relation to the CEE countries despite that fact that Slovakia fell out of the first wave of integration within Western structures. Russia failed to stop the process of NATO enlargement and enforce its own vision of European security and parallel getting closer to the Western structures along with the CEE countries. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives could hardly hide their disappointment over the policy of the United States toward "new Russia" in Europe, which found its fullest expression in their bitter rhetoric. In reaction to the publication of Study on NATO Enlargement in September 1995¹²⁹ which, among other things, admitted the need in relation to Russia to take into consideration geopolitical changes in Europe and to amend the Conventional Forces Treaty in Europe (CFE) of 1990, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikolay Afanasyevsky, stated: "We strictly reject the NATO study on the future enlargement of the Alliance eastward in exchange for amending the Conventional Arms Treaty in Europe in favor of Russia". The disappointed Kozyrev added: "Russia may not accept any treaty in exchange for NATO enlargement. We reject the NATO enlargement, and this is why there cannot be any trading on this issue".¹³⁰ A good diplomat, however, cannot ever afford saying "never any treaty". Kozyrev's removal from the post of the Minister toward the end of 1995 was only a question of time. In January 1996 he was replaced by the then head of Foreign Intelligence Service, Yevgeniy Primakov, who, what Kozyrev principally had rejected, turned into the main object of "trade" in the negotiations with NATO on enlargement eastward.

3.2.2. Primakov Doctrine

Primakov's policy is in two fields - post-Soviet territory and Central Europe - fully comparable with what has been formulated and what the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been striving for during his predecessor. There, however, do exist at least two principal differences (one in the domestic position and the other one in global strategy) between the first two Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation under post-Soviet conditions:

1. Primakov was able to regain for his field of operation what Kozyrev had lost after the autumn of 1993 - he renewed the positions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in making Russian foreign policy. After the presidential elections in 1996, two major events happened in this respect: 1.

¹²⁷ The Ukrainian Weekly. Special Year End Edition, Vol. LXIV, No. 52, December 29th, 1996

¹²⁸ Rahr - Krause, op. cit., p. 16.

¹²⁹ Study on NATO Enlargement. Brussels, 1995.

¹³⁰ SME, 22 September, 1995.

Those representatives of power structures had been revoked from the Government and the nearest vicinity of the President, who reached the peak of Russian politics in autumn 1993, headed by Generals Pavel Grachov and Alexander Korzhakov; 2. New coordinating body was formed for the President, entitled Foreign Policy Council, headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yevgeniy Primakov. The latter commented on this fact as follows: "My Ministry has gained effective control over making foreign policy"¹³¹

2. Both Kozyrev and Primakov shared a joint aim in foreign policy: to re-establish the position of Russia in world policy which could be comparable to the previous position of the Soviet Union. However, the principal difference between them remains in their understanding of achieving the aim. Whereas Kozyrev saw the aim in establishing strategic partnership with the United States, Primakov recognized it in its very opposite: "Russia must become active actor of international doings in the whole world - Middle East, Asia, and anywhere else - just like it was toward the end of the Soviet era. Russian foreign policy must defend Russian national interests and face the development of international relations in direction to forming a unipolar world under the command of the USA".¹³²

Primakov's policy departed from the thesis that even though Russia may not achieve topical leading position of the United States in the world policy, it still may contribute significantly to the creation of the so called multipolar world which will reinstall Russia in the position of one of the centers of world policy. The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs includes among the countries which should contribute to the division of world power the following: European Union, China, Japan, ASEAN (South-East Asia), Latin America, and, of course, the United States and Russia (including CIS).¹³³ Primakov's version of the multipolar world for which he managed to gain almost absolute support at home - unlike his predecessor who failed to gain such support for the strategic development of the relations with the USA - served as the justification of the policy of approaching of Russia with China, Iran, and Iraq during the course of the year 1996. In the opinion of Ariel Cohen, Primakov's policy represents a challenge for the United States in at least two strategically important areas - the Persian Gulf and Taiwan Straits. Besides, "Primakov is trying to achieve exclusive position on Russia at the Kavkaz and in Central Asia, supports the inevitability of the CIS countries integration with Russia, he is a proponent of the union with Belarus, and enforces the use of power in the former USSR region". In Cohen's view, the Primakov doctrine might be defined as a "policy attempts in decreasing the power and influence of the United States and, while simultaneously increasing the power and influence of Russia in the Central East and Eurasia."¹³⁴

One of the aims of the offensive opened at all critical places and issues of world policy was - among other things - to prepare for Primakov better positions for negotiating with NATO on its enlargement into Central Europe. Toward the close of his career, Kozyrev had become unable even to negotiate this issue, but Primakov proved to be a much more realistic strategist. It cannot be claimed that NATO in the person of Primakov had not welcomed this change in the Russian

¹³¹ Globe, P.: Primakov's New/Old Line. RFE/RL 1996, August 12.

¹³² Ibidem.

¹³³ See: Koleshnichenko, T.: *Nasha vneshnyaya politika ne mozhet byt' politikoy gosudarstva vtorogo sorta - Primakov po povodu otnosheniy s NATO*. Rossiyskaya gazeta, 17 December, 1996.

¹³⁴ Cohen, A.: The "Primakov Doctrine": Russia's Zero-Sum Game with the United States. FYI, 1997, No 167, December 15. See also Meier, A.: *Primakov Doctrine Aims at Global Role for Russia - With or Without Yeltsin*. Jinn Magazine, 24.9.1996; Simon, G.: *Russia's Identity and International Politics*. *Aussenpolitik III/97*, pp. 245-266, here p. 253, etc.

attitude, at least in the question of Central Europe, since NATO indeed wanted and needed to reach agreements with Russia.¹³⁵ In Primakov's view, there exist two main issues of tension in the relations to the West: NATO enlargement and the attitude of the West to integration processes within the CIS.¹³⁶ Primakov's "Central-European" policy was, therefore, in the years 1996-1997 predominantly concentrated on the issue of NATO enlargement.

3.2.3. Russia, Central Europe, and NATO enlargement

3.2.3.1. Russian arsenal of retaliation steps

In the years 1996 and 1997 Russia demonstrated - fully in accordance with the Primakov doctrine - what it is able to do in case the NATO enlargement shall be a unilateral procedure or, respectively, the Russian requirements are not complied with. One may specify at least ten spheres or foreign-policy and security issues in which Russia has undertaken specific steps, or tried to make use of them as tools of preventive deterrent.

1. *Unilateral revision of performing the liabilities following from the START 1 and START 2 Treaties on decreasing the number of warheads*; even during the visit of US Minister of Defense, William Perry, in Moscow in April 1995, the Chairperson of the Council of Federation (upper chamber of the Parliament of RF), Vladimir Shumeiko, for the first time clearly communicated to the American side that if NATO is enlarged, the Russian Parliament shall not ratify START 2 as a treaty not corresponding to security interests of Russia.¹³⁷ Moreover, in January 1996, the then Minister of Defense, Pavel Grachov, admitted that the Russia might revise of even START 1 treaty.¹³⁸ The fact is that the American Congress ratified START 2 in January 1997, whereas the Russian Parliament did not do so even in the middle of the year 1998. Contrary to that, Russia approached the United States with the request for a five-year postponement of the implementation of START 2 treaty. The threat of non-ratifying START 2, or unilateral revision the obligations following for Russia from START 1, belonged among the arguments of heaviest caliber of Moscow in the negotiations concerning NATO enlargement.¹³⁹

2. *Termination of withdrawal of tactic nuclear weapons from the Western border of Russia and increasing their number on the territory of Belarus*; this possibility was admitted in October 1996 by Grachov's successor to the post of the Minister of Defense of RF, Igor Rodionov.¹⁴⁰ Despite the fact that the process of integration of Russia and Belarus continues slowly within the framework of creating a union (the treaty was signed in April 1996) - especially in political and economic fields, in the field of military cooperation marks quite a realistic progress. On 2nd April, 1997, the Supreme Council of the Commonwealth of RF and Belarus adopted the "General Principles of building the armed forces of Belarus and Russian Federation and making use of the military infrastructure." Simplification of legislation was agreed, implementation of common

¹³⁵ See e.g. The NATO-Russia relationship is a key feature of European security. Letter from the Secretary General. NATO Review No 3, May-June 1997, Vol. 45, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Garnett, Sh.: "Medved', zastryavshiy v Velikoy Tesnote", ili Ogranicheniya rossiyskoy moshchi. Pro et Contra, Zima 1997, pp. 5-20, here p. 10.

¹³⁷ Portnikov, V.: Wiliam Perry - Pavel Grachov. Duel' vmesto diyaloga. Zerkalo nedeli, 8.04.1995.

¹³⁸ Pravda, 5.01. 1996.

¹³⁹ For the explanation of the Russian standpoint see e.g. Nazarkin, Y.: Strategicheskiye vooruzheniya i bezopasnost' Rossii. Issledovaniye CMI MGIMO, No. 10. Moskovskiy Gosudarstvennyy Institut Mezhdunarodnykh Otnosheniy (Universitet) MID RF. Moskva, janvar' 1997.

¹⁴⁰ Národná obroda, 2.10.1996.

programs in the formation of armies, the creation of the system of joint command, etc. The work on the elaboration of the joint military doctrine continues, the air defense troops jointly defend and monitor the air space, and the Russian leaders do not conceal the fact that the formation of a military-political union with Belarus - to which other post-Soviet states should gradually accede - is motivated by the very fact of NATO enlargement eastward.¹⁴¹

3. *Revision of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE)* ; Russia is prepared to unilaterally revise its liabilities following from CFE, if its requirements to change the limits of conventional weapons in its favor are not be observed. This requirement of Moscow has undergone a certain development. As early as in 1993, Russia asked that the effectiveness of the regulation of the so-called flank limitations be terminated, according to which in the areas of contact of the NATO countries and the former Warsaw Treaty countries only limited numbers of conventional armaments are permitted. The requirement from Russia was predominantly motivated by the development of the situation of crisis in the Northern Kavkaz.¹⁴² In June 1995, Russia increased its requirements in such a manner that there is need to take into account the changes after the dissolution of Warsaw Treaty, and also the fact that CFE no longer correspond to the security interests of RF¹⁴³ One should here note that the Study on NATO Enlargement of 1995 indicated a possible agreement of NATO with this requirement. In April 1997, Russia once again asked for extensive revision of CFE, by which it conditioned its agreement with NATO enlargement.¹⁴⁴

4. *A threat of destabilization of Russian armed forces as a threat of destabilization of security of Europe*; this intimidating argument was formulated at the turn of the years 1996 and 1997 by the minister of Defense of RF, I. Rodionov.¹⁴⁵ In other words, the Russian military élite indicated that in case of the military isolation of Russia and refusal to provide financial assistance to the RF forces from the NATO countries, their destabilization may occur, as well as the emergence of violence temptations among officers which, consequently, may cause a loss of control in the Russian Army generally, and the control over the immense Russian nuclear potential especially. This argument had already had a character of direct blackmailing.

5. *The development of military and technological cooperation with Iran* ; Russia rejected the protest of the United States against the deliveries of nuclear capacities to Iran. Russian Premier Victor Chernomyrdin rejected the cancellation of the signed treaty with Iran on this issue as early as in 1995. Moreover, the United States have a justified suspicion that Russian arms get into Iran through China.¹⁴⁶ Russian side made no exceptional endeavors to convince the American one of the opposite, at least in the process of negotiations on NATO enlargement in the first half of the year 1997.

6. *The development of relations of strategic partnership with China* ; in December 1996, after long years of tense relations, an historical visit of Chinese Premier Li Pcheng took place in

¹⁴¹ Gol'ts, A.: Nash otvet Atlantistam. Itogi, 13.05.1997. For perspectives of the creation of an union between Russia and Belarus see Rummyantsev, O.G.: Dal'neyshaya integratsiya Belorussiyi i Rossiyi: nekotoryye pravovyye aspekty. Moskva, 1997.

¹⁴² Pravda, 13.10. 1993.

¹⁴³ SME, 22. 09. 1995.

¹⁴⁴ SME, 14.04. 1997. For a detailed analysis see Arbatov, A.: Eurasia Letter: A Russian-U.S. Security Agenda. Foreign Policy, No. 104, Fall 1996, pp. 102-117.

¹⁴⁵ Národná obroda, 2.10. 1997; SME, 17.01. 1997.

¹⁴⁶ Portnikov, op. cit.; Cohen, A. - Philips, J.: Russia's Dangerous Missile Game in Iran. Executive Memorandum, No. 503. The Heritage Foundation, November 13, 1997.

Moscow. In the joint communiqué, of the Premiers, both Russia and China denounced the NATO enlargement eastward and expressed themselves in favor of building a multipolar world. A treaty was signed on the deliveries of Russian military aircraft Su-27 to China, as well their manufacture under Russian license. Russia manifested a great welcoming attitude toward China and expressed its readiness for the demarcation of the joint 4300 kms long border, which was subject to many years of contentions.¹⁴⁷ In April 1997, President Yeltsin visited China, which followed immediately after the so called March American-Russian summit in Helsinki which was devoted to the negotiations on the NATO enlargement.¹⁴⁸

7. Independent political line in the areas of crisis immediately related to the security of Europe: the Balkans and the Near East; Primakov demonstrated on several occasions the readiness of Russia to enforce its own political line - opposing to the policy of the United States - in long-years centers of tension which are subject to security interests of the USA, EU, and NATO. Russia raised a sharp protest against the intervention of the British SFOR troops in detaining the Serbian war criminals provided "nothing similar ever again happens".¹⁴⁹ Russia once again started to exert endeavors to reestablish the relations with anti-America disposed circles of Arabic countries, it manifested its readiness to become mediator in settling the conflicts in the Near East, it interfered effectively in a diplomatic way in averting the military attack of Western allies against Iraq in the year 1997.

8. An offer of security guarantees to the Baltic states and Slovakia ; Russia offered or, respectively, agreed to offering security guarantees during the year 1997 to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Slovakia in case they do not become the NATO members or decide for neutrality. Russia had not even excluded the United States or NATO joining the treaty on mutual safeguarding the security of those Central European countries, which do not become NATO members in the first wave. In other words, the suggestion of President Yeltsin of September 1993 was repeated, this time under new circumstances and in new form. In the former, it was a group offer, in the latter a bilateral one. The Baltic countries unambiguously rejected the Russian security offer¹⁵⁰, but not so Slovakia. The United States took up an attitude of rejection toward the Russian proposal to solve the position of the CEE countries saying they provide the guarantees merely to its allies¹⁵¹ In any case, Russia demonstrated that it was ready to be looking for their own allies in Central Europe among the anticipated NATO non-membership countries and that it wishes to preserve the role of a security actor within the region or, respectively, a kind of balance having a direct influence.

9. The development of economic relations with the Central European countries faith the aim of preserving the Russian influence in the region and threatening of economic sanctions; i February 1997, two conceptual materials were published: 1. The Line of Russian Federation in Developing Relations with the Baltic States (RF President Administration)¹⁵²; 2. Central and Eastern Europe and Interests of Russia (Council on Foreign and Security Policy, The Fund on the

¹⁴⁷ SME, 30.12. 1996.

¹⁴⁸ See e.g. Russett, B. - Stam, A.: Russia, NATO, and the Future of U.S. - Chinese Relations. Political Science Department, Yale University, 1997.

¹⁴⁹ SME, 15.07. 1997.

¹⁵⁰ SME, 28.10. 1997.

¹⁵¹ SME, 21.05. 1997.

¹⁵² See Trenin, D.: Baltiyskaya koncepsiya Rossii. Nezavisimaya gazeta, 11.03.1997.

Development of Parliamentarism in Russia).¹⁵³ The materials contained a complex analysis of Russian interests in both of the key regions of Central Europe and the possibilities of increasing the economic influence of Russia in these countries. The authors of both documents departed from the need of a so called "asymmetric reply" of Russia to the NATO's military expansion from the East. The reply should rest in the economic expansion of Russia westward, first of all, to the Central European region.¹⁵⁴ In other words, the countries, which reject the membership in NATO, should enjoy advantages in the economic relations with Russia, and vice versa. The argument on economic sanctions - in case of continuing heading for NATO - was publicly employed in March 1997 by the ambassadors of RF to the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. On the conference "Slovakia and NATO" in Bratislava on 5th March, 1997, Ambassador of RF to Slovakia Sergey Zotov, inter alia, said: "The question is whether Russia will be able to develop business relations with East Europe regardless of the nature of military preparations on the territory of new NATO members. To act as if one was separable from the other one means to consciously pretend and build the economic cooperation between Russia and East Europe on rotten foundations, mainly if we have possibilities to purchase similar goods in the West."¹⁵⁵

10. *Enforcement of a policy of Russia's bilateral relations with key European countries at the expense of the relations with NATO*; the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Primakov, stressed that in case of not taking into account Russian interests in the issue of NATO enlargement, Moscow may in a considerable way reduce its relations with the Alliance and choose as its chief partners in the dialogue on European security key European countries - France and Germany¹⁵⁶ In other words, Moscow might attempt at composing a new "European concert", in which the first violin would be played by the traditional European super powers. Such policy could gradually lead to erosion of Western integration structures and forcing the United States out of the Continent. It was upon the explicit condition from the Russian part that the Founding Act between Russia and NATO was finally signed in the capital of France, the country which for quite a time has been in contention with the USA within NATO concerning the command of the so called Southern flank of the Alliance and several times so far has taken a standpoint of opposition to that of the USA and closer to the one of Moscow. In Primakov's view, "Russia has already found common language with many in Europe who no longer wish to blindly follow the American line".¹⁵⁷

The demonstrated arsenal of possible retaliation measures from the part of Russia in the years 1996-1997 documented that Primakov and "his Russian foreign policy" were really very well prepared for the negotiations with NATO and that they would not sell the positions of Russia so cheap, unlike Gorbachev and Shevardnadze in the beginning of the 1990s. NATO Council on the level of ministers of foreign affairs decided in December 1996 that "the summit of NATO on the level of heads of state in Madrid shall invite one or more countries which showed interest to join the Alliance to commence the talks on accession." At the same time it empowered Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana, to negotiate with RF to enter into agreement before the Madrid summit on 8th and 9th July 1997. In the period between January - May 1997, six rounds of

¹⁵³ Tsentral'naya i Vostochnaya Yevropa i interesy Rossii. Tezisy doklada. Sovet po vneshnej i oboronnoy politike, Fond razvitiya parlamentarizma v Rossii. Moskva, 1997.

¹⁵⁴ Na rasshireniye NATO otvetim ekonomicheskoy ekspansiyey. Deloviye lyudi, 1997, No. 75, mart 1997; For more details see Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁵ SME, 7.03. 1997. For more details see Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁶ Goble, P.: Primakov Offers NATO Both Carrots And Sticks. RFE/RL, 1997, March 3.

¹⁵⁷ Goble, 1996, op.cit.

negotiations talks took place between Solana and Primakov, which were a success, according to the statements from both of the respective parts. On 14th May 1997 an agreement was reached concerning the text of the Founding Act between NATO and Russia.¹⁵⁸

What was it if fact that Russia agreed on with NATO, how high was the "Russian price" for the enlargement of NATO and what may the CEE region expect from this historic act?

3.2.3.2. Russian claims

During the negotiations with NATO Russia insisted on satisfying ten essential requirements, which may be divided into three main groups: those of formal-legal, military-political, and economic character.

First of all, Russia claimed that the document regulating the relations between Russia and NATO formally had a binding character from the legal point of view. In Primakov's words: "Russia ma no longer rely on oral promises and declarations of Western leaders. The dialogue must be pu down in writing. Many a time they kept us telling one thing and then something differen happened".¹⁵⁹ The spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gennadiy Tarasov, explained Russian worries in this sense after the first round of Solana - Primakov talks in January 1997: "Moscow has from the very beginning considered the plans to enlarge NATO a breach of the unwritten agreement of the beginning of the 1990s when the then Soviet troops left the territories of • SFR, GDR, another Soviet satellites without Moscow demanding that a legally binding agreement be signed which would prevent the presence of NATO troops in those countries".¹⁶⁰ The legally binding agreement with NATO should have been, in the original Russian ideas, ratified by the parliaments of all of the 16 member states and by the Parliament of RF. Only then the accession of new members to NATO should have become topical.¹⁶¹

Six key military-political demands were of decisive importance for the development o negotiations: 1) Russia shall have right of veto in the decision making of NATO concerning serious issues pertaining to European security; 2) the first wave of NATO enlargement shall at the same time be the last one; 3) NATO shall not deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member countries; 4) precise limitations shall be defined for the number of NATO operational troops in new member countries; 5) limits shall be set for making use of the military infrastructure of new member countries for the activities of NATO; 6) essential revision of the Conventional Forces Treaty (CFE) or, respectively, preparation and signing of CFE 2 prior to NATO enlargement, which revision will consider security interests of Russia under new conditions. During the negotiations, Russia added to the above military-political demands also those of economic character: 1) membership of Russia in the G7 group or, later, the G8; 2) membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), which would enable avoiding of limitations for the exportation of Russian production; 3) membership in the Paris Club of Creditors, which would enable the emergence of the RF claim to return the old Soviet credits offered to the former third world countries.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. Paris, 27 May 1997.

¹⁵⁹ Goble, op. cit., 1996.

¹⁶⁰ SME, 22.01. 1997.

¹⁶¹ Goble, 1997, op.cit

¹⁶² Pokatilov, A.: I porazheniye ot pobedy nas MID nauchit otlichat'. Soglasheniye mezhdru NATO i Rossiye 27 maja skoreye vsego budet podpisano. Itogi, 13.05. 1997.

Before the first round of talks with J. Solana, Primakov indicated what he considered crucial for reaching a compromise: "We depart from the fact that the main measure of credibility of our NATO partners shall be their readiness to take into awareness our concerns on our own security. If we are able to agree on the modernization of the CFE in such a manner that the most reliable, i.e. material, guarantees of mutual European security were provided, then we shall be ready to sign a corresponding document on special relations with NATO."¹⁶³ German Chancellor Helmut Kohl who visited Moscow in January 1997 admitted "an agreement could be made with Moscow on NATO enlargement if Russia and Ukraine were granted reasonable compensations. I have every reason to assume that thanks to a coordinated attitude reasonable compensations could be achieved"¹⁶⁴ Kohl has not been any specific on what he understands under "reasonable compensations", whether it concerned merely what Primakov had indicated in relation to the CFE revision, or Russian demands of economic character were also included. In any case, it was clear that *a compromise must be achieved*.

The Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary - the most probable candidates to join the Alliance - showed during the negotiations their concerns predominantly on the Russian claims of military - political character. Acceptation of Russian claims would mean that their membership in NATO would only be one of "second category". In April 1997 negotiations were held in Washington between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the CR, J. Zielenec with the head of American diplomacy, Madelaine Allbright who assured her Czech colleague that "NATO will not admit any negotiations or solutions which would bypass the backs of the new member countries and that the agreement with Russia might decrease their defense capacities or touch upon their sovereignty".¹⁶⁵ NATO indeed did not yield to Russia, at least as concerns the first invited member countries, CR, Poland, and Hungary

Secretary General of NATO, Solana, considered this fact one of the major successes of the negotiations with Primakov: "We have found out that we can achieve simultaneously - first-rate new members of NATO as well as the transformed relations with Russia"¹⁶⁶ On the other hand, Primakov commented on the outcomes of the negotiations as follows: "On our level, we have achieved full understanding in all of the aspects of the document, including those military political".¹⁶⁷ The spokesman of the Russian President, Sergey Yastrzhembsky, also welcomed the outcomes of negotiations: "A number of guarantees have been included within the document which to a large measure put limitations on minimizing the negative influence of NATO enlargement on the national interests of Russia".¹⁶⁸

After these statements on both parts, a question arises, what it in fact was that NATO and Russia agreed on and how such an agreement may influence further process of NATO enlargement or the development of international situation in Europe and in the CEE region.

3.2.3.3. The compromise achieved and its consequences for Central Europe

Which of the Russian claims and to what degree were they satisfied? Let us attempt at their brie summing up.

¹⁶³ SME, 9.01. 1997.

¹⁶⁴ SME, 10.01. 1997.

¹⁶⁵ Weydenthal, de J.: Russia: NAT 's Solana Meets Primakov For Tense Talks. RFE/RL, 1997, 15 April.

¹⁶⁶ Speech by NATO Secretary General Javier Solana at Columbia University. New York, 29 July 1997.

¹⁶⁷ Práca, 15.05. 1997.

¹⁶⁸ SME, 15.05. 1997.

First of all, Russia failed to enforce signing of the classical international treaty, which would contain particularized formulations of conditions, obligations, and rights, precise specification of the period of effectiveness, etc. On the other side, NATO has not achieved what it originally wanted - adoption of merely a common declarative document in form of a Charter. A compromise was reached by adopting the Founding Act, which had been inspired by the form of the Helsinki Act of 1975. The Act shall not be subject to ratification by the parliaments of the NATO membership countries, although the Russian signatory did not exclude that this might happen in case of the Russian parliament. The binding character of the regulations of the Founding Act was confirmed by the signatures of the Heads of State and Government of 16 NATO member countries and the Russian President Boris Yeltsin on 27th May, 1997, in Paris, like it similarly happened in Helsinki in the year 1975. Not to speak of the fact that behind the signed heads of states on both sides stand the largest military groupings of contemporary Europe, which in itself is a sufficient guarantee of the Treaty.

Russia did not obtain the right of veto of the NATO decisions pertaining to the issues of European security. In the text, the following is given word by word: "The regulations of this Act do not in any case grant to NATO or Russia the right of veto on the performance of either party, nor any limitation of the right of NATO or Russia to take decisions and exert activities independently follow from these".¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, the entire part II of the Act wording gives a detailed schedule of consultations, establishment and operation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council which guarantees to Russia, at least, consulting participation in the decision-making on the issues of European security of those admitted by NATO. Javier Solana expressed this precisely, stating: "Russia shall not be able to block the NATO's own decisions. However, Russia may expect that NATO shall seriously hear and take into consideration its legitimate interests".¹⁷⁰

Russia also failed to obtain from NATO an explicitly formulated obligation that the first wave of NATO enlargement should also be the last. Contrary to that, in the text of the Act, the issue of further NATO enlargement is as a matter of fact not being mentioned directly. Madrid Declaration of NATO, which followed the signing of the Act, declares in Article 8: "We reaffirm that NATO remains open to new members under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Those countries that have expressed an interest in membership, however have not been invited to commence the accession talks today, remain in consideration for membership in the future. The Alliance expects to extend further invitations in coming years to nations willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership (...)". However, the second half of this sentence reads as follows: "(...) and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance and that the inclusion would enhance overall European security and stability". In other words, Madrid Declaration contains no passage, which would explicitly, state that the process of NATO enlargement will inevitably and really continue. The same Article contains also the following sentence: "(...) in order to enhance overall security and stability in Europe, further steps in the ongoing enlargement process of the Alliance should balance the security concerns of all Allies".¹⁷¹ Madrid Declaration is in the issue of further NATO enlargement influenced much more by the regulations on All-

¹⁶⁹ Founding Act, p. 4.

¹⁷⁰ Speech by NATO Secretary General, 29 July 1997.

¹⁷¹ Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation. Issued by the Heads of State and Government. Madrid, 8th July 1997, p. 3.

European security than is the NATO Council decision of December 1996 saying "clearly" that the first countries shall be invited on the Madrid summit in July 1997. Behind this "spirit and style of formulations" of Madrid Declaration one may recognize a considerable influence of half-year negotiations with Russia and the text of the Founding Act. In other words, one should not forget that all of the decisions of NATO - including, and maybe predominantly, the issues of further enlargement of the Alliance - shall not be made without a much more expressive consulting presence of Russia than was the case in the previous period. Article 11 of Madrid Declaration states: "The Founding Act reflects our (of Russia and NATO) shared commitment to build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security"¹⁷²

Avowal of the Alliance to the obligations not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members may be included within the successes of Russian diplomacy: "NATO membership countries reiterate that they have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy - and do not foresee any future need to do so".¹⁷³ A not so unambiguous success, at least as concerns direct formulations in the text of the Founding Act, achieved Russia in its claims to set limitations on the NATO operational troops and making use of the existing military infrastructure in new member states. True, Russia did not reach setting their precise limits, it, however, achieved definitions of its conditions: "NATO reiterates that in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defense and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. Accordingly, it will have to rely on adequate infrastructure commensurate with the above tasks. In this context reinforcement may take place, when necessary, in the event of defense against a threat of aggression and missions in support of peace consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE governing principles, as well as for exercises consistent with the adapted CFE Treaty, the provisions of the Vienna Document 1994 and mutually agreed transparency measures".¹⁷⁴

It should be stressed that the greatest satisfaction on the Russian part was evoked by the adoption of the joint obligation to substantially revise the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), which would consider a new security situation in Europe, including the existence of the enlarged NATO. As has been mentioned, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Primakov, prior to the commencement of talks in January 1997 conditioned by this fact any possible agreement of Russia to sign treaties with NATO.¹⁷⁵ During the visit of Madeleine Allbright in Moscow in the beginning of May 1997, the parties agreed that they undertake *to solve any remaining problems through CFE modernization*" (italics mine). In this relation, M. Allbright expressed a view that "USA yielded to Russia in everything in what it was possible to yield".¹⁷⁶

In other words, by the CFE revision Russia follows two principal aims at one time. First of all, decreasing the limits in the number of conventional forces specifically for each of the European countries would mean that NATO should not be allowed to deploy in these new member states any significant military force. In the agreement on the limits for conventional forces for CR,

¹⁷² Ibidem, p. 5.

¹⁷³ Founding Act, p. 7.

¹⁷⁴ Ibidem, p. 9.

¹⁷⁵ SME, 9.01. 1997.

¹⁷⁶ Pokatilov, 1997, op. cit.

Poland, and Hungary, precise limits for deploying "alien" (i.e. NATO) troops on their territories could be set in this way. Next, considering the fact that NATO, unlike WT, continues in its existence, Moscow wants in the CFE revision to preserve the limits of conventional forces for "groups of states". In such case, any further NATO enlargement in new countries would become questionable.¹⁷⁷ Accession of any further country would automatically presuppose further CFE revision. Should the opposite case occur, every new NATO member would have to substantially limit the number of their conventional forces which, of course, would inevitably decrease their capacity to contribute to the Alliance defense potential and, of course, the interest of the Alliance in such a member. The Founding Act indicates what direction the CFE revision should take: "The member States of NATO and Russia reaffirm that States Parties to the CFE Treaty should maintain only such military capabilities, individually or in conjunction with others, as are commensurate with individual or collective legitimate security needs, taking into account their international obligations, including the CFE Treaty".¹⁷⁸

The largest part of the passage of part IV of the Founding Act is devoted to the issue of CFE adaptation dealing with military-political matters.¹⁷⁹ Russia managed to interweave in the text the anticipated CFE revision with the elaboration of the Joint and General Security Model for Europe in the 21st century in the loft of OSCE, which was agreed at the Lisbon OSCE assessment conference in December 1996. In other words, Russian diplomacy succeeded in having indirectly placed the issue, through the CFE revision, on any future NATO enlargement into the OSCE agenda, which had been its long-time aim. According to the Founding Act, the negotiations on the conventional forces shall constitute one of the major issues (the text specifies 19 such issues altogether) of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council.¹⁸⁰ NATO avowed to the commitment to prepare a new framework treaty on the new CFE adaptation also in Article 24 of Madrid Declaration.¹⁸¹ The Minister of Foreign Affairs of RF, Primakov, declared immediately after signing the Act: "We believe that the practical implementation of the Founding Act will help to reinforce security in Europe. It will be shown in near future whether our optimism is justified. I am having in mind the ongoing negotiations in Vienna on the adaptation of CFE to the new post-confrontational situation in Europe".¹⁸²

In other words, the talks between Russia and NATO on the latter's enlargement eastward have not been finished by signing the Founding Act and go on in the negotiations on the adaptation of the CFE Treaty. Signing of the Founding Act cannot be taken as a clear victory of diplomacy of either party. There do exist, however, some essential facts which speak in favor of Russian diplomacy - *from the viewpoint of those CEE countries which will not become NATO members in the first wave* - despite the fact that it has not achieved satisfaction of all of its claims in signing the Founding Act. NATO did manage to obtain an "indirect" agreement from Russia with the first wave of enlargement, however, it met half-way with the global Russian claims which return Russia, on a qualitatively new level, into the security agenda of Europe after the cold war and the dissolution of the USSR. Further enlargement of NATO, if any, shall take place in a much more

¹⁷⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁸ Founding Act, p. 8.

¹⁷⁹ Ibidem, pp. 7-9.

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 6.

¹⁸¹ Madrid Declaration, p. 9.

¹⁸² See e.g. Nassauer, O.: *Conventional Forces in Europe - Arms Control at Risk*. Berlin Information Center for Transatlantic Security. Summit Briefing Paper, 97.3, 5 July 1997; McCausland, J.D.: *NATO and Russian Approaches To 'Adapting' the CFE Treaty*. ACA, 1997, etc.

interwoven structure of security commitments than has been the case so far. Besides, Primakov managed to separate in the Founding Act the NATO-Russia relations in Europe from those between USA and Russia in the world. In other words, the Founding Act does not force the Russian foreign policy to change, under his guidance, the content of the enforced foreign doctrine, as Primakov had demonstrated it successfully in the years 1996 and 1997. This is supported also by the text of the National Security Concept of Russian Federation approved half a year after signing the Founding Act: "The formation of a multi-polar world shall be a long-time process. The present stage is still characteristic of strong relapses of attempts to create a structure of international relations based on the unilateral, including military, solutions of key problems of world policy (...). The perspective of NATO enlargement eastward is unacceptable for Russia, since it represents a threat for its national security"¹⁸³

In consequence of the anticipated enlargement of NATO, the European security architecture shall not be based on the hierarchized system on the basis of CSCE, but will have a pluralistic character - of the institutions existing side by side.¹⁸⁴ The NATO Madrid summit of July 1997, as well as the EU summit in Luxembourg in December 1997 adopted a decision to enlarge eastward. This is the way in which a significant stage of forming a new architecture of Europe is being finished after the cold war. In the same manner, a significant stage of the Russian foreign policy has been finished in relation to the CEE countries, which has been developing predominantly against the background of the relations with the West. In the new situation one may expect an increase of realistic elements and a much greater variability of both individual and regional attitude in the foreign policy of Russia toward the post-Soviet area, Europe, and the CEE region. What tools may the Russian foreign policy make use of under new conditions and what are the perspectives of the development of the relations between Russia and the CEE countries

¹⁸³ Kontsepsiya Natsional'noy bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsiyi. Utverzhdena Ukazom Prezidenta Rossiysko Federatsiyi ot 17 dekabrya 1997 g. No 1300, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁴ See Zagorskiy, A.: Rossiya i rasshireniye NATO: endshpil'. Pro et Contra, Zima 1997, pp. 78-87.

4. Perspectives of the development of relations between the Russian Federation and the CEE countries

4.1. Russian interests and goals "after Madrid"

One may assume that one of the direct consequences of NATO decision on enlargement shall be growing Russian interest in the CEE countries in general. The tendency has to be expressed much stronger than in previous years to develop the relations with the CEE countries as partners "worth attention by themselves", not merely as to the relations between Russia and the West. One may expect that *individual and sub-regional attitudes* of Russia toward individual CEE countries and also the CEE parts becomes more intense. Despite this, due to objective geopolitical factors, the *old group* aims toward the CEE region as a whole shall remain preserved. In other words, the relations with CEE shall remain part of the Russia's *European policy*.

The main attention of the Russian security policy in the nearest future shall be concentrated on the CFE adaptation in such a way that the modernized or, respectively, new CFE II, be adopted, if possible, prior to the accession of the first CEE countries to NATO in the year 1999. In the middle-time perspective, the negotiations on the model of European security for the 21st century shall represent a priority at the OSCE. The main aim followed by Russia in both cases will be *that the first wave of NATO enlargement eastward remains the last one*. The completion of the process of NATO enlargement - under currently agreed conditions - shall remain the chief priority of Russian diplomacy. Any success in bilateral relations with any of the CEE countries, which may help achieving this aim, or improves the negotiation facilities of Russia in the security issues, shall be highly welcome. In this sense, Russia shall continue the *alternative* policy to that of the North-Atlantic Alliance in the CEE region.

As has been mentioned, despite the anticipated accession of the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary to NATO, Russia has not given up its attempt to maintain and ratify in treaties the neutral and nuclear-free status - *of the remaining CEE countries*. Pursuant to the traditional Russian attitude, the CEE region has become a zone of "security vacuum" which emerged after the withdrawal of Soviet troops in the beginning of the 1990s. Aleksey Arbatov considers the maintenance and fixation of this condition in treaties one of the most important tasks of the strategy of Russia's national security, its fourth imperative.¹⁸⁵ This *imperative* found its expression in the Foreign Policy Concept (MFA RF, 1993), in the letter from President Yeltsin to the leaders of Western countries (30th September, 1993), the Military Doctrine of RF (November 1993), and the National Security Concept of RF (December 1997) and manifests itself in a principally emphasized disagreement of Russia with NATO enlargement. This imperative of Russian foreign policy remains an unchanged and chief security interest of Russia in relation to the CEE region also after Madrid Summit in July 1997. Specific Russian initiatives in the year 1997 testify to this endeavor in a most expressive way. We are having in mind here the security

¹⁸⁵ Arbatov, A.: Rossiya: natsional'naya bezopasnost' v 90-ye gody. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 8-9, 1994, pp. 5-18, here p. 12. Arbatov in his study calls the four imperatives of Russian policy in relation to Europe as follows: the first imperative: an active policy of preventing conflicts on the borders of Russia; the second one: to advocate and defend the CFE of 1990 since this corresponds with the security interests of Russia, the third one: to prevent the formation of a wide anti-Russian coalition of European states.

guarantees offered to the Baltic States, as well as the readiness to offer them to Slovakia, should the latter ask for same.

4.1.1. Security guarantees offer to Baltic States and Slovakia

As early as in the beginning of the year 1997, Russia extended to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia an offer to provide them security guarantees in case they would not attempt at accession to NATO.¹⁸⁶ Estonian President, Gundis Ulmanis, made the following observation on that: "We do not intend to deal with Russian guarantees for Baltic countries even on the level of plain discussion".¹⁸⁷ Concerning the signing of Russian-Lithuanian treaty on common border of October 1997, Russian President reiterated his proposition to the Lithuanian President, Algirdas Brazauskas. According to the Russian proposition, the guarantees of security and neutrality for Baltic states would be fixed in treaties, whereas other partners could accede to the treaty.¹⁸⁸ The presidents of the three Baltic states at their regular summit in Palanga (Lithuania) in November 1997 simply stroke the Russian proposition off the agenda.¹⁸⁹ Another fact deserves attention, namely, that although the reiterated "autumn" proposition did not apply to Estonia any longer, all of the three Baltic countries took up a joint attitude. Baltic states learned their lesson from successful experiences of the Visegrád group in the beginning of the 1990s, and coordinate now their foreign policy, including their respective relations with Russia.

Slovakia's instance is just the opposite. It not only ceased to coordinate its foreign policy with its Visegrád neighbors, but the very representatives of Slovakia showed interest in the Russian security guarantees. The greatest initiative in this respect was developed by the Slovak National Party (SNP), which from the year 1994 has been member of government coalition and from the year 1995 has openly favored the strategy of neutrality for Slovakia.¹⁹⁰ Shortly before the official visit of the Russian Premier, Viktor Chernomyrdin, to Bratislava, the SNP Chairman, Ján Slota, had been welcomed on his own request by the Russian Ambassador to the Slovak Republic, Sergey Zotov. Ján Slota was interested in the opinion of the Russian part concerning the guarantees of neutrality offered to Slovakia by Russia.¹⁹¹ The SNP leader approached with a similar question the Ambassador of the USA to Slovakia, Ralph Johnson. Consequently, the Embassy of the USA in Bratislava issued a statement which said: "The United States offer the guarantees (only - the author) to its allies".¹⁹² Viktor Chernomyrdin himself provided the answer on behalf of the Russian party who said during his visit to Bratislava at the end of April 1997: "As

¹⁸⁶ See *Liniya Rossii v otnoshenii Baltiyskikh stran. Soobshcheniye Press-sluzhby Administratsii Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii*, 11. fevralya 1997.

¹⁸⁷ • TK (SME, 22.07. 1997).

¹⁸⁸ • TK (SME, 27.10. 1997).

¹⁸⁹ • TK (SME, 12.11. 1997).

¹⁹⁰ After the parliamentary elections in October 1994, coalition government was set up headed by Premier Vladimír Mečiar. The government was made of the Movement for Democratic Slovakia (Chairman V. Mečiar), Slovak National Party (Ján Slota), and the Association of Workers of Slovakia (Ján Čupčák). The nearest parliamentary elections shall take place in September, 1998. For more details on the Slovak debate on foreign policy in relation to the development the relations with Russia see Duleba, A.: *Blind Pragmatism of Slovak Eastern Policy. Actual Agenda of Slovak-Russian Bilateral Relations. Occasional Papers Series A01. Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association. Bratislava 1996.*

¹⁹¹ SME, 11.04. 1997.

¹⁹² SME, 21.05. 1997.

*far as neutrality is concerned, we shall support any solution, predominantly the one pertaining to this orientation. For us, all of these questions are clear" (italics mine).*¹⁹³

Regardless of the future development of both interior and foreign policy of the Baltic states, Slovakia, and those of the CEE countries which have not been invited to join NATO in the first wave, the above cases clearly illustrate the unchangeable character of Russia's security interests within the CEE region: *to prevent membership of further countries of the region in NATO and achieve their neutrality status*. Russia is willing, after Madrid, to proceed even further: it is prepared to offer to those countries *unilateral* security guarantees, should they choose neutrality. However, the guarantees accepted from one part de facto mean not neutrality, but the status of a Russian ally. The difference in foreign and security policies between Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary on the one hand and the remaining CEE countries ("Have-Nots") on the other after Madrid 1997, shall reside predominantly in the fact that for the successful Visegrád Three their *membership in NATO changes itself from the aim of the foreign policy into its tool*, including the relations with Russia.¹⁹⁴

In case of "Have-Nots", this is just the contrary, the membership in the Western security structures remains the aim of their foreign policy, if, however, they do not decide for its change in consequence of the internal development, and also of the influence of external factors, among which the Russian one certainly will not be missing. Enlargement of NATO by Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in the first wave (in the year 1999) and interruption of the process commenced for an extended period of time, if not accompanied by multiple intensification of cooperation programs between NATO and "Have-Nots" within the CEE region,¹⁹⁵ will cause *sharpening* of the international situation in the region and an increase of national rivalry among the states. From the middle-term, and in case of some of the countries also of the short-term perspective, the interruption of the process of integration within NATO may have unfavorable impact not only on their security position within the CEE region, but also on their further domestic transformation processes.

Russia, if it is to succeed in the enforcement of its interests in CEE in the long-term perspective - in the form as it declares them - needs in even before the first wave of enlargement of NATO (1999) to achieve a *precedent* in the region. It needs that any of the CEE countries in the new conditions accepts outwardly the international position according to the model of Finland in the period of the cold war. In this respect, the eyes of greatest hope in Russia look at Slovakia. In the Ambassador's Zlotov view: "The basis of a deep and multilateral cooperation (between RF and SR - the author) is a similarity of attitudes of Russia and Slovakia to the key questions of European and international security (...). Russia highly appreciated the attitude of Slovakia which declared that in the NATO enlargement Russian interests are to be considered, that without Russia's participation no firm security system on the continent may be built".¹⁹⁶

None of the CEE countries may imitate the model of Finland of the period following World War II due to objective domestic and external economic, international, and political factors, not to

¹⁹³ Pravda, 30.04. 1997.

¹⁹⁴ See Calka, M.: The Place of Ukraine in Polish Foreign Policy. in: Ukraine, Central Europe and Slovakia: interest in and prospects for cooperation (ed.: A. Duleba). International Conference, Bratislava, October 24-25, 1997. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, pp. 21-24; here p. 23.

¹⁹⁵ See Asmus, R.D. - Larrabee, F.S.: NATO and the Have-Nots. Reassurance After Enlargement. Foreign Affairs, Vol. 75, No. 6, November/December 1996, pp. 13-20.

¹⁹⁶ Zotov, S.: Potreba vyšších foriem spolupráce. Media kurier, Vol. III, No. XV, January 1998, pp. 5-7.

speak of subjective ones. The country in question would in fact declare neutrality, however, de facto it would become a Russian ally. The country which would slow down or, respectively, terminate the political and economic transformation and would come close to the political and economic system of Russia on the basis of the so-called post-communist pragmatism, electoral democracy, and clientele capitalism.

Baltic countries rejected the Russian proposition of security guarantees. Officially, Slovakia has taken a neutral position for the time being, despite the activities of the political forces from the Government of the Premier, Vladimír Mečiar (1994-1998). In other words, the Russian security initiative in relation to CEE *in its pure form* has not achieved any clear and obvious success within the region and it is hardly probable that the situation will change in the near future. In consequence of the experience it is possible to expect a shift of the center of gravity in the Russian attitude to CEE on questions of *economic cooperation* despite the fact that the security aims shall remain preserved. This feature, which may be denoted as *economization* of the relations between Russia and Central Europe, shall be characteristic feature of the development of the relations between Russia and Central Europe in the period "after Madrid" in the combination with the above given *individual and sub-regional attitude*. The possibilities in this sense are indicated by the attempt to formulate the concept of the so-called "asymmetric response" of Russia in the CEE region.

4.1.2. An attempt to formulate the "asymmetric response"

In the Russian expert circles in the beginning of the year 1997, voices calling for a change to CEE could be heard. The essence of the need for such change was formulated by Dmitriy Trenin who criticized the above mentioned official document named The Line of Russian Federation in Relation to Baltic Countries, published by the President's administration on 11th February, 1997. In the opinion of Trenin, "Russia has not yet learned to find the right tone in its relations with minor neighbors, specifically with the former Warsaw Treaty allies and the former USSR republics. Geopolitics and geostrategy still prevail in the Russian foreign-policy thinking *at the expense of geoeconomics*. In consequence of this, many situations are analyzed from the viewpoint of potential threats, and not from the viewpoint of *possibilities being on offer*" (italics mine)¹⁹⁷.

The RF Council on Foreign and Defense Policy and the Fund for the Development of Parliamentarism in Russia¹⁹⁸ with the financial support of the company Rosprom presented a report in February 1997 in Moscow of the research on the topic "Central and East Europe and the Interests of Russia".¹⁹⁹ The report deserves attention since this is in fact the first attempt to make an overall assessment of Russia in relation to CEE considering the first round of NATO enlargement on the one hand, and on the other one, from the viewpoint of long-term economic (*geoeconomic*) interests of Russia. As follows from the statement of President Yeltsin's

¹⁹⁷ Trenin, D.: Baltiyskaya kontseptsiya Rossiya. Nezavisimaya gazeta, 11.03.1997.

¹⁹⁸ The Chairman of the Board of the Council is Sergey Karaganov, who is at the same time the Deputy Director of the Institute of Europe with the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Director General of the Fund is Serge Mndoyants. What deserves attention is the fact that one of the Senior Research Fellows is the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Yuliy Aleksandrovich Kvitsinky, the author of the Soviet policy in relation to the CEE countries in the beginning of the 1990s and at the present time, adviser to the Chairman of the Council of Federation of Russian Federation (upper chamber of the parliament).

¹⁹⁹ Tsentral'naya i Vostochnaya Yevropa i interesy Rossii. Tezisy doklada. Fond razvitiya parlamentarizma v Rossii, Sovet po vneshney i oboronnoy politike. Moskva, 1997.

Counselor Dmitriy Riurikov, "the report lies on the desk of every state official in whose labor conscription are the relations with that region".²⁰⁰ One may briefly sum up the essence of the new attitude or, respectively, the so-called "asymmetric response" as follows: *Russia should respond to military expansion of NATO by economic expansion into the CEE region*.²⁰¹ We shall attempt to briefly explain the logic of the new geoeconomic attitude of Russia to the CEE region.

The authors of the analysis depart from the thesis that enlargement of EU and NATO do not represent parallel and mutually complementary processes, just on the contrary, these *are alternative and mutually blocking processes*. They reached the above conclusion on the basis of comparison of the anticipated costs for enlargement NATO and EU and the fact that "the major part of costs of NATO enlargement shall have to be borne by exactly those countries of Western Europe, which at the same time speculate over the problem of how to decrease their own costs in the EU expansion".²⁰² Entry in the EU of new members shall be extended into several long stages, and in case of NATO political aspects of enlargement shall for a very long time prevail over the military ones. Even after the accession of the first countries, both NATO and EU shall have very long and very strenuously acquire new territories, which gives Russia a chance to attempt to at least minimize the losses from the processes of enlargement of Western structures for its own interests.²⁰³ In the following text, the authors concentrate on the process of EU enlargement.

The authors come to the conclusion that all of the CEE countries (both leaders and outsiders of the process of integration with EU) shall inevitably display an increased interest in Russia and its markets, predominantly due to two reasons: 1) higher dynamics of the growth of the trade deficit of the CEE countries in trading with EU than in trading with Russia; 2) unreadiness of many essential sectors of the CEE countries national economies for the integration with EU.²⁰⁴ According to the report, it is first of all the latter reason, which shall become the main stimulus for the renewal of endeavors in CEE to return to eastern markets. The outsiders of the integrati process in the region will not have any other chance, anyway, in both long-term and medium-term perspective than to develop economic cooperation with Russia and the CIS.

According to the authors, Russia faces a dilemma: to prefer cooperation with the CEE countries standing closes to Russia (Balkan in both cultural and political sense) which, however, suffer from lesser developed economies, or to set as an aim of foreign-economic strategy in the regi

²⁰⁰ Nikonov, V.: Fantóm minulosti aleb o •o ešte spája strednú Európu s Ruskom. Sme v strednej Európe, No. 7, 1997, p. 2.

²⁰¹ See conference proceedings in which the research report was presented: Na rasshireniye NATO otvetim ekonomicheskoy ekspansiyey. Delovyye lyudi, No. 75, Mart 1997, p. 9.

²⁰² Tsentral'naya..., op. cit., p. 3. In case of NATO, the estimates of the upper level of costs are around 60 billion USD, see Asmus, R.D. - Kugler, R.L. - Larrabee, F.S.: What Will NATO Enlargement Cost? Survival, Vol. 38, No. 3, Autumn 1996, pp. 5-26. In case of EU, estimated costs are around 8 billion ECU, see e.g. ..Baldwin, Francois, and Portes: Costs and Benefits of Eastern Enlargement: the impact on the EU and Central Europe. Economic Policy, 1997; see also Costs, Benefits and Chances of Eastern Enlargement for the European Union. Bertelsmann Foundation, Research Group on European Affairs (eds.). Gütersloh 1998, and the like.

²⁰³ Ibidem, p. 4.

²⁰⁴ Ibidem, p. 7; summary deficit of the CEE countries in the trade with EU rose from 1.5 billion ECU in 1991 to 7.6 billion ECU in 1995; in case of trade with Russia, summary deficit of the CEE countries in 1991 represented 2.0 billion USD and in 1995 5.3 billion USD. In the trade of CEE countries with Russia, it is inevitable to consider the fact that the business assets of RF are substantially lower, since part of these is being used considerably less being spent for the fees for the transit of Russian raw material into Western Europe and another part for gradual payment of the old Russian debt from the time of COMECON which had originally represented 7 billion USD.

to penetrate to the more developed countries in the region despite the fact that the inclination to cooperate with Russia in those countries is lower (Central Europe in both cultural and political sense with the exception of Slovakia). The authors of the material recommend the acceptance of the second alternative.²⁰⁵ However, they do realize at the same time that Russia lack sufficient potential to become economic and trade alternative for the CEE countries instead of EU. Russia should not, however, even set such an aim. Contrary to that, it should become a partner of EU in its relation to CEE in such a way that the relations with EU do not mean for the CEE countries an alternative to the relations with Russia. For the CEE countries, the strategy of development of relations with EU and the development of relations with Russia should be mutually complementary, so that the basis of the new economic architecture of Europe is a trilateral context of cooperation: EU-CEE-Russia.²⁰⁶

According to the report, Russia may become strategic partner for EU in CEE in *that it will open its markets for those sectors of the economy of the countries within the region, which face biggest problems with transformation*. However, "it would be impractical to create an illusionary image that Russia, more than its partners, needs to save certain sectors of the economy of CEE countries, achieving thus a kind of softening of the process of their integration in EU. *This is merely a ground for establishing equal and mutually convenient relations of Russia with EU and the states of the region which shall enable to prevent the emergence of economic division of Europe. Creating more favorable conditions for the growth of export of the partners* (CEE countries - the author) *into its own market, Russia shall be entitled to ask for concessions and consideration of its interests with the trilateral cooperation with EU and CEE countries*" (italics mine).²⁰⁷ The authors of the analysis propose the following possible model of trilateral cooperation: Western investments into the problematic sector of the economy of CEE countries - the production in the CEE country - Russian business partner capable of placing its production in Eastern markets.²⁰⁸

It is obvious that under "problematic sectors" of the economy of the CEE countries the authors of the report have predominantly in mind agriculture, machinery, heavy and defense industry, power engineering, etc., which contracted greatest pains in economic reforms after the fall of the communist regimes and the extinction of COMECON markets. These branches were most centralized in the past and were massively subsidized by state grants and it is hard for them to cope with market mechanism and the loss of previous "Eastern markets". The change of ownership structures in those sectors was carried out, and in many countries still is, very slow and with difficulties, while the governments are frequently forced to partly proceed in subsidizing those enterprises (the degree of government intervention depends from the situation in individual CEE country) due to their unattractiveness for foreign investors and the state policy of the support of employment. The management of those sectors in the CEE countries has traditionally belonged to the politically conservative groups and opponents of both economic and political reforms²⁰⁹

It is these sectors, which Alexander Bykov is having in mind when he says that "the initial euphoria (of the pro-West orientation in CEE) started to gradually fade away when it hit the

²⁰⁵ Ibidem, p. 7.

²⁰⁶ Ibidem, p. 8.

²⁰⁷ Ibidem, p. 12.

²⁰⁸ Ibidem, p. 13.

²⁰⁹ See e.g. Olsson, M.: Corporate Governance in Economies of Transition. The Case of the Slovak Republic. Uppsala Papers in Financial History, Report No. 5, 1995.

inertia of economic structures" (note and italics mine).²¹⁰ Of course, insufficient competitiveness in the developed markets forces those enterprises to focus on less demanding markets and exert pressure on the government that its policy be accommodated to their economic interests. It is paradoxical that the authors recommend Russia not to orientate to cooperation with weaker economies in the CEE region, since this would only result in *a mere conservation of backwardness*. On the other hand, the more developed CEE countries with the best chances for the integration into EU are recommended the orientation on less demanding Russian markets, which, however, may have the same effect – *the conservation of mutual backwardness*. It is not clear why exactly those sectors of the CEE economies should become the basis for establishing equal and mutually convenient relations between Russia and EU. This seems to be the weakest point of the argumentation of the authors of the new *geo-economic approach* of Russia to the CEE countries.

4.1.3. Responses from Central Europe

The questions asked and attempted to be answered by the Russian experts in the beginning of the year 1997, had been raised and also answered a long time ago in the CEE countries. Of course, this does not pertain to all of the CEE countries in equal proportion, it, however, certainly does to Poland. As early as in 1994, there was a discussion in Poland on the content of relations with Russia after the victory of the leftist DLA (Democratic Left Alliance) in parliamentary elections, which formed the coalition government with PPP (People's Peasant Party) headed by Waldemar Pawlak. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Andrzej Olechowski, subordinated directly to the President, fought a real battle of the content of Polish Eastern policy with the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations headed by Leslaw Podkanski, which was subordinated to the Prime Minister and the Government

As Marek Calka states: "Some representatives of the ruling coalition viewed the development of economic relations with the East not only as a chance of improving Poland's balance of trade but above all as *a way of strengthening those sectors of the economy that found it especially hard to cope with economic reforms* (...) (agriculture, heavy industry, the defense industry, parts of the former fuel and energy complex). The implementation of this concept (...) primarily taking into account the needs and interests of the circles connected with the above mentioned branches of the economy, required the introduction of fundamental changes to the strategy proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (...). In addition, there were suggestions regarding the possibility of adjusting some sectors of Poland's economy to Russian Federation *standards by blocking their restructuring* (italics mine).²¹¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland prepared a program document of the development of relations with its Eastern neighbors under the name "Partnership for Transformation", in which the greatest threat in the relations with Russia was defined as follows: "the possibility of economic tools being used to exert pressure, or for the reconstructing of Russia's political influences". The authors of the program stressed at the same time, "the incompatibility of economic systems (of both countries - the author) which could lead to lasting deformation of Polish economy and financial structures", specifying such traits of the Russian economy as "preservation of old monopolies combined with an unclear structure of ownership, criminal ties between business and politics, the lack of clear-cut rules of the economic

²¹⁰ Bykov, A.: Na prekryostke mirovogo razvitiya. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 2, 1993, pp. 96-104, here p. 99.

²¹¹ Calka, M.: Poland's Eastern Policy in 1994. in: Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 1994. Warsaw 1995. pp. 49-54, here pp. 52-53.

game and instrumental approach to the law"²¹² The threat of implementation of those Russian traits into Polish economy has been defined in Polish debate as the threat of *Russification of economy*.²¹³

Evaluation, after some time elapsed, the development of Polish debate on the topic of economic cooperation with Russia, Marek Calka (October 1997) concludes: "(...) it was recognized that acceptance of Russian proposals concerning foundation of COMECON-bis, establishment of a free trade zone, etc. would necessarily hamper and decelerate the process of economic reforms in Poland, and it would threaten Polish membership in the EU".²¹⁴ In other words, approximately a about the same time when the concept of a new attitude of Russia to the CEE countries was born, recognizing in hard-to-transform sectors of the CEE countries economy *a key to the economic expansion of Russia into CEE and at the same time for Russian help to those countries in their integration into EU*, in the largest from among the Central European countries - they arrived an exactly opposing conclusion: "Russian assistance" would be *an obstacle* not merely for internal economic reforms but for the accession to EU.

In relation to the victory of the post-Communist socialist party in the parliamentary elections in Hungary in the year 1994, also in Budapest one could have found a call for "the return to Eastern markets". However, also here a broad consensus was formed in this issue: the development of mutually convenient relations with Russia - yes, not, however, at the expense of termination of internal transformation or threatening the entry into the Western structures.²¹⁵ In the Czech Republic, in the years 1990 through 1997 no post-communist party came to power, which means that Prague may be facing such discussion in the future.²¹⁶ Bratislava differs also in this respect from its Visegrád neighbors. The Government headed by *the pragmatist*, Vladimír Mečiar, is not indulged in discussions, but exerts specific endeavors at solving the problematic sectors of economy and, first of all, of Slovak machinery industry in the Eastern markets.²¹⁷

Long-term Foreign Trade Concept of the Slovak Republic with the outlook reaching the year 2005 approved by the Government toward the end of the year 1997, anticipated the growth of the production of machinery products in Slovakia's export from 20.5% in the year 1996 to 32.9% in the year 2005, provided that in the year 2000 the machinery production should occupy the first place in the structure of commodities of Slovak exports. In the territorial direction, the relation is to be changed in favor of the Russian Federation. Whereas the share of exports of this branch of industry into the EU and CEFTA countries shall decrease from 78.3% in the year 1996 to 70.7% in the year 2005, *the exports to the Federation shall increase 4.5 times*.²¹⁸ Simply, the Slovak Government does not share the worries of its neighbors concerning the possible *Russification* of the Slovak economy and threatening of its membership in the Western structures.

²¹² Ibidem, pp. 51-52.

²¹³ Ibidem, p. 53.

²¹⁴ Calka, M.: The Place of Ukraine in Polish foreign policy. in: Ukraine, Central Europe, and Slovakia: interests in and prospects for cooperation (ed: A. Duleba). International Conference, Bratislava, October 24-25, 1997, pp. 21-24, here p. 23.

²¹⁵ Póti, L.: From Subordination to Partnership: Hungarian-Russian relations, 1990-1997. Hungarian Institute of International Affairs. Foreign Policy Papers, No. 7, 1997, pp. 11-12.

²¹⁶ See e.g. Kotyk, V. : Česko-ruské vztahy v kontextu středoevropské politiky Ruska. Mezinárodní vztahy, No. 2, 1997, pp. 22-30.

²¹⁷ For more see Duleba, A.: The Blind Pragmatism of Slovak Eastern Policy, op. cit.

²¹⁸ Novotný, J.: Perspektíva východných trhov. Media kurier, Vol. III, No. XV, January 1998, pp. 18-19.

One may hardly expect that Russia shall renew its positions in CEE *as partner to the EU* in case that it decides for the support of "problematic" sectors of the economy of the CEE countries. In this way, Russia may only support *anti-reform élites* and semi-democratic regimes in the CEE region. It is not excluded that leaning against those élites may renew this only temporarily, its influence in some of the CEE countries. Strategy of conservation of *mutual backwardness* may not, however, become a really prospective long-term strategy of *European Russia* for the 21st century. Russia shall achieve in this manner just the contrary it will become *a competitor to the EU in the region*.

4.2. Russia as alternative model of transformation in the post-communist Europe

4.2.1. Strong Presidential regime and electoral democracy as a result of political transformation in Russia and in the post-Soviet area

In the course of five years after the dissolution of the USSR (1991-1996), the political systems of the former Soviet (Slavonic) republics (Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus) went through a radical metamorphosis accompanied by an impetuous interior political development, in the background of which stood "the war of the branches of power" with equal outcome, formation of Presidential even super-Presidential systems with an obvious prevalence of the structure of executive power. The outcome of this period of transition was the development from one extreme to the other one - from the almightiness of Supreme Soviets (parliaments) with their tradition of "revolutionary" accumulation of legislative and executive powers,²¹⁹ disposing of the subordinated hierarchical structure of the Soviets (Councils) of lower levels to the new super-Presidential systems, which meant a radical curtailment of the rights of parliaments²²⁰ and the formation of parallel structures of executive power and on all strategic levels of the construction of the state

The paradox of many "executive" structures of power (or, respectively, of state or presidential administrations) is the fact that these were built on the basis of organs, infrastructures, and cadres of the former Communist Parties. Unlike the CEE countries, in the USSR no mass civil protest movements were formed, nor new élites capable of replacing the old nomenclature. In the Soviet Republic, democratization was introduced "from the above". New political leaders who lead the Soviet republics to independence, removing from power the old all-Union élite and aspiring to gain dominant political positions in the independent countries, as a matter of regularity came into

²¹⁹ The Soviets of the local levels in the socialist period were the representatives bodies with legislative rights. At the same time, within their framework "executive committees" were formed with executive powers. This was one and the same body which accumulated legislative and executive power within the sphere of its performance – this "revolutionary" system of power accumulation was in direct contradiction with the principle of the division of power, typical for Western democracies.

²²⁰ In Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, the so called "Yeltsinesque model" of presidency of 1990 became effective, which grants to the presidents as the supreme representatives of the executive power the right to issue decrees which have a character of legislative formation of standards (decrees, notifications) and are binding for execution throughout the entire territory of the country. This phenomenon is atypical for the democracies with strict and balanced distribution of power among the individual branches (legislation, executive, judicial) or, respectively, is a violation of the principle of the distribution of power. On the development of views on the institute of presidency see - Beliaev, S.A.: The Evolution in Constitutional Debates in Russia in 1992-1993. A Comparative Review. Review of Central and Eastern European Law, No. 3, 1994, pp. 305-319.

conflict with the Supreme Soviets. It was unimaginable, and at the same time practically impossible, to form absolutely new structures of power which could compete with the Soviets and would not consider the interests of the existing structures of the "non-existing" communist party.²²¹ In other words, the essence of the reform of the building of state in the post-Soviet Slavonic republics was in the fact that it was the reform of the structures of the CPSU into a branch of executive power headed by the head of state - the President. Executive power in the process of formation of new political systems plays merely a marginal political role - for instance, they were able to cope without it at all in Ukraine²²² The center of gravity of the interior political struggle, which by no means, was conducted in accordance with the existing constitutional law, just the contrary, by making use of direct force (Russia, autumn 1993) or pressure ventures (Ukraine, 1995 - 1996), it was lying somewhere else.

Another factor which influenced the process of transformation, has always been topical, psychological factor related to the level of general political awareness or, respectively, of political culture of the post-Soviet élite. In other words, it is a Soviet legacy of the "revolutionary accumulation of power" in accordance with the principle - *I decide and execute without any control*. Despite the fact that this principle had been one of the reasons of crisis of the communist system, since it as a matter of regularity, leads to the phenomena of the "abuse of power", it has remained encoded in the "political" genes of the post-Soviet élite. The practice of the period of transition has shown a practical absence of the image of the existence of the really divided power with clearly defined authorizations and independent operation. Not only the Soviets accumulated both legislative and executive powers, but the new Presidents as well needed not merely "more executive power", but also, and predominantly, more "legislative power". Essential issue of the transformation was de facto not the problems of the division of power but the fact, which of the branches manages to obtain "more accumulated power". The substance of strength of presidential systems, which have been formed in the (Slavonic) post-Soviet republics, resides in the fact that it was the executive headed by Presidents, which managed "to accumulate more power".

It is necessary to point out that one of the consequences of such attitude is word by word "making profane" of the very term of democracy in the broad post-Soviet societies. Social chaos caused by the power interests of individual groups of the old élite charged with the Soviet political and cultural legacy and the war among the branches of power was presented as a consequence of the "introduction of democracy". At the same time it has been completely forgotten that the letter "A" in the alphabet of the democratic political system is a thorough application of the constitutional doctrine, defining individual authorizations, independence and balance of the principal branches of power (legislative, executive, and judicial). It is therefore questionable whether in the post Soviet republics (except of Baltic ones) the introduction of democracy was the aim, or it was merely the introduction of "democratization" and in many respects merely "cosmetic" elements.

The constitutional doctrine failed to find its pure application, merely "hybrid" political systems have been formed in which "Soviet accumulation of power" exists and there are absolutely no guarantees that these countries are stabilized for good, since the present condition is a victory of

²²¹ One may give here as exemplary in this direction the the Act on the Representative of the President which was approved by the Ukrainian Parliament of 5 March, 1992. Along with the Decree of President Kravchuk "On State Administration" of 14 April, 1992, he created a legislative base on the basis of which the network of administration of the Communist Party became a new vertical axis of the state apparatus, subordinated directly to the President. For more details see Duleba, A.: Prvé roky ukrajinskej nezávislosti - výstavba štátu v kontexte vývoja vnútropolitckej situácie, 1991-1995. In: Mezinárodní vztahy, No. 4, 1996, pp. 71-85.

²²² Constitutional Court of Ukraine was formed and started its operation as late as in October 1996.

one side and the defeat of the other one, it is not a well-balanced compromise or, respectively, the mechanisms of balancing the different interests and their mutual control are missing. It is at the same time questionable whether the "hybrid political systems"²²³ in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine may at all be rated as democratic, guaranteeing the observation of human rights and, predominantly, not abusing the state power. Democracy may not be reduced to merely an institute of free elections and freedom of expression (it is, after all, never quite clear in the post-Soviet republics, in most cases this is so until the very last moment, whether the advised elections shall take place at all).²²⁴

In all of the Slavonic post-Soviet republics, the "presidency" and the strong executive power were gradually joined by the privatizing old-new oligarchy of the owners of the state property or, respectively, the so called informal and pragmatic "the party of power".²²⁵ One may even say that "presidency" and executive power in the post-Soviet conditions gave birth to a new post-Soviet political and economic oligarchy, which is inseparably joined with the structures of the executive power. The Presidential system with the total supremacy of the executive power suits to this oligarchy of "pragmatists", deideologized in the course of "perestrojka", since the accumulation of power in the hands of the state administration, not subject to control from the part of parliament or Soviets, respectively, not to speak of the public, disables any effective control of those "property" activities.²²⁶

If we add to this a low level of political culture and awareness of the civil society, which is prepared to passively accept the non-transparent "high policy up there" substantiated under the banners of the need to enforce "strong hand and order", just like the absence of a really alternative non-post-communist élite capable of taking over the "power initiative" into their hands and influence in a significant way the process of building the state, marginal role of political parties, etc., we find out that it is not democracy, which is in play in the post-Soviet states (not even in those with "external democratic ambitions"), but *predominantly the stability of the country*, under which one understands stabilization of the hierarchized oligarchic power, operating on the basis of their own, unwritten, but "dusted" Soviet rules of power play, preserving the status quo of the outcome of the period of transition (1991-1996).

If we consider the depth of the consequences of the disintegration of the USSR and its power structures and shall look on the formation of the state in the post-Soviet countries from the viewpoint of the need to secure their stability at any cost (not from the viewpoint of their "democratization"), we have to admit that the above characteristics of the development are objectively without alternative and must be accepted as such. *However, one should stress at the same time that the development in the post-Soviet territory takes its own route, which is different*

²²³ Ananicz, A. - Magdziak-Miszewska, A. - Sienkiewicz, B.: Rosja 1996 - przelom czy kontynuacja? Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych Instytutu Spraw Publicznych. Warszawa 1997, pp. 18-19.

²²⁴ McFaul, M.: A Precarious Peace. Domestic Politics in the Making of Russian Foreign Policy. *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Winter 1997/98, pp. 5-35. According to the author, democracy in Russia was reduced to "electoral democracy" with five main characteristics: 1. A too high concentration of power in the hands of the President; 2. The absence of a really independent judicial power; 3. The undeveloped system of political parties; 4. Marginal position of civil society; 5. Critical situation of the independent press due to its being purchased by economic oligarchy; see pp. 14-16.

²²⁵ For the characterization of the notion "the party of power" see - Riabchuk, M.: *Partiya vlady*. *Politychna dumka*, No. 3, 1994, pp. 37-43, here pp. 37-38.

²²⁶ See Easter, G.M.: Preference For Presidentialism. Postcommunist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS. *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 2, January 1997, pp. 184-211.

from the democratic ideal of the formation of state as had been expressed and formulated toward the close of the 1980s in the CEE countries, disposing of a different political tradition and political culture.

4.2.2. The rule of the financial - industrial oligarchy

The less possibilities the transparent party policy has to influence decision-making on the level of central power, the more of these have non-transparent lobby interest groups. Loud-mouthed cry and competition of political parties in Russia remain thus merely an outer democratic facade for domestic population (with the growing effect of profanation of essential democratic values in their eyes) as well for the rest of world, which from the autumn of '93 anyway cares more in the stability of Russia than its democratic character. The focus of the real Russian policy has for long been lying somewhere else. To be able to influence the policy of the administration in Russia, there is no need for having direct and legitimate representation in the parliament obtained in the elections (one speaks here, of course, of the parliamentary elections), it is enough to gain influence in the non-elected Presidential administration and the structures of executive power.

The point of departure for an attempt at deciphering is the understanding, in our opinion, of the following facts determined by the Soviet political-economic reality. After the removal of the CPSU as politically all-embracing superstructure, Russia was left politically exposed. Political posts on the regional and local levels (as to their legal form) simply had to replace the existing economic structures with their own organizational hierarchy. The CPSU had been their only managing alternative until the year 1991. After its disappearance, both organization and administration of public life remained within the authority of dominant enterprises on the local level or, respectively, on the economic pragmatists without any ideology, many of whom had been party members only to have chances to make professional career. Russia had no alternative élite of state administration, apart from the above economic élite, interwoven within the state administration bodies of the Soviets.

One has to realize that the social infrastructure in settlements, cities, and regions has always been closely interconnected with the existing manufacturing enterprises. Those enterprises were, in turn, dependent from the operation of the hierarchy within their own industry, etc., up to the highest administration structures in the country. The Yeltsinesque regime, just like the regimes in the prevailing majority of the post-Soviet countries, are the result of gradual growing of economic and state administration structures into one body or, respectively, by taking over of the performances of capacities of the state administration structures by the local and regional economic élites²²⁷ The interest of those de facto old and alternativeless state-economic élites, just like their loyalty to the new political center, was conditioned by the possibility to privatize the enterprises, which belonged to them anyway²²⁸ The new central power in the majority of post-Soviet states had no other choice, if they wanted to survive for an extended period of time, but to admit and stabilize the reality.

²²⁷ Finansovo-promyshlennyye gruppy i konglomeraty v ekonomike i politike sovremennoy Rossii. Fond Tsentra Politicheskikh Tekhnologiy. Natsional'naya sluzhba novostey, 1998: Obrazovaniye oligarkhii, p. 1.

²²⁸ For the analysis of feed-back between the processes of "taking over" the administrative functions of the state and privatization see Lepekhin, V.: 'Interest Groups' in Present Day Russia and Their Role in the Political Process. in: Post-Soviet Puzzles. Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union (eds: K. Segbers, S. De Spiegeleire). Vol. III, Baden-Baden 1995, pp. 59-76.

Sergey Shakhrai, a one-time Vice-Premier of the Russian Government, explained the above relations in a highly telling and terse manner: "There exist in the country principally three branches (agriculture, industry, and military-industrial complex - MIC) and the regions grouped around these branches. Altay region is agricultural. In Udmurtsk they have MIC. Novosibirsk is industrial. If the President and the Government fail to understand this reality and do not create structures reflecting political, financial-economic interests of those branches, we shall witness an uncivilized fighting among them. This country must be ruled by such coalition government, which would be directly connected with those branches and would express their interests.²²⁹ Simply, in Russia the notion of "coalition government" does not mean a coalition of political forces, but a coalition of élites of single economic branches. From this viewpoint it is clear why Yeltsin, if he had wanted to remain in power, had to sacrifice his ideationally "liberally tainted" environs with their supra-branch reforms, which disposed of neither social nor economic basis, in contrast to the existing economic élites of the ideology-free pragmatists, or also of the bumped-up Russian political centrists.²³⁰

Alongside with the élite connected with the state sectors of economy (mainly FEC - Fuel and Energy Complex and MIC - Military- Industrial Complex), the political influence of the new financial élite has been becoming evident in a more expressive way from the year 1994, which obtained immense property due to the introduction of the institute of the so called state-empowered banks.²³¹ Thanks to the access to public finances, a group of seven most powerful banks has been formed in Russia,²³² which through privatization of the state sector enterprises began to compete with the old state-economic élite. Their entry in the direct politics was demonstrated in the presidential campaign in the year 1996, in which they significantly contributed to the victory of President Yeltsin. The outcome of this was restructuring of the Russian Government and appointing A. Chubays and B. Nemcov Vice-Premiers of the Government in March 1997. In the course of spring and summer of 1997, the new financial élite attempted to re-distribute the property and power in the country in their own favor at the expense of the "old" élite through an attempt at reform of the so called natural monopolies (predominantly the re-distribution and privatization of Gazprom). However, the old élite managed to strike off and defended their economic and power position in the country.²³³

²²⁹ Interview by Argumenty i fakty, No. 4, 1994.

²³⁰ In the short history of Russian democracy, what is most remarkable is first of all the political decline of the original engine of Russian reforms, the broad democratic bloc under the name of Democratic Russia which had been formed shortly before the parliamentary or, respectively, presidential elections of 1990 and 1991. The representatives of the fraction Interegional group of deputies formed in the old Soviet Parliament elected in 1989 (B. Yeltsin, Y. Afanasiev, A. Sacharov, G. Popov) became the core of the bloc. The bloc Democratic Russia performed its pre-election task and brought B. Yeltsin and the reformers on the foreground of the political scene – it defeated the Communist Party in the parliamentary elections of 1990 (B. Yeltsin became the Chairman of the Russian Parliament) and in presidential elections of 1991 (B. Yeltsin became the President). In the mid-half of 1992 the first crisis within the main engine of Russian reforms appeared. Democratic Russia, after the departure of the centrists (they created the so-called bloc Civil Union – moderate opposition; A. Vol'sky, A. Rutskoy, N. Travkin) had been transformed into the bloc Democratic Option (headed by the then Premier Y. Gaydar). It was the position of the deputies of the Russian Parliament from the fraction of Civil Union which, reportedly, led to the change of the Prime Minister at the end of 1992 when Gaydar was replaced by Chernomyrdin. See e.g. Karaganov, S.: Russia - the State of Reforms. Gütersloh 1993, p. 53.

²³¹ Finansovo-promyshlennyye..., op.cit., p. 1.

²³² The most significant include Oneximbank, Menatepbank, SBS-Agrobank, Mostbank, Agrobank, Inkombank, Rossiysky kredit and the like.

²³³ See Finansovo-promyshlennyye..., op.cit.: Gazprom, p. 10-11.

In consequence of establishing a new balance of power after a short but intense battle of Gazprom, the so-called economic super-élite has been formed in Russia, consisting of the most powerful economic subjects. This élite monopolized their relations with the political power, reverting their relations into a type of *personal union*. A narrow group of the representatives of top business obtained a direct access to the decision-making center in Russian policy and has become a textbook example of the working of classical oligarchy.²³⁴ According to the statement by Boris Berezovsky, one of the richest men in Russia, one half of the economy of the country is controlled by six financial groups.²³⁵ 10 per cent of the richest families in Russia in the year 1996 enjoyed 34 per cent of national revenue, whereas 10 per cent of the poorest families received only 2.6 per cent.²³⁶

A direct consequence of the rule of oligarchy - not that of the law - in Russia is an immense growth of the role of organized crime in the economy of the country. According to the data from the Ministry of Interior of RF, there exist in the country 9,000 organized criminal groupings which control 35,000 commercial structures, including 400 banks and 1,500 state enterprises. Some 40 per cent of entrepreneurs and two thirds of all commercial structures are engaged in criminal activities.²³⁷ According to the data from the Russian Academy of Sciences, 35 per cent of capital and 80 per cent of stocks in privatized enterprises are controlled by the organized crime.²³⁸

4.2.3. Consequences for foreign policy and risks for CEE

One of the outcomes of political and economic transformation in Russia in the past years is the fact that the economic oligarchy acquired control positions in the formation and implementation of the country's foreign policy. According to McFaul, "(...) the combination of weak democratic institutions and Yeltsin's political success have allowed a small, well-organized coalition of economic interest groups to occupy a central role in the making of Russian foreign policy. The combination of superpresidentialism, a fragmented party system, and impotent countervailing forces representing pluralist interests means that these economic lobbies can dominate policy making in Russia, including foreign policy".²³⁹ This fact undoubtedly has its positive and negative aspects. Under the influence of business, Russian foreign policy has been *commercialized* in the past two years. McFaul considers positive the Russian interest in peaceful and good relations with economically developed countries. "Support for maintaining a liberal policy orientation was reinvigorated, however, when emergent economic interest groups with tangible interests in peaceful relations with other states, and especially peaceful relations with Western democracies, began to assert their influence in foreign policy matters. Groups with economic interests - Gazprom, oil companies, mineral exporters, and the bankers - began to

²³⁴ Finansovo-promyshlennyye..., op.cit, p. 3.

²³⁵ Natsional'nyye interesy i problemy bezopasnosti Rossii. Doklad po itogam issledovaniya, provedyonogo Tsentrom global'nykh program Gorbachev-Fonda v 1995-1997 gg. Moskva, 1997: Politicheskaya stabil'nost', p. 6.

²³⁶ Ibidem: Ekonomicheskaya bezopasnost', p. 3.

²³⁷ Kryshchanovskaya, O.: Russia's Illegal Structures. in: Post-Soviet Puzzles. Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union (eds.: K. Segbers, S. De Spiegeleire). Vol. III, Baden-Baden 1995, pp. 59-76, here p. 602.

²³⁸ Ibidem, p. 604.

²³⁹ McFaul, M.: A Precarious Peace. Domestic Politics in the Making of Russian Foreign Policy. International Security, Vol. 22, No. 3, Winter 1997/98, pp. 5-35, here p. 27.

replace individuals and groups with political ideas as the main societal factors influencing foreign policy outcomes" ²⁴⁰

On the other hand, commercialization of Russian foreign policy is pregnant with risks pertaining predominantly to the countries of the former Eastern Bloc and the USSR. James Sherr pointed out the fact that it had been *the most conservative* Soviet institution - KGB - which responded most rapidly to the weakening of the centralized power in the USSR and the emergence of new *market* conditions. In January 1987, its boss then in office, Vladimir Kriuchkov, began to implement the program of *commercialization* of KGB, calling for "the creation of mixed enterprises and small enterprises" and adding: "Our service has acquired strong positions in the world of business, but it must show itself more effective in its approach to businessmen, on whom depend advanced contacts and access to leading-edge technologies" ²⁴¹ During the year 1988, Soviet legislation has indeed been regulated and the first joint ventures and commercial banks appeared in the country and the monopoly of foreign trade was abolished. According to Sherr, KGB actively participated in the privatization process, and it is not by chance that its protégés - prominent Komsomol leaders - assumed leading positions in the *new* Russian business. ²⁴²

After the disintegration of the USSR, Russia lost its main tool of influence in the former republics and in CEE - the military power. However, it did not lose day-by-day, long-year formed agency and influence network in those countries. ²⁴³ It would be naive to assume that Russia resisted the temptation to make use of these tools of *indirect influence*. In the relations with the CEE countries, *economization* of Russian policy had inevitably to appear. The formation of FAPSI (Federal'noye Agentstvo Pravitel'stvennogo Servisa i Informatsii) deserves attention, an organization whose main scope of operation is foreign intelligence service, but at the same time it has the right to make investments abroad, establish enterprises, etc. According to Sherr's thesis, one may not exclude that Russian capital which had been "exported abroad" ²⁴⁴ and the Russian mafia operating outside Russia, are manipulated by Russian secret services with the aim of enforcing the interests of the state or, respectively, economic interests of the Russian oligarchy. ²⁴⁵

Polish Professor, Antoni Kaminski, states that "the biggest threat for Central and East Europe is not (at present - the author) military aggression, but rather weakness of political-economic institutions". In this sense, the CEE countries may find themselves in a situation when, "instead of stabilization of political and economic institutions proceeding from the West eastward, shall be faced with gradual destabilization from the opposite direction". ²⁴⁶ As an example of such weakness of state institutions in Poland he offers the "Oleksy case" when the suspicion was not rebutted that the Polish Premier had contacts with the former (?) KGB officers. At the same time, it was Premier Oleksy who signed an agreement with Gazprom on constructing the gas pipeline Yamal through the territory of Poland and on the creation of a joint venture between the Polish

²⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 24.

²⁴¹ Sherr, J.: Russia: geopolitics and crime. The World Today, February 1995, pp. 32-36, here p. 32.

²⁴² Ibidem, p. 33.

²⁴³ See e.g. Andrew, Ch. - Gordiyevsky, O.: KGB. Istoriya vneshnepoliticheskikh operatsiy ot Lenina do Gorbacheva. Nota bene, 1992.

²⁴⁴ Estimates of the Russian capital exported abroad are between 100 and 300 billion USD. See Natsional 'nyye interesy..., op.cit.: Ekonomicheskaya stabil'nost', p. 6.

²⁴⁵ Sherr, op. cit., p. 35.

²⁴⁶ Kamiński, A.Z.: Korupcja - wymiar wewnętrzny i międzynarodowy. in: Polska i Ukraina w latach dziewięćdziesiątych. Podstawy i płaszczyzny współpracy (ed.: Marek Calka). Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych Instytutu Spraw Publicznych. Warszawa 1997, pp. 82-94, here pp. 89, 91.

State gas and oil enterprise and Russian Gazprom. The Polish Government did not publish the text of the agreement, referring to the fact that this is commercial secret. Kaminski considers this argument ridiculous.²⁴⁷

Commercialization of the Russian foreign policy means a threat for the CEE countries in form of *making use or, respectively, abusing intelligence tools for enforcing the Russian interests and influence in the CEE region*. Apart from this, from the mid-term and long-term perspective, *commercialization* of political and economic system in Russia, *manifested by the rule of money, not law* represents a threat for the development of transformation in the CEE countries. The share of private sector in the economy of Russia was toward the end of the year 1995 bigger than in the majority of the CEE countries, even bigger than in many West European states".²⁴⁸ The economic reform in Russia was in a prevailing measure reduced to privatization, whereas it was not accompanied by political reforms and building of the democratic institutions. Just the contrary, the interests of rapidly formed post-privatization oligarchy interested in maintaining the status quo in the society at any cost, needed the introduction of the autocratic regime²⁴⁹ (the model of "electoral democracy"). The development of "Russian democracy" was terminated in the autumn of 1993. Since then, Russia has represented *an alternative model* of political and economic transformation for the post-communist countries, which still find themselves in the process of building new and stable institutions according to the Western model. Russia represents an alternative transformational model of the *third way* which *really exists* and which may, under certain conditions of a crisis of development, become attractive for the politically and economically *inert* post-communist structures and autocracy-oriented political forces in the CEE countries.

The substance of long-term risks following from the character of economic and political transformation in Russia and the post-Soviet area for the CEE countries have been very tellingly formulated by Petr Robejsek: "Russia is able to survive economically even if it refuses to comply with the Western criteria of economic effectiveness. If this model is enforced, and all the facts testify to it, Russia shall be modernized within the framework of the traditional industria developmental model. In fact this will merely be a perfection of its own imperfection"²⁵⁰ In the majority of the CIS countries, there emerges a specific form of "corporate capitalism" with a very narrow interconnection between the state and economy. "Under these conditions we can nothing but admit the following unpleasant state of affairs: the state formation, which quite recently was known under the name of the Soviet Union, has in fact never disappeared. As an economic, political, social, and security-political system of relations it continues to exist and at present merely experiences a stage of temporary disability. All the greater attention should be devoted to the fact that from this backward economic area, gravitational forces shall be emanated onto the former socialist states. Continuation of their dependence on Russia might be inferred from high material and energy consumption in industrial branches - for instance chemistry, paper, metallurgy. Considering this, long-term material and energy dependence of many CEE countries acquires an extraordinary importance. Russian policy strives at instrumentalization of economic dependence. Along with the above-mentioned energy and raw material dependence, this applies

²⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 91.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Sergey Karaganov, SME, 23.02.1996.

²⁴⁹ Interview with Alexander Livshits, Argumenty i fakty, No. 37, 1994.

²⁵⁰ Robejsek, P.: Ukraine, Central Europe and the EU: a western view. in: Ukraine, Central Europe, and Slovakia: interests in and prospects for cooperation (ed: A. Duleba). International Conference, Bratislava, October 24-25, 1997, pp. 33-37, here p.34.

to the technological one as well (nuclear energy). Russia endeavors to deepen the existing dependence in the armament sphere by offering the installments of the Russian debt in form of arms supplies. Equally so works the fact that Russia offers itself as a "soft", less demanding market in comparison to the West. East European countries shall take a final leave from the eastern system only after they stop producing second-class products. Until that time there shall exist a chance of return into the old relations of economic and political dependence on Russia" ²⁵¹

4.3. Tools of Russian policy

4.3.1. Political and ideological tools

After the disintegration of the USSR, Russia lost apart from the direct military tools also the direct *political and ideological tools* of the influence within the CEE region. Streaming of the CEE countries toward democracy, free market, rule of law, and membership in Western structures, did not enable Russia to acquire *political initiative* in the region, since it had no ideological tools with which to approach its former satellites. On the other hand, during the course of the years 1992 and 1993 it was shown clearly that not all of the CEE countries are equally well prepared to implement reforms and that the process of transformation shall require a substantially longer period of time than had been originally optimistic expectations. In some of the countries, the process of reforms was beginning to encounter an ever-stronger resistance from the anti-reform political forces. The post-communist CEE one again started to be haunted by a scare of nationalism. A whole number of new international problems has emerged, provoked by the rivalry among nations and the sources of ethnic tension. Central Europeans once again started to experience intensely their own history which, as has been shown, had only been temporarily put on frost by force and artificially imposed unity within the East Bloc. Paradoxically enough, this has been the very course of development, which has returned Russia *politically* back to CEE.

Russian diplomacy showed its readiness (mainly after the year 1993) to support predominantly those political élites in CEE which had attempted at looking for *a third way* in the transformation and which had come into contention with their Western partners *in the dialogue on democracy*. Having made use of the *misunderstandings* between the governing élites in CEE and the West, Russia acquired a chance of exerting *an indirect political influence* in the region. The most illustrative example in this sense is Slovakia.

4.3.1.1. Political support for the search of a "Third Way"

Given Slovakia's official application for EU membership submitted on June 1995 and its officially declared goal to join NATO, the country has a clear interest in continuing a dialogue with the West. It is possible to highlight three main stages in dialogue between Slovak governments headed by PM Vladimir Mečiar and Western partners about "political transformation in Slovakia" during some last years: (1) "Pre-Demarches Era": January 1993 - November 1994; (2) "Demarches Era": November 1994 - October 1995; (3) "Post-Demarches Era": October 1995 - present

²⁵¹ Ibidem, pp. 34-35.

While the main subject of Western concern during the first period (January 1993 - November 1994) was question of minorities in Slovakia in the context of Slovakia's admission to the Council of Europe (June 1993) as well as its participation in OSCE (from January 1993), this changed during the second period to the official EU and U.S. diplomatic warnings addressing the style of governing in Slovakia that is moving its away from the democratic standards established by Western countries. Western "diplomatic notes" were addressed to the new Slovak government elected in the October parliamentary elections' 94. Slovakia has received three diplomatic demarches - two ones from the EU (the first diplomatic demarche was issued on 24 November 1994 and the second on 25 October 1995) and the third one from the USA (issued on 27 October 1995). While the subject of Western concern during the first period were mainly the questions regarding to - let say - a "software of Slovak democracy", this has changed in second period after parliamentary elections' 94 to the worrying about a "hardware of Slovak democracy". No other CEE country aiming to join Western structures has received something like that on the official diplomatic level. Slovakia received no critique from Russia on such "marginal" issue as the question of "post-communist democratic transformation".²⁵²

After the *démarche* period of 1994-1995, the government coalition - despite of its contradictor declarations - realized the fact that Slovakia's chances integrating into Western structures were minimal, or better, nil, because of the style and content of government's domestic policies. Thus, the government faced a crucial dilemma: on the one hand, a change in domestic policies would, in fact, mean admitting a defeat in domestic policy, and, on the other hand, making no changes done would mean that Slovakia, as opposed to its CEE neighbors would not become integrated into West. Rather, it would be an unstable country, in a worsened international position. The coalition decided to adhere to its domestic policy, and placed its own short-term power objectives before the long-term national ones. Thus, it became necessary to start persuading chiefly themselves, but also future electors, that Slovakia, in fact, "does not need any integration", and that the "Western model" of transformation does not reflect Slovak needs.

The leaders of two coalition parties first called the foreign-policy orientation, specified in the governmental program, into question in October 1995. Slovak National Party (SNP) chairman Ján Slota and the Association of Slovak Workers (ASR) chairman Ján Čupčák in two successive interviews for the Russian press stated that "the Slovak Republic should not enter into various military blocks, and should preserve its neutrality"(...) ²⁵³ "The majority of common Slovaks do not at all miss NATO, the EU, or the IMF"(...) ²⁵⁴ Slovak PM Mečiar during his visit to Moscow this time combined his vision of a secure Europe with the creation of a continental security system which would include Russia. Afterwards he explained: "One of the possibilities is that NATO will transform into an organization covering the whole of Europe with member states as well as co-operative ones. The division of Europe into two parts would be a historical mistake"²⁵⁵. However, parting with NATO and the EU could not be satisfactorily explained by mere "pancontinental" foreign-policy speculations mapping the Russian view of building up a

²⁵² For more see Duleba, A.: Democratic Consolidation and the Conflict over Slovakia's International Alignment. in: Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation. The Struggle for the Rules of the Game (eds : Soňa Szomolányi, John A. Gould). Slovak Political Science Association, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Bratislava 1997, pp. 209-230.

²⁵³ ITAR-TASS, 3.10. 1995.

²⁵⁴ ITAR-TASS, 20.10. 1995.

²⁵⁵ Pravda, 2.11. 1995.

new European security architecture. The dialogue with the West failed predominantly because of "domestic political reasons".

Slovak PM Vladimir Mečiar first presented the "Slovak know-how of transition" abroad during his visit to rump Yugoslavian Federal Republic in the late January 1996. On the occasion of being awarded an honorable doctorate at Belgrade University, V. Mečiar held a lecture on "the Slovak model of economic transformation", in which he maintained the following: "Everybody has the right of his own way; we want to avoid dogmatism. The role of a state is not reduced in the period of transition. What changes are its functions (...). The process of transformation can be supported from outside, but it cannot be imposed from outside".²⁵⁶ In February 1996, the elite-oriented Russian journal VIP published an extensive interview with the Slovak premier, in which he, among other things, claimed the following: "No doubt, there are some circles in the West which take a critical attitude towards my person, our Movement (Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) - the author), or even our country (...). In the political area, we did not start establishing a traditional structure of Western countries. Our Movement came into existence on the basis of pragmatic, rather than ideological, principles (...). It does not resemble Western parties (...). We have outlined the following perspective for our country: expecting as little as possible from outside, and making use of domestic resources (...). Not everybody understands it, and not everybody likes it (...). We are not looking for any "third way", we are looking for a way for ourselves. Only those who think schematically can be surprised: Why is it different in your country than in the West? Yes, it is different! But, if it is different and good - is it bad?"²⁵⁷

The Russian policy very sensitively responded to "Slovak communication problems" with the West and, through Sergey Jastrzhembsky, the then Russian ambassador to Slovakia (now spokesman of the Russian President), it decided to support and defend Slovakia in this dialogue. In January 1996, he said: "To say 'follow us' (...) there is only one way to democracy, and we know the way (...) as many Western countries do, is a new Bolshevism".²⁵⁸ In April 1996, the Russian daily Izvestiya published an extensive document on Slovakia, in which the Russian ambassador defended Slovakia: "The West does not understand specific features of the young country, and does not take into consideration either the history of the Slovak people or the Slovak way of thinking, their mentality. Dissatisfaction over the governmental policy itself is apparent (...). The Slovaks are told: Look how the Czechs, Poles, or Hungarians do things. Why do you proceed in a different way? Just because it is a different country which wants to do it its way"²⁵⁹

Slovak PM received direct political support on the supreme level from President Yeltsin during his visit to Moscow in May 1998. Several months before the coming parliamentary elections in Slovakia (29th September, 1998), at the joint press conference Russian President openly confessed the interest of Moscow that Mečiar's Government remain in power: "*We want, we want very very much, that you win the elections* (...). We, in Moscow, are very pleased within Europe you strive hardily at the orientation toward your own security, toward friendship with Russia (...). We are pleased with these successes" (italics mine).²⁶⁰ Consequently, he explained

²⁵⁶ Narodná obroda, 8 February, 1996.

²⁵⁷ See V. Mečiar for VIP: If it is different (than in the West) and good - is it bad? in: Pravda, 15.02. 1996.

²⁵⁸ Wall Street Journal, 11.01. 1996.

²⁵⁹ For information on Izvestiya's Report on Slovakia (prepared by Leonid Myechin) see in Pravda, 23.04. 1996.

²⁶⁰ For more see Duleba, A.: Democratic Consolidation and the Conflict over Slovakia's International Alignment. in: Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation. The Struggle for the Rules of the Game (eds.: Soňa Szomolányi, John A. Gould). Slovak Political Science Association, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Bratislava 1997, pp. 209-230.

why he wishes Mečiar's victory in parliamentary elections: "I consider you a guaranty of Slovak-Russian relations".²⁶¹

In short, we can conclude that there has been born a myth about "Slovak way of transition" in Slovakia at the end of 1995 and beginning of 1996 justifying the failed Mečiar's government foreign pro-Western policies. The biological patterns of this myth come from Slovak ruling coalition while the godparents come from Russia. Thus, controversy with the West brought Slovakia's ruling circles close to Russia. On the other hand, in case of Slovakia Russia demonstrated its direct political support to *the alternative model of transformation* in a CEE country. It did not hesitate to make use of the political controversy between Slovakia and the West to once again, at least partially, to renew its political influence in the CEE region. Extending the political support to Slovakia for its looking of a third way was accompanied by the reanimation of the idea of Slavonic solidarity as *ideological infrastructure* of "friendly relations" under the new conditions.

4.3.1.2. Slavonic idea as an ideological tool of Russian foreign policy

It would make no sense to deal with the problems of *Slavonic idea* or *Slavonic solidarity* if this were a mere attribute of contemporary ethnic nationalism (see Chapter 2). Equally so, it would have no sense to deal with it if it were merely *folklore* part of thinking of the Russian political élite. However, one has to deal with it at the moment when this idea encounters response in the *Slavonic* CEE countries not merely among the nation-oriented intelligentsia, but serves for the *justification of decision-making* in the sphere of foreign policy on the level of political élite. As a tool of foreign policy, this Slavonic idea becomes topical not only in the relations between Russia and Ukraine, but also in the relations between Russia and Bulgaria, Serbia, and Slovakia.

The leaders of coalition parties in the Slovak government, Ján Slota and Ján Čupák, calling for neutrality of Slovakia, made use of the idea of Slavonic solidarity as an argument. The SNP Chairman Ján Slota in his interview for ITAR-TASS said: "Disproportionate enlargement of NATO in the former socialist countries of Central Europe is destabilizing the continent. SNP considers this a step back, toward the growth of international tension, and maybe to something more dangerous. *Slavonic nations have to realize that if they are forced to direct their weapons against their friends, they shall in this way dig their own grave* " (italics mine)²⁶² His coalition partner, ASR Chairman Ján Čupák declared that "Russia is willing to give security guarantees to Slovak neutrality which is unacceptable for Western politicians. They (Western politicians - the author) managed to achieve by stratagem that the post-communist countries of East Europe disarmed themselves on their own, that they liquidated by oxyacetylene welder their tanks, cannons, and aircraft. Now the lure us into NATO and EU in order to complete in this way the disassemble of our military industry and force us to purchase the armament from the West. *Slavonic nations have been robbed in a similar way before when they liquidated COMECON* " (note and italics mine).²⁶³ The chief coalition partner of both quoted politicians, Slovak PM Mečiar, during his visit to Moscow in October 1995 at the occasion of renaming of one of the streets of Moscow to Bratislavská Street, gave a brief speech in which he among other things pointed to the fact that the *idea of Slavonic solidarity between the two nations has been extended*

²⁶¹ Slovenská republika, 29.05. 1998.

²⁶² ITAR-TASS, 3.10. 1995.

²⁶³ ITAR-TASS, 20.10. 1995.

through our history from the times of Štúr", (...) that "in the center of Europe there lives a nation which holds on firmly" and that "they are your friends" (italics mine).²⁶⁴

The following historical questions once again appeared on the agenda in Slovakia in relation to foreign policy: What is the Slavonic idea? What was it in the time of its emergence in the mid-19th century? What is it or may become today, at the end of the 20th century

Slavonic idea in the form of a Panslavonic doctrine was born in Central Europe in the mid-19th century as an *ideology of jeopardy* facing the threat of extinction and assimilation of Slavonic nations in the Habsburg and Ottoman monarchies. The European "spring of the nations" in the 1840s ravished in its whirlpool the newly emerged intellectual élites of Slavonic nations, striving to implement the principle of national self-determination. The spring of the nations grew into the war of nations and Panslavism emerged as a platform facing Pangermanism and Panhungarism in the Austrian Empire. The treachery of the royal court in Vienna, which at first had made use of national movement of Slavonic nations to suppress by force the Hungarian uprising of 1848-49 and consequently ignored their political and national claims, caused disillusionment on the part of Slavonic élites.²⁶⁵ The hopes for a change in the position of Slavonic nations in the monarchy (the concept of the so-called Austroslavism) came to an end. The eyes of the latter therefore turned with longing to Russia as the last alternative of political liberation of the Slavs. Russia should have become a core of the All-Slavonic State, which should have saved the Slavs of Central Europe from the inevitable national death in the German-Hungarian-Turkish embrace. This was the spirit of the legacy of one of the most significant representatives of Slovak Revival generation, Ľudovít Štúr, who in 1853 wrote a treatise named "The Slavs and the World of Future", in which he among other things puts down: "If then (...) the Slavs are not allowed to develop and organize even within federative states, not even under Austria, then only the third possibility remains, that is, affiliate the Slavs with Russia, and this is the only one correct and has future. Cross your heart, brothers, and say: wasn't it Russia, which in our sad past was shining as a lighthouse in the deep night of our life?"²⁶⁶

Panslavism spiritually linked up with the ideology of Russian Slavophilism, rejecting cultural model of the West and leaning against the traditionalist values of Slavonic (read: Russian) society: corporativism of the common-land arrangement, humbleness, and deep religiosity of the nation, harmony (read: firm hierarchy) of the state power, etc. Alongside with Pangermanism and Panhungarianism, the signs of the West had been rejected by almost one entire and at the same time founding generation of Slavonic national élites: liberalism was counterpositioned with conservative hierarchy of power, socialism with corporativism of the common land, and "secularized" Western Church and atheism with the unstained Orthodox religion. The Slavs as alternative to Western materialistic revolutions, riots, uprisings, etc. was to emerge as Savior and Redeemer of the world bringing peace and order: "to prevent by strong hand the West from falling into abyss".²⁶⁷ Russia was to become a political guaranty and implementator of this national-liberation program of the Slavs as the only Slavonic nation with a potential of a superpower.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Národná obroda, 31.10. 1995; the term "the times of Štúr" : Ľudovít Štúr was codificator of the Slovak language, the ideational and political leader of the Slovak National Revival in the 19th century.

²⁶⁵ See e.g. Popovych, M.: *Revoljutsiyno-demokratyčne yednannya slovyan u XIX st.* SPV Bratislava 1973.

²⁶⁶ Štúr, L.: *Slovanstvo a svet budúcnosti.* Slovenský inštitút medzinárodných štúdií, SAP. Bratislava 1993, p. 150.

²⁶⁷ *Ibidem.*

²⁶⁸ Dosta• ova, M.J.: "Slovanská otázka" v názoroch grófa S.S. Uvarova. in: *Slovanské štúdie*, No. 1-2, 1993, pp. 67-78.

To the great disillusionment of the above generation of Slavonic élites, Russia failed to perform this civilization mission in the second half of the 19th century, not even later. On the other hand, it is undeniable that in its foreign policy, Russia not once and for always was purposefully making use of the sympathies of the Slavs from Central Europe and the Balkans, following exclusively its own power interests. Legitimacy of the realized, that is reflected as legitimate, claims of the Russian ruling élite, however, never achieved the limits so as to be able to satisfy the missionary expectations of the part of élites of Slavonic nations in the 2nd half of the 19th century. The biggest mistake of the Central European Panslavists was in that they had never understood cardinal difference between Panslavism and Panrussianism in the logic of the historical power awareness of the Great-Russian élite.²⁶⁹ Whereas Panrussianism (denial of self-determination of Belarussians and Ukrainians) was its inevitable inner attribute, Panslavism is merely an outer form and always an only purposefully employed vehicle, nothing else. The emergence of the East Bloc after World War II was not made on the basis of All-Slavonic solidarity and ideological basis of Slavophilism (not merely Slavonic nations became its part, anyway. Just the contrary, both World War I and Bolshevik Revolution had inevitably to sweep in different directions all of the hopes of Slavs for a peaceful and stable Russia professing the values of Slavonic traditionalism. Russia, in the eyes of Slavophiles, contracted a lethal disease of communism, which they had rejected in its classic Marxist form in the mid-19th century as one of the gravest signs of the West. Historical unification of the Slavs took place under the direction and coordination of Russia or, respectively, the Soviet Union on a completely different and to Slavophilism contradictory "sinful principles". For the new Soviet élite, Slavophilism was simply ideologically unacceptable.

It would appear then that Panslavism has long been politically and ideologically dead not only in Central Europe, but in Russia as well. Wherein then lie the causes of its rebirth at the end of the 20th century? Does there exist at present a fertile ground in Slavonic countries of the non-post Soviet area for the ideology of Panslavism? Considering the fact that Panslavism emerged as the ideology of jeopardy, even at present the condition of instability, evoking the feelings of jeopardy, may create and does create preconditions for its "ideational-political" reproduction. This pertains *mainly to the new Slavonic states, which emerged through the disintegration of federations* (USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia), including Slovakia. Instability, which emerged through disintegration of the above given state formations, may once again place contemporary Russia in the position of a guaranty and defender of their national freedom, which they, unlike 19th century Russia, have indeed attempted at.

At the same time, one should bear in mind that there do exist in those countries national political élites which derive their legitimacy from the legacy of the first generation of the awarded Slavonic élites of the mid-19th century, genetically connected with the ideology of Slavophilism and Panslavism.²⁷⁰ Slavonic idea was and still *is part of the ideational identity of the nation-oriented élites of Central European Slavs since it had been standing at the birth and the roots of their national awakening in the 19th century.* In the present unstable international situation, the very fact of Russia's readiness is a corner stone and guaranty of national life and liberty. This is for them a value in itself. Similar expectations related to the Slavonic mission of Russia, manifested themselves only in case of Serbia and in the part of the Slovak élite which takes

²⁶⁹ For more see Duleba, A.: Panslavizmus - zm • tvychvstanie zabudnutej ideológie? in: Medzinárodné otázky, No. 3, Vol. III, 1994, pp. 29-34.

²⁷⁰ Miná• , V.: Štúrovské paradoxy. In: Parlamentný kuriér, No. 2, 1993, pp. 56-58.

immediate inspiration from the legacy of the Štúr's generation looking for their modern national identity after having gained independent statehood. Unlike the Poles, Belarussians, and Ukrainians, the Slovaks have been saved in their history from the immediate political contact with the Russian superpower. Saved from the Polish, Belarussian, and Ukrainian physical experiences, literally so, they have preserved an historical illusion of the Slavonic idea. The Czechs have come down to earth from this illusion in their history finally after the year 1968, not so the Slovak nationally aware intellectuals, simply because *the Czechoslovak state was not their own state*.²⁷¹

It appears inevitable to emphasize that the possibility of using political and ideological tools in contemporary Russian policy in relation to the CEE countries *has no universal character* and is limited by the will of political élites of individual countries *to voluntarily solicit a political support from Russia*. As is shown by the example of Slovakia, the reason is an endeavor to aimfully *make use of Russia as political factor* in the defense and enforcement of its own both domestic and foreign interests.

4.3.2. Economic tool

Whereas the utilization of political and ideological tools in the Russian policy is limited by specific cultural and historical circumstances and their employment is only possible in specific cases, the utilization of economic tools has *universal character* pertains to the entire CEE region. In the analysis of *economic* tools of Russia, just like of the perspectives of Russia-Central European relations, it is inevitable to consider essential tendencies of the economic development of Russia and the CEE countries.

4.3.2.1. Deepening of economic differences between Russia and the CEE countries

The comparison of essential macroeconomic indicators in the years 1993 through 1997 shows an ever-growing difference in the economic development of Russia and the Visegrád countries.

The most telling indicator of the growing difference in the success rate of reforms and economic development is the GDP per capita, which in case of Russia still has a falling tendency, whereas in all of the Visegrád countries it is rising. Still in the year 1993, the differences in this indicator were not so remarkable, perhaps with the exception of CR, whose per capita GNP was 1.7 times higher than that in the Russian Federation (in Slovakia it was 1.3 times as high and in Hungary 1.2 times. Poland was even worse in this indicator - 1.1 times less than in the RF). In 1997 the situation was substantially changed: GDP per capita in CR was 2.7 times higher than in RF, Slovakia 2.0 times, Hungary 1.7 times, and Poland 1.5 times than in RF. It was as late as in 1997 when Russia recorded a mild increase of the GDP (in percentage) compared to the year 1996, whereas Poland has been recording positive GDP increase from 1992 (2.6 per cent), CR from 1993, Hungary and Slovakia from 1994. In their endeavor to revert the crisis development of economy, which had been caused by the disintegration of centralized economy and the transition to market principles, the Visegrád countries have an advantage of several years and there do exist all the preconditions for its increasing. One of those is an increase of direct foreign investment into the economies of the Visegrád countries compared to that of Russia. The total of 37,840.000

²⁷¹ Slovak question. Debate: Ján Ľanogurský, Pavol Kanis, František Mikloško, Peter Weiss, Peter Zajac, Ivan Kamenec, Martin Kanovský, József Kiss, Miroslav Marcelli, László Öllös, László Szarka, Milan Zemko. in: OS, No. 3, 1997, pp. 27-38; see also Duleba, A. The Blind Pragmatism of Slovak Eastern Policy, op. cit, pp. 36-45.

USD (including Slovakia²⁷² it is 38,664.000 USD) have been invested in the economies of CR, Hungary, and Poland in the years 1993-1997, which is 4 times more than in Russia, where only 9,239.00 billion USD of direct foreign investment were made within the above period of time.

Table 1: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators (I) for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Russia

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Population (m)					
Czech Republic	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Hungary	10.3	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.2
Poland	38.5	38.6	38.6	38.6	38.6
Slovakia	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4
Russia	148.3	148.2	148.0	147.5	148.2
Nominal GDP (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	34.4	39.7	49.6	56.5	52.9
Hungary	38.6	41.5	43.7	44.8	44.9
Poland	85.9	92.6	116.7	134.4	135.8
Slovakia	12.0	13.8	17.3	18.8	19.5
Russia	165.8	270.0	353.7	440.2	462.5
GDP per capita PPP (\$)					
Czech Republic	8425.0	8884.0	9475.0	11222.0	11574.0
Hungary	5992.0	6361.0	6558.0	6845.0	7290.0
Poland	4668.0	5040.0	5454.0	5876.0	6407.0
Slovakia	6302.0	6771.0	7300.0	7918.0	8585.0
Russia	5009.0	4500.0	4373.0	4245.0	4361.0
GDP (% change)					
Czech Republic	0.6	2.7	4.8	3.9	1.0
Hungary	-0.6	2.9	1.5	1.3	4.4
Poland	3.8	5.2	7.0	6.1	6.9
Slovakia	-3.7	4.9	6.8	6.6	6.5
Russia	-8.7	-12.7	-4.2	-4.9	0.4
Industrial Production (% change)					
Czech Republic	-5.3	2.1	8.7	6.8	4.5
Hungary	4.0	9.5	4.6	2.3	10.9
Poland	6.4	12.1	9.7	8.5	11.4
Slovakia	-3.8	4.8	8.3	2.5	2.0
Russia	-14.1	-20.9	-3.3	-5.0	2.6
Unemployment (%)					
Czech Republic	3.5	3.2	2.9	3.5	4.5
Hungary	13.3	11.4	11.1	10.7	10.8
Poland	16.4	16.0	14.9	13.6	10.5
Slovakia	14.4	14.8	13.1	12.8	12.5
Russia	5.7	7.5	8.8	9.3	10.0
Inflation (%)					
Czech Republic	20.8	10.0	9.1	8.8	8.5
Hungary	22.5	18.8	28.2	23.6	18.3
Poland	35.3	32.3	27.8	19.9	15.3
Slovakia	23.2	13.4	9.9	5.8	6.1
Russia	307.4	197.4	47.6	14.7	11.5

²⁷² In the years 1993 through 1997 only 824 mil USD came to Slovakia in form of direct foreign investment, which is one of the lowest indicators in CEE. Most observers agree that the main reason is instability of political institutions in the country.

Foreign direct investment flow (\$m)					
Czech Republic	500.0	1000.0	2700.0	1400.0	1300.0
Hungary	2300.0	1100.0	4500.0	1790.0	2211.0
Poland	1715.0	1875.0	3659.0	5190.0	6600.0
Slovakia	199.0	203.0	183.0	178.0	61.0
Russia	682.0	637.0	2230.0	2090.0	3600.0

Source: Business Central Europe

Poland, being the first from among the CEE countries, achieved as early as in 1996 a comparable level of the volume of production with that of the time prior to the reforms. According to the European Commission prognoses (DG II), Slovakia should achieve this condition in the second place in the year 1998 and in the year 1999 the Czech Republic and Hungary should follow.²⁷³ In Russia, the decline of the volume of production in 1995 compared to the year 1989 represented 50.5 per cent²⁷⁴, while in the year 1997, a turnover had been recorded and a mild increase.

4.3.2.2. Dramatic decline of mutual trade

The dissolution of COMECON in the year 1991 brought along an immense decline of mutual trade between Russia and the CEE countries. While toward the end of the 1980s, the COMECON countries represented over 50 per cent of the Russian foreign trade turnover, the share of those countries fell down under 15 per cent in the mid-1990s. Considering the fact that Russia failed to compensate for the loss of COMECON markets, foreign trade of Russia in 1994 reached merely a half of the level of 1990.²⁷⁵

Table 2: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators (II) for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Russia

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Exports (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	13.2	14.3	21.6	21.9	22.5
Hungary	8.9	10.7	12.9	13.1	19.0
Poland	14.1	17.2	22.9	24.4	27.2
Slovakia	5.5	6.7	8.6	8.8	8.8
Russia	59.2	66.9	79.9	89.1	78.3
Imports (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	12.9	15.0	25.3	27.7	27.0
Hungary	12.6	14.6	15.4	16.2	21.0
Poland	18.8	21.6	29.1	32.6	38.5
Slovakia	6.3	6.6	8.8	11.1	10.3
Russia	36.1	38.7	46.7	62.3	58.7
Trade balance (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	0.4	-0.7	-3.6	-5.8	-4.5
Hungary	-3.7	-3.8	-2.5	-3.1	-2.0
Poland	-4.7	-4.3	-6.2	-8.2	-11.3
Slovakia	-0.9	0.1	-0.2	-2.3	-1.5
Russia	23.1	28.2	33.2	26.9	19.8
Current-account balance (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	0.1	-0.1	-1.4	-4.5	-3.2
Hungary	-3.5	-3.9	-2.5	-1.7	-1.0
Poland	-2.3	-0.9	5.5	-1.4	-4.3

²⁷³ European Dialogue, No. 5, October 1997.

²⁷⁴ Bobylev, Y.: Promyshlennyy spad v Rossii: strukturnye kharakteristiki. IET Processings. Institut ekonomicheskikh problem perekhodnogo perioda, 1997.

²⁷⁵ Fituni, L.: Russia: External Economic Relations and Future Development. NATO Colloquium, 1995.

Slovakia	-0.6	0.7	0.4	-2.0	-1.3
Russia	6.4	11.4	9.5	11.7	9.4
Foreign exchange reserves (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	3.9	6.2	14.0	16.1	15.0
Hungary	6.7	6.8	12.0	9.8	12.6
Poland	4.3	6.0	15.0	18.0	20.7
Slovakia	0.5	1.8	3.4	3.5	3.3
Russia	4.5	2.9	11.0	15.3	17.8
Foreign debt (\$bn)					
Czech Republic	8.5	10.7	16.6	20.8	21.4
Hungary	24.6	28.5	31.7	27.6	22.1
Poland	47.3	42.2	44.0	40.4	38.0
Slovakia	3.6	4.3	5.8	7.8	10.7
Russia	112.8	121.6	120.4	124.0	NA
Exchange rate (\$)					
Czech Republic	29.2	28.8	26.6	27.2	43.5
Hungary	92.0	105.2	125.7	152.6	186.8
Poland	1.8	2.3	2.4	2.7	3.3
Slovakia	30.8	32.0	29.7	30.7	33.6
Russia	2212.0	4563.0	5121.0	5784.0	6321.0
<i>Source: Business Central Europe</i>					

In the second half of the 1990s, significant changes occurred in the foreign-trade orientation of both CEE countries and Russia. The EU countries have become the chief business partners for both parts. The share of EU in the foreign-trade turnover of the CEE countries (average for 10 associated countries) in 1995 reached 65.6 per cent and that of Russia 35.5 per cent. Russia lost the positions of the former USSR in the foreign-trade turnover of the CEE countries. In 1995, Russia accounted for 24 per cent of the foreign trade of Bulgaria (60 per cent in 1989), of Hungary 9.4 per cent (25 per cent), Slovakia 11.8 per cent, Czech Republic 6.4 per cent (of the former Czechoslovakia 40 per cent), Romania 9 per cent (26.6 per cent), and Poland 6 per cent (25 per cent).²⁷⁶ The Visegrád countries, thanks mainly to association treaties with the EU, managed more rapidly than Russia to re-orientate its foreign trade.

Through their value of total export covering the years 1993 through 1997, the Visegrád countries almost got on the same level with Russia. In the years 1993 through 1997, the total value of their exports achieved the level of 302.3 billion USD (Poland 105.8 billion USD, CR 93.5 billion USD, Hungary 64.6 billion USD, Slovakia 38.4 billion USD), whereas the value of export of Russia within the above period of time achieved the sum total of 373.4 billion USD. The total value of imports of Visegrád countries within the above period of time achieved 371.4 billion USD (Poland 140.6 billion USD, CR 107.9, Hungary 79.8, and Slovakia 43.1). Unlike the Visegrád countries, Russia displays a stable trade balance (in 1997, almost 20 billion USD).

The disintegration of COMECON markets had negative effects on the structure of commodities of Russian exports, which has acquired a more expressive character of raw material. Earth gas, crude oil, and oil products account for almost one half of the total volume of exports. The share of machinery products has declined from 10 per cent in 1991 to 3.9 per cent in 1995. On the other hand, it was the exports of raw material which has been the main reason for a long-term active balance and payment account of the Russian Federation.

²⁷⁶ Vneshneekonomicheskiye svyazi TsVE s YeS i Rossiyey. Part 3. Tsentral'naya i Vostochnaya Yevropa i interes Rossii, op. cit., p. 8.

Table 3: Structure of Russia's exports by commodities (%)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Exports total	100	100	100	100	100
Foodstuff products and Agricultural raw material (apart from textile raw material)	2.6	3.9	3.8	4.2	2.4
Raw material (crude oil, oil products, and earth gas)	51.7	52.1	46.7	43.8	40.9
Chemical industry products	6.6	6.1	6.0	7.7	9.6
Wood and cellulose and paper products	4.7	3.7	4.2	4.2	4.1
Textile a textile products	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.8
Metal, precious stones and products of these	14.3	16.4	23.2	26.3	28.0
Machines, equipment, and means of transportation	10.2	8.9	6.5	5.0	3.9
Others	9.0	8.3	9.2	8.0	10.3

Source: Goskomstat Rossiyskoi Federatsii (State Committee of the Russian Federation on Statistics)

The imports of RF is dominated by machines, equipments, means of transportation and foodstuff, the share of which represents together over 50 per cent.

Table 4: Structure of Russia's imports by commodities (%)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Imports total	100	100	100	100	100
Foodstuff products and Agricultural raw material (apart from textile raw material)	27.9	26.0	22.2	30.4	28.0
Raw material (crude oil, oil products, and earth gas)	2.9	2.7	4.0	2.9	2.8
Chemical industry products	12.4	9.3	6.2	11.0	7.6
Wood and cellulose and paper products	1.1	1.2	0.5	1.7	1.8
Textile a textile products	9.9	12.2	13.9	7.6	5.2
Metal, precious stones and products of these	6.2	3.3	3.5	4.0	5.5
Machines, equipment, and means of transportation	35.6	37.7	33.8	35.0	33.0
Others	4.0	7.6	15.9	4.8	16.1

Source: Goskomstat Rossiyskoi Federatsii (State Committee of the Russian Federation on Statistics)

Raw material in the foreign trade of Russia (without the CIS countries) in 1996 accounted for over 80 per cent, whereas the sale of raw material was responsible for over one half of state income in hard currency. Quite a number of Russian experts warn against the threat that should

this trend continue for an extended period of time, Russia will gradually grow into a raw-material supplement of the economically developed countries.²⁷⁷

Table 5: Russia: Exports to the Top Twenty Partners (current prices, per cent of total)

		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996*
Total exports, fob (\$m) ¹⁾		53605	59177	66862	79910	87629
Exports exc. CIS, fob (\$m) ¹⁾		42376	44297	53001	65666	71874
<i>Ranking in 1995</i>		<i>(% of total)</i>				
Germany	1	14.04	11.46	12.03	9.20	9.37
USA	2	1.80	4.51	6.72	6.91	6.73
Japan	3	4.02	4.53	5.33	5.51	4.06
Switzerland	4	2.05	3.63	7.02	5.45	5.19
China	5	6.76	6.93	5.45	5.23	6.57
Italy	6	6.99	5.93	5.63	5.17	3.93
Netherlands	7	5.44	2.21	4.66	4.87	4.63
United Kingdom	8	5.49	7.57	8.04	4.71	4.47
Ireland	9	0.09	1.37	1.75	3.82	4.04
Finland	10	3.77	3.08	3.57	3.60	3.67
Poland	11	3.93	2.96	2.67	3.04	3.58
Czech Republic	12	...	3.11	2.41	2.90	2.43
Hungary	13	3.80	4.74	2.66	2.75	2.51
Slovak Republic	14	...	2.10	2.33	2.66	2.61
Turkey	15	1.56	2.43	1.91	2.53	2.35
France	16	4.72	3.51	2.50	2.35	2.22
Belgium	17	2.14	2.39	2.60	2.30	1.98
Lithuania	18	1.02	0.67	1.36	1.65	1.57
India	19	1.42	1.07	0.72	1.52	1.10
South Korea	20	0.63	0.88	1.07	1.40	1.65
<i>Notes:</i>						
1) Officially registered trade.						
2) Shares in trade excluding CIS.						
<i>Source: WIIW</i>						

The prevailing part of Russian exports flows to the EU countries (37 per cent of the RF trade turnover), whereas raw material participate in it with 44 per cent and wood and wood products 14 per cent.²⁷⁸ In 1997, Russia shared 21 per cent of the EU countries imports and 18.7 per cent in their exports.²⁷⁹ The main export partner of Russia is Germany, which accounted for 10 per cent of the Russian turnover annually in the past years.

²⁷⁷ Natsional'nye interesy i problemy bezopasnosti..., op. cit.: Ekonomicheskaya bezopasnost', p. 2; See also Lukov, V.: Bezopasnost' Rossii: vneshnepoliticheskoye izmereniye. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 8, 1995, pp. 5-9: Lukov warns that as many as 21 per cent of GDP of Russia is made in foreign trade, whereas in the times of tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, this indicator has never exceeded the level of 5 per cent.

²⁷⁸ Savel'yev, V.: Rossiyu ne isklyuchit' ni iz Yevropy, ni iz Aziyi. Ob otnosheniyakh Rossiyi i YeS. Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn', No. 8, 1995, pp. 37-45, here p. 38.

²⁷⁹ EU/Russia relations. Brussels, 27 January 1998.

Despite the fact that among the first twenty export partners of Russia only five CEE countries may be found (the Visegrád countries and Lithuania) which altogether participated with only 13 per cent in the Russian exports in 1995, the CEE region remains one of the key customers of Russian raw material. Into the CEE countries, 34 per cent of exports of natural gas was implemented in 1995 from Russia to the "Far Abroad" (exc. the CIS countries), 26 per cent of crude oil exports, and 20 per cent of coal exports. In 1995, exports of natural gas into CEE almost approached the level that of 1989 (42 billion m³ - in 1989: 47.8 billion m³). Crude oil deliveries into the region achieved the level of 36 million tons (excluding the countries of the former Yugoslavia).²⁸⁰ If we consider the significance of transit of the CEE region for the access of Russia to the EU countries having the most significant market for the latter, it appears inevitable that Russia displayed great interest in the renewal of mutual economic contacts.

4.3.2.3. Endeavor at liberalization of trade on both multilateral and bilateral levels

Increased activity of Moscow in the renewal of economic cooperation and the development of mutual trade with the CEE countries could be observed from 1995. Toward August 1995, the embassies of the former COMECON countries and Albania in Moscow obtained a document from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RF entitled "On the principles of trade and economic relations, mutual partnership, and cooperation" in which Russia had proposed the renewal of trade and economic relations with the CIS countries and the seven CEE countries.²⁸¹ The then Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Trade, Oleg Davidov, explained the sense of the Russian initiative. According to him, "Central Europe is a significant actor in the endeavor of Russia to integrate within the world economy, while it still does not perform the task. The existence of CEFTA, consisting in Poland, CR, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia has an unfavorable influence on the Russian economic and political interests, limiting the access of Russian industrial ware and advanced technologies to its markets."²⁸²

The Russian proposal to create a COMECON-bis has not been met with understanding in CEE. In a similar spirit like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of SR, responded also the remaining CEE countries: "The priority for the Slovak Republic in the sphere of multilateral economic cooperation is its integration in EU, enlargement of the free-trade zone within CEFTA, and active membership in the World Trade Organization (...) Should anybody consider the creation of a kind of new or renewed COMECON, this would not be in correspondence with the above foreign-policy orientation of the SR, and any such endeavors would be rejected".²⁸³ After the failure of multilateral initiative, which was oriented chiefly against the existence of CEFTA, Russia undertook some steps of bilateral character in the relations with single CEE countries with the aim of achieving liberalization of mutual market. Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were presented in 1996 from Russia proposals to liberalize mutual trade.

Illustrative is mainly the process of Slovak-Russian negotiations on the issue, since it was Slovakia, which from among the Visegrád countries manifested the biggest political will to liberalize the trade with Russia.

²⁸⁰ Vneshneekonomicheskiye svyazi TsVE s YeS i Rossiyey..., op. cit., p. 8.

²⁸¹ Pravda, 20.09. 1995.

²⁸² Zahradníček, T. - Drahný, S.: Moskva mení doktrínu. Sme v strednej Európe, No. 2, 1997.

²⁸³ Pravda, 20.09. 1995.

The first official notice on the possibility of creating a free trade zone between SR and RF appeared during the visit of Russian PM Viktor Chernomyrdin in Slovakia in February 1995. Russian PM gave then his opinion on the free trade zone in relation to the anticipated establishment of a Joint Trade House, about which preliminary agreement was achieved during his visit to Bratislava as of the first step toward the future free trade zone.²⁸⁴ Despite the above mentioned official rejection of the all-inclusive initiative of Russia of August 1995 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the SR, the Minister of Finance of SR, Sergey Kozlík, inquired in October 1995 his Russian partners whether they would be interested in bilateral liberalization of trade on the level of free trade zone or even, reportedly, of tax union.²⁸⁵ In March 1996, on the press conference of the government, Minister of Economy of SR, Ján Ducký, informed of the fact that the government had adopted draft measures for the expansion of Slovak exports to the Russian Federation. Among the above-mentioned measures he included the establishment of EXIM Bank and preparing an Agreement on Free Trade between the two countries²⁸⁶

The Slovak "economic summit" took place in the city of Piešťany in September 1996, whose task was to develop a new foreign-trade policy for the country. The problem was mainly in an immense growth of passive balance of trade in 1996 (amounting to over 50 billion SKK),²⁸⁷ caused by non-diversification of imports of energy resources, participating in the balance in the amount of some 77 per cent. The then economic counselor to PM Peter Štáňo explained the aims of the summit as follows: "Both external and internal conditions have changed and one has not respond to the emerged situation. The growth of prices of crude oil and gas, while there still exists non-diversification of these sources is in an essential way reflected in the trade balance. Which is even worse, we are unable to increase the exports to the Russian market. The time has come for a selective, differentiated, and aimful foreign-trade policy"²⁸⁸ PM Mešiar even during the Piešťany summit stated that "there exists an offer from the Russian part to create a free trade zone, the negotiations till being in their initial, expert stage."²⁸⁹ A more detailed information on the Russian proposal appeared as late as in October 1996. Anton Bonko, a representative of the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, informed that the calculations made show that in mutual commodity trade (apart from crude oil and gas) we would be active up to roughly one half of payments for annual imports of energy carriers. The Russian part further insists that our decision making on creating a free market zone should not be conditioned by the agreement of any third party. The proposal from the Russian party is not limited in time and it is anticipated that it shall last for about six months.²⁹⁰

The problems connected with the creation of the free trade zone between SR and RF have also been realized by the Russian party. Vladimir Babichev, the then Vice-Premier of the government of RF, during the fifth round of negotiations of the Inter-Governmental Commission for Trade and Economic, Scientific-Technological, and Cultural Cooperation between SR and RF in November 1996 in Bratislava was explicit enough: "This is not merely economic, but also

²⁸⁴ *Národná obroda*, 8.03. 1995.

²⁸⁵ See e.g. Mikloš, I.: *Od Sovietskeho zväzu do Ruska. Domino efekt*, No. 45, 1995; Minister of Finance, Sergey Kozlík, later denied the information of press agencies claiming that he had been talking in Moscow of the tax union, he, reportedly, had only been talking of the free trade zone.

²⁸⁶ *Pravda*, 13.03. 1996.

²⁸⁷ In the years 1994 and 1995 SR had a relatively balanced foreign-trade (see Table 2).

²⁸⁸ *Pravda*, 3.09. 1996.

²⁸⁹ *Národná obroda*, 6.09. 1996.

²⁹⁰ *Hospodárske noviny*, 7.10. 1996.

political issue."²⁹¹ After the termination of negotiations, S. Kozlík, Minister of Finance of the SR, who is the head of the Slovak part of the Joint Commission, having been asked by the journalists whether Slovakia consults this issue with EU responded in the sense that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the SR forwarded a notice that the EU does not take a negative stand on the prepared free trade zone between SR and RF.²⁹² Despite that fact that a notice definitely is not identical with a specific report on the stand of the Council of association agreement with the EU which, under the agreement, is the only body authorized to give a qualified opinion, that as a matter of fact the standpoint from the CR was still missing, the Slovak delegation did not hesitate and submitted as early as in November 1996 to the Russian party a draft Memorandum on liberalization of free market between SR and RF, containing essential principles of the agreement on the free trade zone. This should have been undersigned by both parties by the end of June 1997.²⁹³

The Slovak government was so very much involved in the issue of settlement of trade balance with Russia that it almost forgot to comply with its international obligations. First of all, the obligation in question was one following from the association agreement with the EU and agreements of tax union with the CR, to consult on any issues pertaining to liberalization of trade with third parties. This is not to speak of the fact that the Russian Federation is not a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) or, respectively, CEFTA. It is the membership of the SR itself in WTO from which an obligation follows for the country to liberalize its trade only with the WTO member countries. For several months, the Slovak diplomacy had been finding out the opinions of its contractual partners, only to finally have to admit through Pavol Hamšík, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, in February 1997, that "Slovakia realizes its international obligations, which is why the free trade zone with Russia is merely subject of speculations."²⁹⁴ In January 1997, the Slovak government issued a report in which it stated that entering into agreement on free trade with Russia would bring to the SR an annual profit of only 11.5 million USD.²⁹⁵

Instead of the free trade zone agreement, during the Russian PM Chernomyrdin in Bratislava in April 1997 a joint declaration of PMs was signed on liberalization of mutual trade. In other words, this was merely a declaration on signing an agreement in the future. Having learned their respective lessons from the diplomatic failure, both parties in the declaration on liberalization of the mutual trade undertook to consider their respective obligations following from each of them from the effective international agreements and treaties and from the WTO principles. A similar declaration was signed between Russia and Poland²⁹⁶

The experiences from the negotiations between SR and RF have demonstrated that under the currently existing circumstances, even when exerting their respective political best efforts, it is impossible to achieve liberalization of mutual trade. However, the main problem was not on the part of the CEE countries, but on the part of Russia, which is unable to settle its domestic economic problems in accordance with international standards and adopt such internal legislation, which would qualify it for at least a membership in the WTO. The perspectives of liberalization of mutual trade and those of the development of economic cooperation between the CEE

²⁹¹ Práca, 25.11. 1996.

²⁹² Ibidem.

²⁹³ Národná obroda, 25.11. 1996.

²⁹⁴ Národná obroda, 7.02. 1997.

²⁹⁵ Hospodárske noviny, 31.07. 1997.

²⁹⁶ Pravda, 30.04. 1997.

countries and Russia shall therefore depend predominantly from the continuation of economic reforms in Russia.

The circumstances being as they are, the most significant representative of the Russian economic interests in the CEE region remains the gas concern Gazprom. Anyway, in the past years it had not been clear at all in quite a number of cases whether the activities exerted toward the CEE countries were part of the conceptual Russian foreign policy or, rather, it was *a business strategy* of Gazprom.

4.3.2.4. Gazprom's interests in CEE

Russia's participation in the production of energy in the world was in 1995 13 per cent and this indicator ranks it on the second place immediately following the USA (20 per cent). It exploits some 28 per cent of world earth gas mining, 12 per cent of coal, and 11 per cent of crude oil. Crude oil and gas sectors remained practically the only resorts of the former Soviet economy which have survived the collapse caused by the disintegration of the USSR and the end of the centralized system of the management of economy since 1991. In 1995, Russia exported 192 billion m³ of natural gas in the value of 13.4 billion USD and 122 million tons of crude oil in the value of 12.3 billion USD, which made up for some 40 per cent of all state income in hard currency within the above period of time²⁹⁷

94 per cent of the exploitation of Russian gas is at present controlled by the company Gazprom, for the first time having been partly privatized in 1992 (40 per cent of stock remained in the property of the state). Gazprom is the biggest world producer of natural gas, while its share in the world production of gas represents some 23 per cent. Gazprom operates 144,000 km of pipelines (monopoly exporter from Russia) and employs over 360,000 employees. The company creates 8.5 per cent of Russia's GNP.²⁹⁸ The former Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gazprom, V. Chernomyrdin, became the Russian PM in December 1992. There is no doubt about the fact that crude-oil and gas interests have a significant say in the implementation of Russian domestic and foreign policy. In the opinion of Peter Rutland, "it is not quite clear where Gazprom ends and where Russia begins".²⁹⁹ Chernomyrdin's successor in the office of Gazprom boss, Re Viakhirev, gave the following opinion in London in the beginning of 1995: "Anybody who gains power (in Russia - the author) must settle their relations with Gazprom, because without Gazpro they will be unable to settle anything at all."³⁰⁰ This rule obviously holds true not only for the Russian domestic, but foreign policy as well.

Russian natural gas faces very promising business perspectives. There exist an anticipation that in 2010 the consumption of natural gas in Western Europe shall be increasing annually t billion m³ (bcm), while as many as 127 bcm should be covered by the Russian natural gas, which enables Gazprom to increase its share at solvent European markets from 24 per cent in 1995 to 28 per cent in 2010. The business strategy of Gazprom is that from the mere supplier it becomes the distributor of gas in the Western market, which is why it purposefully establishes joint ventures, by means of which it could distribute gas up to the final consumers. In 2010 the sales through joint ventures could reach up to 45 per cent which would significantly contribute to the growth of

²⁹⁷ Rutland, P.: Russia's Energy Empire Under Strain. Transition, Vol. 2, No. 9, 3 May 1996, pp. 6-7.

²⁹⁸ Gazprom: Russian Joint - Stock Company. Source: Gazprom, 1997; ING Barings, September 1996.

²⁹⁹ Rutland, P.: Russia's Natural Gas Leviathan, op. cit., p. 12.

³⁰⁰ ITAR-TASS, 29.11. 1996.

income for the company³⁰¹ Natural gas is an incomparably cleaner source of energy than are crude oil or coal. The European Union is planning to introduce the so-called energy tax for crude oil processing amounting to 10 USD/barrel, so that the development of new, environmentally-friendly and energy-saving technologies is encouraged. In other words, the significance of gas and its utilization in the world energy system shall be growing at the expense of crude oil exploitation.³⁰²

Table 6: Russia's share in the examined world supplies of the main lines of raw materials

Raw material	Share in the examined world supplies (%)	Position in the world
Crude oil	13	2
Earth gas	35	1
Coal	12	3
Uranium	5.6	7
Iron ore	28	1
Fosfates	8.2	3
Copper	10	3
Nickel	30	1

Source: Komitet RF po geologii i ispol'zovaniyu nedr

Table 7: Exploitation of raw materials in Russia

Raw material	Volumes of exploitation					
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Crude oil and oil condensates (mil. ton)	462	399	354	318	304	301
Earth gas (billion m ³)	643	641	618	607	580	584
Coal (mil. ton)	353	337	306	272	262	270
Copper (thousands tons)	758	675	580	561	553	495
Nickel (%)	100	93	82	76	79	68
Gold (%)	100	87	89	85	89	80

Source: Goskomstat RF, Komitet po geologii i ispol'zovaniyu nedr, Ministerstvo topliva i energetiki RF

It is natural that Gazprom has an immense interest in increasing the gas deliveries and exportation. Two new multi-billion projects of the construction of new pipelines serve this aim, which should be added to the existing central line going through Ukraine and Slovakia (annual carrying capacity to Europe: ca 80 billion bcm) and the new Southern line through Bulgaria and Greece to Turkey with the expected capacity of 29 billion bcm³⁰³ A competitor to Russian gas in Europe may only be the one from Norway, Algeria, and West Africa.³⁰⁴

³⁰¹ ING Barings, September 1996.

³⁰² Seyful'mulyukov, I.: Mirovyj rynek nefi. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya, No. 6, 1994, pp. 104-105.

³⁰³ Robinson, A.: O•ivené nádeje po studenej vojne. Slovenský Profit, No. 42, 1996. p. 16.

³⁰⁴ ING Barings, September 1996.

Table 8: Russian Share of European Gas Markets and Projection (%)

Importer	1992	2000F	2010F
Austria	74	68	64
France	33	26	25
Germany	31	24	21
Greece	.	81	84
Italy	27	29	34
Switzerland	17	11	11
Turkey	96	73	48

Source: International Energy Agency

Departing from the practice of EU planning, 30 per cent share of the deliveries from a single source (at least three sources of deliveries) is considered a tolerable limit, which does not yet represent the emergence of dependence and a long-term threat in case of unexpected interruption of deliveries. On the one hand, within the Trans-Energy Network program (TENs), the EU supports the Russian transportation projects (those mentioned above) for the delivery of natural gas to the EU markets through the CEE countries. However, despite immense supplies of natural gas in Russia, the supposition of increasing its deliveries in absolute numbers, and its convenient price, the EU is planning to keep the share of Gazprom in its markets below the level of 30 per cent (28 per cent in the year 2010). Considering the presupposition that Gazprom will manage through its business policy to cross the above limit, EU governments exert pressure on Russia to open its gas market for foreign investment, to make Gazprom reforms, just like they exert investment initiatives with the aim of the development of further sources of deliveries in the area of Persian Gulf, Central Asia, etc., which could create competition to Gazprom in Europe.³⁰⁵

Besides, in the long-run perspective and considering the anticipated accession of the CEE countries, the EU has interest that the share of Gazprom is gradually decreased in the CEE markets. Western companies make annually some 7 billion USD of direct and portfolio investments into the reform of energy sector of CEE with the aim to mainly diversify the sources and routes of the deliveries.³⁰⁶ Also under the above pressure, Central European countries are forced to weaken the Russian gas monopoly in the CEE. The most obvious examples of this process may be observed in the Czech Republic and Hungary.

In the Czech Republic, heated debate has been provoked by a government material on the ways of diversification of earth gas importation in the CR after 1998 with the aim to gradually eliminate the dependence from the deliveries of Russian gas.³⁰⁷ Already in 1997, the share of Gazprom in the Czech gas market was reduced by 20 per cent.³⁰⁸ The Hungarian monopoly gas forwarder, the company MOL, entered into a long-term contract with the company Gaz de France on the deliveries of 400 million bcm of gas a year. Apart from Gaz de France, MOL purchases gas also from the German Ruhrgas. At the same time, the share of Gazprom in the Hungarian market was

³⁰⁵ Ibidem.

³⁰⁶ Starostin, A.: Risk pereraspredeleniya eksporta. Finansovyye riski, No. 1, 1996, p. 15.

³⁰⁷ Janík, B.: • eská republika sa chce zbav izávislosti od Ruska. Národná obroda, 20 November, 1996.

³⁰⁸ See Zelenka, R.: Bojisko o plyn. SME, 3 December, 1996.

only some 65 per cent, 35 per cent of national demand having been covered by their own production. Despite this, Hungary commenced further diversification of deliveries.³⁰⁹

Table 9: CEE Import Dependence on Russian Gas (1995)

(bcm)	Imported from Russia	Domestic production	Import dependence (%)
Czech Republic	7.95	0.14	98.3
Hungary	6.89	4.88	58.5
Poland	6.70	3.70	64.4
Slovakia	5.60	0.20	96.6
Bulgaria	5.00*	0.05	99.0
Romania	4.40	19.0	18.8
Croatia	1.20	1.60	42.9
Serbia	1.20	0.00	100.0
Slovenia	0.45	0.00	100.0

Source: FSU Energy, ING Barings

It is natural that Gazprom exerts any and all endeavors to eliminate this process and exerts pressure on the governments of the CEE countries, making use of Russia as state to achieve its aims, including its foreign policy. Gazprom is predominantly interested in the elimination of the threat that the Western competitors acquire control over the transit of Russian gas to Europe through the territory of CEE. This would limit their possibilities to make prices in the future, to be competitive, and enjoy profits from the sale of gas. In other words, the best and the most effective control is possible in case of property entry into those companies in CEE which operate transit gas transport systems and the companies which operate underground gas storages. Predominantly, the storages are strategically important for a prompt response on the gas market.

In this sense, the interests of Gazprom in CEE are identical with its interests in the CIS, of which Ukrainian experiences testify too. According to the inter-governmental agreement "On the Principles of Settlement of Ukrainian Debt in Return for the Deliveries of Russian Natural Gas in 1994", signed on 18th March, 1995, another agreement was signed, the one between Ukgazprom and Gazprom on the creation of the Russian-Ukrainian joint-stock company of a closed type called Gaztransit. Apart from the property interest of Gazprom in the transit system on its territory, Ukraine undertook, in form of its own investment in the joint venture, to include herein two of its most voluminous underground gas storages (Bil'che-Volytsko-Ungrian and Bohorodchanskiy). The effectiveness of the agreement, not in the entire wording (underground storages was refused to be invested), was only abolished by the Ukrainian Parliament. Another offer followed from the Ukrainian part, specifying that that the underground storages be simply taken out of the joint venture. The answer from the Gazprom's Executive Director Rem Viakhirev was clear enough: "The alternative of creating Gaztransit without the Ukrainian underground gas storages is of no interest for us".³¹⁰ According to the above agreement, the Ukrainian government undertook to emit by the end of 1996 state bonds in the nominal value of 1.4 billion USD, which

³⁰⁹ Národná obroda, 20.12. 1996.

³¹⁰ Yeremenko, A.: Ispol'zovaniye gaza Ukrainoy v 1995 godu i perspektivy yego priobreteniya v 1996 godu. Finansovyje riski, No. 1, 1996, p. 11.

shall be given over to Gazprom and placed in the Russian capital market. Their owners shall be entitled to participate in the privatization of Ukrainian enterprises.³¹¹

With the aim of enforcing its long-term business interests in the CEE region and Western Europe, Gazprom has chosen a strategy of establishing joint ventures. In the 1990s Gazprom established 18 joint ventures with foreign partners, eight of which in the CEE countries. The only from among the key CEE countries in which it failed to establish a joint venture and in which it recorded substantial decrease of its share in the market is the Czech Republic.

Table 10: Gazprom's Joint Ventures in Europe

Company	Shares (%)	Partners/country	Project
ABB/Entes	.	Turkey	Construction of 1,000MW power plant near Ankara and supply 2bcm pa
Europol Gaz	48	Polish Oil&Gas (Poland)	Construction of Yamal pipeline across Poland
Gas Trading SA	35	Polish Oil&Gas (Poland)	Distribution and marketing within Poland
Gasum	50	Neste (Finland)	Distribution and marketing within Finland
GWH	50	OMV (Austria)	Distribution and marketing within Austria
Izhorsky Tube Works	5	Manesmann and Izhorsky Works	Pipe manufacturing in Sankt Peterburg
Panrusgaz	50¹⁾	MOL (Hungary)	Building the transit portion of a pipeline to Italy
Progres Gas	50	Petrol (Serbia)	Distribution and marketing within Serbia
Promgas	50	Snam (Italy)	Construction of pipeline within Italy and distribution
Prometheus	50	DEPA (Greece)	350km pipeline from Burgas (Bulgaria) to Alexandroupolis - completion 199
Topenergy	50	Bulgargaz (Bulgaria)	600km pipeline across Bulgaria to supply Serbia and Macedonia
Slovrusgaz	50	Slovak Gas Industry (Slovakia)	Distribution and marketing within Slovakia. Contract signed in October 1997
Uraltrans/Schlumberger	.	Rombach Schlumberger (Germany)	Manufacture of distribution equipment in Yekaterinburg
Volta	49	Edison Gas (Italy)	Installation of 1,000km of pipeline, supply and distribution of gas in Italy as alternative supplier to Snam (Eni)
WIEH	50	Wintershall (Germany)	Distribution in Germany and Central Europe
Wingaz	35	Wintershall (Germany)	Supply and distribution of Gas in Germany as competitor to Ruhrgas since 1993
Wiron	25²⁾	Romgaz (Romania)	Distribution and marketing within Romania
Yugorosgaz	50¹⁾	Petrol, Progres Gas and others (Serbia)	Distribution and marketing within former Yugoslaviya

³¹¹ Suchasnyy stan palyvno-enerhetychnykh resursiv Ukrainy. Kyjiv 1996, p. 15.

Notes:

1) Higher than indicated because it owns a stake in one of the other minority shareholders.

2) Wiron is a 50:50 joint venture between Romgaz and Gazprom's subsidiary, WIEH, in which Wintershall is the other equal shareholder.

Source: ING Barings (added by author)

4.3.2.4.1. Gazprom's failure in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is crossed by Gazprom's main transit gas-pipeline used to supply gas to its main customers - Germany and France. The Czech Republic itself purchases some 10 billion bcm gas per year. The estimated gas consumption in the Czech Republic in 2010 should reach 14 billion bcm³¹² In 1995, the trade between the CR and Russia amounted to about USD 2 billion. Over 80 % of Russian exports were represented by the deliveries of natural gas and crude oil.³¹³

The Czech Republic, which was dependent on supplies of crude oil and earth gas from Russia, was the first among the CEE countries to systematically diversify the sources of the strategic energy raw-materials. Construction of the Ingolstadt (Germany) - Kralupy (CR) oil pipeline started as early as in 1991, and the pipeline was put into operation in March 1993 and this brought an end to unilateral dependence of the Czech Republic on crude oil deliveries from Russia.³¹⁴ The same idea, that is, elimination of unilateral dependence on Russian gas, underlay negotiations between the main Czech gas trader and distributor, the Transgaz company, and the GFU, a Norwegian syndicate (Statoil, Norsk Hydro and Saga). In March 1997, the Czech government provided a governmental guarantee for the agreement between Transgaz and GFU on long-term (20 years) deliveries of Norwegian gas. The agreement stipulates that the Czech Republic will purchase 3 billion m³ of natural gas per year. As a result, the annual loss of Gazprom in the Czech market will amount to about USD 200 mil³¹⁵ Ruhrgas, a German company, whose main competitor at the German market is Gazprom through its joint-ventures Wingaz and WIEH, plans to deliver in the future 10-15 per cent of gas from the Northern Sea through the transport networks of Western Europe to the CEE countries.³¹⁶ Any long-term contracts in the CEE that support competitiveness of Norwegian gas in CEE, therefore, are in defiance of Gazprom's interests. From this point of view, the Czech-Norwegian contract was the first significant trade loss of Gazprom in the CEE region.

Gazprom attempted to prevent the Czech-Norwegian contract by offering a considerable Russian gas price reduction for the Czech Republic, and by establishing a Joint Czech-Russian Trade House in which the respective shares of both parties would be 50%. Business operations within the Trade House would enable the Czech Republic to pay for a part of natural gas deliveries by the deliveries of Czech goods to the Russian market, which would reduce the passive trade balance of the Czech Republic with regard to Russia. Chemapol, a Czech petrochemical

³¹² ING Barings, op. cit.

³¹³ Polityka Rosji wobec Czech, Slowacji i Wegier w latach 1994-1997. Wybrane zagadnienia. Analiz. Ósrodek Studiów Wschodnich. Warszawa, kwiecień 1997, p. 4.

³¹⁴ SME, 11.03. 1993

³¹⁵ Grajewski, A.: NATO rozszerza sie na Wschód, a Gazprom na Zachód, Polska w Europie. Zeszyt dwudziesty czwarty (XXIV). Warszawa, pazdziernik 1997, pp. 118-126, here p. 121.

³¹⁶ ING Barings, op. cit., p. 121.

company, mediated this offer.³¹⁷ It should be noted that this company was involved in great scandal in 1994. Jan Ruml, the Minister of the Interior, based on the information from the Czech Intelligence Service (BIS), confirmed that some Czech companies dealing with processing and sale of Russian oil, contacted certain companies controlled by the Russian mafia. Moreover, Ruml stated that Chemapol's General Manager, Mr. Václav Junek, has been an agent of the Czechoslovak Intelligence Service before 1989, and that he had acted as an agent for industrial and technological espionage in France. Junek maintained business relations with the Russian KGB. Ruml claimed that export of Russian oil was under control of companies which were connected with Russian organized crime and which had been mostly established on the basis of an intelligence service network controlled by the KGB.³¹⁸

On March 19, 1997, the Czech government eventually made a decision to provide governmental guarantees for the agreement between the Czech Transgaz and the Norwegian GFU syndicate on long-term deliveries of gas to the Czech Republic. The Russian party reacted to its failure in exasperation through its ambassador to Prague, Nikolay Ryabov (the former Chairman of the Central Election Committee of RF). Ryabov stated that the Russian party might reconsider its trade relations to the CR, including the agreements on gas and oil deliveries.³¹⁹ In its communiqué for the press, Gazprom stated the following: "Similar decisions would undoubtedly affect Gazprom's inherent interests in European gas market".³²⁰

The Czech Republic became the first country to get rid of its unilateral dependence upon Russia in terms of natural gas and oil deliveries. In addition, it is the last transit country in the CEE, in which Gazprom failed to establish a joint venture.

4.3.2.4.2 Hungarian model of reforming the power industry

The Hungarian reform of the power industry is considered to be the best model for other CEE countries. Hungary opened its power industry to international capital, which accelerated its privatization. The state-owned oil and gas-company (MOL) was also partly influenced by privatization. Due to the reform, regional distribution companies dealing with gas deliveries came to be controlled by foreign companies (Gaz de France, Ruhrgas, Elf, Agip, etc.). Consumer prices of gas - compared to the other CEE countries - approached the European price level very closely. Gazprom also made the liberalized conditions for the penetration to the Hungarian market. As opposed to other CEE countries, Gazprom is not the only and dominant company in the Hungarian gas market. The state-controlled MOL remained a monopoly gas supplier. Gazprom can sell its gas in Hungary only through MOL.³²¹

The 1994 foreign trade turnover between Hungary and Russia amounted to USD 2.6 billion. 90 per cent of Russian exports were represented by raw-materials. This trade structure reflects long-term trends. In 1995, Hungary produced 40 per cent of domestic gas consumption and 60 per cent were delivered by Russia (see Table 9). Annual consumption in Hungary is about 11 billion bcm of natural gas. In the early 1996, a 70-km oil pipeline between Hungarian Győr and Austrian Baumgarten was put into operation. The pipeline enables Hungary to purchase crude oil from the

³¹⁷ Grajewski, op. cit., p. 121.

³¹⁸ Polityka Rosji..., op. cit., p. 8.

³¹⁹ SME, 22.03. 1997.

³²⁰ Quoted from Baker, S.: Russia: Gazprom Lashes Out At Czechs Over Norwegian Gas Deal. RFE/RF, 21, March 1997.

³²¹ ING Barings, September 1996.

West.³²² As a result, Hungary ceased to be dependent exclusively on gas deliveries from Russia. Hence, purchase of Russian gas is controlled by economic principles, and the space for possible political pressure on the part of Russia has thus been limited.

Gazprom and MOL established a joint venture Panrusgaz whose main purpose is the construction of the southern branch of the Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline on Hungarian territory (so-called Volta project). Foundation of this Hungarian-Russian company was preceded by establishing a joint-venture between Gazprom and the Italian Snam company in September 1995. The Volta project is to enable the deliveries of Russian gas from Yamal oil-fields to Italy. The gas-line will be connected to the main line on the territory of Poland, and then it will pass through Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia to Italy. A reduced variant of the Volta project plans to deliver gas to Italy by its connection to the Bratislava gas-line on the territory of Slovakia. Construction of Hungarian section started in 1997.³²³

Liberalization of the power industry in Hungary and diversification of sources and delivery routes resulted in a situation mostly controlled by market principles. Gazprom's influence is thus balanced by the Western competition. The legitimate effort to defend its trade interests makes Gazprom exercise standard procedures and make transparent investments into the Hungarian economy, which is evidenced by investments in purchase of the controlling interest of DKG in 1994, company which is a producer of equipment for petrochemical companies. In addition, Gazprom invested in AEB, one of the oldest Hungarian banks, in 1996.³²⁴ Consequently, as opposed to the CR, Hungary has never become the mark of Russian threats concerning reconsideration of oil or gas deliveries if Hungary would join the NATO, etc.

4.3.2.4.3. "Contract of the century" in Poland

The Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline construction project is the corner stone of Gazprom's long-term trade strategy. Its implementation will make it possible: 1) to interconnect new natural gas localities behind the polar circle and the North-Eastern Europe as the largest consumer of natural gas; 2) to maintain Gazprom's EU market niche; 3) to become a strategic supplier of gas to the EU; (4) to bypass Ukrainian territory in gas transportation, thus improving Gazprom's position in negotiations on transit charges. The projected gas-pipeline length is 5,982 km (Russia - Belarus - Poland - Frankfurt upon Oder), and its transport capacity will be 67.4 bcm. The gas-pipeline construction should be completed in 2005, and the estimated costs range from USD 36 to 50 billion. Poland is a key country in implementation of this project - the length of Polish gas-pipeline section will be about 665 km. Its construction will require investments worth about USD 2.2 billion.³²⁵

In connection with entering into the contract with Gazprom, Poland was facing a big dilemma, because Poland ranks among the countries with the lowest natural gas consumption among the CEE countries (power is mostly produced from coal - see Table 11). The contract with Gazprom will turn Poland into one of the largest natural gas consumers in the CEE region, which will threaten the coal industry, a traditional and important industry sector of Poland's economy (see table 12). Taking into account gradual exhaustion of coal sources, the Polish government decided

³²² Polityka Rosji..., op. cit., here pp. 24-25

³²³ ING Barings, September 1996.

³²⁴ Finansovo-promyshlennyye gruppy i konglomeraty v ekonomike i politike sovremennoy Rossii. Fond Tsentr Politicheskikh Tekhnologiy. Natsionalnaya sluzhba novostey, 1998: Part I: Gazprom, p. 3.

³²⁵ ING Barings, September 1996.

to enter into an agreement after more than six years of negotiations with Gazprom and the Russian government

Table 11: Natural Gas Share in Total Energy Consumption of Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic in 1995 (%)

	Oil	Gas	Coal	Nuclear	Other	Total
Poland	16.3	9.4	73.9	0.0	0.3	94.7
Hungary	33.8	37.5	13.3	15.0	0.0	24.0
Slovakia	24.6	26.3	28.6	18.9	1.7	17.5
Cech Rep.	19.8	15.6	55.7	8.7	0.3	37.9

Source: BP Review of Energy Statistics

A joint venture of Gazprom and the Polish state-owned oil-exploitation and gas company (Polskie Górnictwo Naftowe i Gazownictwo - PGNiG) Europol Gaz SA was established with the aim to construct and subsequently operate the Polish section of the Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline. Each of the parties owns 48 per cent of shares, the remaining 4 per cent is owned by another joint venture Gaz Trading SA (PGNiG and Gazekspart, which is a 100% daughter of Gazprom).³²⁶

Table 12: Demand for Gas Forecasts (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia)

bcm	1995	2010F
Poland	9.9	24.0
Hungary	10.0	16.0
Czech Republic	6.6	14.0
Slovakia	5.1	10.0

Source: ING Barings

Following the agreement on establishing a joint venture, Poland entered into a long-term agreement with Gazprom in August 1996. The latter concerns deliveries of natural gas until 2020. Starting with 2010, 12.5 bcm natural gas will be delivered to Poland from Russia. To avoid the unilateral dependence on deliveries of Russian gas, Poland intends in future to import 1.5 - 4.5 bcm of natural gas from Norway through the territory of Germany. However, since the share of Russian gas in Polish consumption will reach almost 80 per cent,³²⁷ the long-term development trends in this country seems to take a direction opposite to that in Hungary and the CR, where the share of Gazprom in the market has been decreased. The contract on the construction of the

³²⁶ Grajewski, op. cit., p. 120.

³²⁷ Ibidem, pp. 120-121.

Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline may be considered to be a great strategic success of Gazprom - both with regard to Western Europe and Poland itself.

The contract negotiations were accompanied by similar suspicion as in the CR, that is, it concerned unconventional methods of Russian "gas diplomacy". While in the CR, it was the general manager of Chemapol who played the central role in the scandal connected with corruption and alleged KGB cooperation, in Poland it was Prime Minister Jerzy Olexy himself who signed the agreement with Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. Olexy then resigned because he was accused of cooperation with a former KGB officer.³²⁸ All in all, the text of agreement on the foundation of a joint venture with Gazprom was not published (as in the case of Slovakia), which was justified by its being a "business secret".

4.3.2.4.4. A Joint Trade House: Model for Slovakia

As already mentioned above, the idea of a Trade House was first discussed during Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Slovakia in February 1995 in connection with possible liberalization of trade between the SR and the RF. The objective was to reduce trade imbalance to the benefit of Slovakia. In other words, this Trade House, called Slovrusgaz, was to be laid on the "gas philosophy": Gazprom will use the money received for gas deliveries to purchase and imports of Slovak goods to Russia.³²⁹ At that time, Prime Minister Mešiar stated that the idea of a joint Trade House was disadvantageous to Slovakia, because Gazprom conditioned its approval by its participation in privatization of the Slovak Gas Company (SPP), or by its share in the Slovak transit system. The Slovak government rejected to sign the agreement on Slovrusgaz in the late 1995, because it implied reduced incomes from transit charges, the most significant source of SPP's incomes, and subsequent limited possibility to regulate gas prices at the domestic market, which did not comply with the interests of the government or the state-owned SPP.³³⁰

During the negotiations of these Prime Ministers in Bratislava in April 1997, the so-called "gas agreements" were signed: they concerned long-term gas deliveries to Slovakia till 2008, the transit of Russian gas through the territory of the SR, and the establishment of a joint-venture between SPP and Gazprom. The Russian Premier considered the agreements to be "very important", and emphasized that the Russian party did not usually sign this kind of agreements for such a long period. "The first one was entered into with Slovakia. In quantitative terms, it means full guarantee on deliveries of Russian gas to Slovakia till 2008". The main Slovak benefit from the joint venture with the basic capital of USD 1 million, and an equal property share (50 : 50 per cent of stock) of both parties was said to consist in sales of Slovak products to the RF worth 40 per cent volume of gas purchased by the SR, which was to contribute to the reduction of Slovak deficit in mutual trade.³³¹ The joint-venture agreement was completed and signed in October 1997, and remained (as in Poland) unpublished because of "business secret". As a result, Slovakia remains the only Visegrád country to be completely dependent on natural gas deliveries from Russia, at least until 2008.

³²⁸ See Kaminski, A. Z.: Korupcja - wymiar wewnętrzny i międzynarodowy. In: Polska i Ukraina w latach dziewięćdziesiątych. Podstawy i płaszczyzny współpracy (ed: M. Calka). Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych Instytutu Spraw Publicznych. Warszawa 1997, pp. 82-94; see also subchapter 4.2.3.

³²⁹ Národná obroda, 8.03. 1995.

³³⁰ Rabayová, Z.: Gazprom netají záujem o začleňenie rusko-slovenského plynárenského domu. Trend, 18 December 1996, p. 2A.

³³¹ Pravda, 30.04. 1997.

The Slovak government rejected to enter into a joint-venture agreement in 1995. By all accounts, it was the failure of the free trade zone project, which made the Slovak government agree with the Russian proposal for a joint venture. The possibility to pay for Russian gas by Slovak goods up to 40 per cent of the purchased gas value seems to have been perceived as a way of reducing the passive trade balance under the circumstances which, did not allow for liberalization of mutual trade.³³² The foreign trade turnover between Slovakia and Russia has stabilized at USD 1.6 billion with 76 per cent of Russian exports (worth USD 1.3 billion) being covered by the deliveries of oil and natural gas. It should be noted that in April 1997 the Slovak government did not provide any evidence of invalidity of its 1995 arguments. In addition, payments for Russian gas by goods have not become a "matter of fact". While in April 1997, Chernomyrdin assured the Slovak government that the Russian party was ready to purchase Slovak goods in this way, several months later the greatest potential benefit to the SR appeared to be a pitfall. Gazprom's head Rem Viakhirev expressed a view that Gazprom was offered by the Slovak party "goods which nobody else had wanted".³³³

In Slovakia, Gazprom succeeded in implementing the model of a joint Trade House, which had been tested on the CIS territory in connection with problems concerning payments for gas deliveries. This model is based on a barter trade: gas for goods. It may be supposed that it is this trade form with which the Slovak government's expectations are connected as to the revival of Slovak machinery industry, because its products should be delivered to Eastern markets within the agreement.³³⁴ The rationale of this trade almost fully corresponds to the philosophy of Russia's "asymmetric response". Almost immediately after signing the agreement on Slovrusgaz in October 1997, the SPP established a daughter company SPP Bohemia in the Czech Republic. SPP Bohemia started to purchase the stock of regional gas companies in the CR. Moreover, it gained 50 per cent shares of the Moravské ropné bane company (Moravian oil fields) in Hodonín. Based on the information from SPP's Director General Ján Ducký (the former Minister of Economy, SR), this company should enable SPP to build up underground gas storage in the Czech Republic with the capacity of about 450 million bcm. The storage will store the gas delivered by Slovrusgaz to cover the demands of the Czech market.³³⁵ Since Gazprom failed to enter the Czech market directly, it may be expected that he will do it through the Slovak Slovrusgaz.

4.3.2.4.5. Summary: Gazprom in CEE

Since Russian economic legislation does not comply with internationally recognized standards, and due to no clear rules in the Russian market, extensive corruption, and state interventions into economic development, Russia of the 1990s did not meet the WTO membership conditions. This fact, as well as international obligations of the CEE countries following from their WTO membership and the EU association agreements has not enabled them to liberalize the trade with the Russian Federation. As a result, they could not appropriately react on the enormous fall in mutual trade following the break-up of the COMECON. Given the high level of their dependence on the deliveries of raw-materials, chiefly natural gas, a heritage of their COMECON

³³² For details see subchapter: 4.3.2.3; for comments see Hirman, K.: Ruskí plynáři ponúkli Slovensku výhody len na to, aby dosiahli vlastné strategické ciele. Trend, No. 22, 1997, p. 10A

³³³ SME, 7.07. 1997.

³³⁴ For details see subchapter: 4.1.3.

³³⁵ Trend, No. 22, 1998, p. 01B.

membership, the CEE countries in general struggle with a high-level of negative trade balance with Russia. The only significant Russian subject in the CEE region, which has a well-defined long-term strategy and interests, is the Gazprom monopoly.

Gazprom attempted at maintaining its economic position at the CEE markets, and at gaining control over existing and future transit gas-pipelines by establishing joint ventures in the CEE countries. The purpose of this strategy is to maintain and possibly increase its niche in the growing EU markets. The only country where Gazprom failed to establish a joint venture is the Czech Republic. Gazprom tried in single CEE countries, with various levels of success, to make use of their trade deficit with Russia for instrumentalization and increasing of their dependence on the deliveries of Russian natural gas. The model of a joint Trade House is to be the means to that end. The model is partly based on the gas-for-goods principle. While this philosophy would enable the problem-facing industries in the CEE countries (heavy industry, mechanical engineering, agriculture, etc.) to survive, it would conserve their backwardness, and aggravated their chances to join the EU. From among the Visegrád countries, it was only Slovakia that had agreed to accept this offer and to instrumentalize its dependence on the Russian natural gas deliveries.

Given a sluggish reform of power industries in the CEE countries (with the exception of Hungary), Gazprom had to start negotiations with the governments of the CEE countries. In pursuing its economic goals, Gazprom was strongly supported by the Russian government. There are well-founded reasons to believe that, in pursuing its trade goals, Gazprom made use of various KGB networks controlled from Moscow (Chemapol case - CR, Oleksy case - Poland), as well as open threats (Russian ambassador to the CR Nikolay Ryabov and to the SR Sergey Zotov - March 1997).

While the CR and Hungary made decisions on systematic diversification of gas delivery sources and routes, which entailed reduced share of Gazprom in their markets, the contracts with Gazprom on the operation of the Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline will increase the level of dependence of Poland upon Russian gas deliveries. The only country whose unilateral dependence upon Russian deliveries has not changed is Slovakia. Moreover, the activities of the joint Slovak-Russian Slovrusgaz company are also focused on the Czech market, which should help Gazprom to compensate for the failure in direct penetration to the Czech market by means of a joint-venture.

4.3.2.5. Russian debt repayment as an tool for resumed armaments deliveries

Naturally, the Russian government pursues commercial goals of its armaments producers. Russia inherited from the USSR more than 80 per cent production and research capacities of the former Soviet military and industrial complex. At present it encompasses over 2,000 companies, including 700 R&D institutes, and employs almost 4.5 million of people. However, its 1995 production amounted only to about 16 per cent of the production of this complex in 1985. ³³⁶

³³⁶ Manachinsky, A.: *Rosiya i Ukrayina*. Kyiv, 1996, pp. 17-18; see also Berezovskij, V. - Chervyakov, V.: *Sectoral Production Capital: Military-Industrial Complex and Fuel and Energy Complex*. In: *Post-Soviet Puzzles. Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union* (eds: K. Segbers, S. De Spiegelreie), Vol. III, Baden-Baden 1995, pp. 405-458; Shkabara, I.: *The Geography of Russia's Military-Industrial Complex*. Ibidem, pp. 511-551; Zisk, K.M.: *The Foreign Policy Preferences of Russian Defense Industrialists: Integration or Isolation?* in: *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (ed: C.A. Wallander). The John M. Olin Critical Issues Series. Westvie Press, 1996, pp. 95-120, etc.

Nevertheless, Russia continues to allocate the largest percentage of the national budget to the field of defense - 25 per cent, and about 7-8 per cent of the gross domestic product (the 1996 data; a higher percentage is allocated by the USA only)³³⁷. Export of weapons is the third most important source of hard-currency incomes (after the export of raw materials - mainly oil and gas).

After a deep fall of export of military production in the late 1980s, it has been considerably increasing since 1994. The USSR was the largest exporter of armaments and weapon systems, with the peak volume of export having been reached in 1986 when the export amounted to USD 28.8 billion.³³⁸ In 1987, it was USD 17.7 billion, in 1988 USD 15.1 billion, and in 1990 only USD 9.6 billion, and finally in 1991 only USD 3.9 billion.³³⁹ The export of armaments dropped to its lowest level in 1992 - USD 1.1 billion.³⁴⁰ Its 1994 value amounted to USD 1.3 billion, and in 1995 it was USD 3 billion³⁴¹, and the exports have been gradually growing. Official data on the Russian trade in armaments (at least since 1990) should be taken with reserve because the RF General Prosecution, for example, in 1995 started prosecution against several companies dealing with weapon trade (including the largest one - Rosvoruzenie) for illegal sales of weapons worth USD 5 billion (!), which is a sum not included in the legal trade.³⁴² Obviously, it considerably exceeds the official data. From 1992 to 1995, the Russian government made great effort to get the most important trade commodities (oil, gas, armaments) under its control.

Table 13: Agreements on the armaments deliveries in the world in the years 1988 through

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	TOTAL
USA	13,77	11,58	20,77	19,79	24,27	23,74	12,76	8,23	134,92
Russia	18,17	18,31	13,31	6,58	1,94	2,40	3,77	9,10	73,59
France	2,46	1,77	3,33	3,62	4,73	5,01	8,87	2,70	32,49
Great Britain	26,53	2,12	2,52	1,21	2,47	3,24	1,22	1,00	40,32
Germany	1,47	6,97	2,59	1,86	1,61	1,04	1,33	2,00	18,59
China	3,07	1,65	2,52	0,55	0,54	0,63	0,81	0,20	9,98
Italy	0,37	0,71	0,57	0,44	0,64	0,42	0,20	1,00	4,36
Others (European Countries)	4,91	5,08	2,07	2,19	1,83	0,73	1,94	1,20	19,95
All Others	4,30	3,78	2,98	2,30	2,04	1,98	1,43	3,40	22,22
TOTAL	75,06	51,99	50,38	38,53	40,09	39,20	32,34	28,83	356,41

Source: Delovye lyudi, No. 75, Mart 1997

Russia could do nothing but welcome the possibility to repay its debts to the CEE countries by armaments deliveries. In fact, it itself proposed this method of payments. Out of the Visegrád countries, it was Hungary and Slovakia that agreed with this proposal. However, Hungary - as opposed to Slovakia - imports both Russian and Western weapons. In the last two years, Hungary has been coordinating the purchase of armaments, chiefly of the airplane technology, with the CR

³³⁷ The Military Balance 1996/97. Oxford University Press, October 1996.

³³⁸ Pravda, 5.08. 1993.

³³⁹ Alekseyev, Y.: Mirovaya trgovlya oruzhiyem i Rossiya. Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunaodnyye otnosheniya, No. 4, 1994, p. 17.

³⁴⁰ Republika, 21.07. 1993.

³⁴¹ The Military Balance 1996/97.

³⁴² Pravda, 22.04. 1995.

and Poland, keeping in mind their common interest in joining the NATO. The SR does not coordinate the purchase of armaments with its neighbors, although it declares the same foreign-policy and security goals. On the contrary, it imports exclusively the Russian technology.

Russia inherited the debt of the USSR to the CEE countries, which resulted from cooperation within the COMECON. In 1993, it was recognized in the sum of over USD 7 billion³⁴³ including USD 3.5 billion falling on the Czech Republic, USD 1.6 billion on Slovakia, USD 1.7 billion on Hungary, about USD 1 billion on Bulgaria.³⁴⁴ Russia offered the CEE countries to pay the debt in the form of armaments deliveries with the aim to: 1) maintain their military-technological dependence inherited from the Warsaw Treaty; 2) resume export of weapons to the CEE markets. Russian military producers did not favor this decision because rather than hard currency they were given just a promise of the Russian government of compensation for the value of the exported technology "sometimes in the future". On the other hand, deliveries of armaments and military systems to the CEE within acquittal of debts was considered a long-term investment that might be gradually compensated for by future deliveries of spare parts for this technology.³⁴⁵

4.3.2.5.1. Another failure in Prague

The Soviet debt to the former Czechoslovakia amounted to USD 5 billion, which was the highest debt within the COMECON. After the division of the Czechoslovak Federation, both succession states, the CR and the SR, divided the property of the former federation, including all foreign assets and liabilities, in the proportion of 2:1. As a result, USD 3.4 billion of the Soviet debt fell on the Czech Republic, and USD 1.6 billion on the Slovak Republic. The sum mostly represented a state debt, and only about USD 400 million fell on debts of Russian companies to their partners in the CR and the SR.

The Czech Republic strictly rejected the idea of acquitting the debt by deliveries of Russian armaments. On the contrary, it manifested its interest in capitalization of the respective debt in the form of participation in privatization of Russian companies and/or by deliveries of raw materials.³⁴⁶ The Russian party, however, did not back down from its standpoint, having been encouraged by success of similar negotiations with Hungary and Slovakia. The negative standpoint of the Czech party resulted in an ever-increasing lucrativeness of the Russian offer. In the early 1997, following unsuccessful negotiations of the Czech Minister of Finance Ivan Kořánek in Moscow concerning debt repayment by capitalization of Czech debts, the Czech party was offered "immediate" modernization of the Czech MiG-21, MiG-23, Su-22, Su-25 fighters, and T-72 tanks through the Rosvooruzhenie company. The Ministry of Defense, CR, rejected this offer because "*a similar contract would jeopardize membership of the CR in the NATO*". Sergey Belousov, the representative of Rosvooruzhenie in the CR reacted by submitting an even more attractive offer: "We offer you the high-tech K-50 helicopters and Su-39 and Su30

³⁴³ Tsentra'naya i Vostochnaya Yevropa i interesy Rossiya. Tezisy doklada. Sovet po vneshney i oboronnoy politike, Fond razvitiya parlamentarizma v Rossii. Moskva 1997, p. 9.

³⁴⁴ Politika Rosji wobec Czech. Slowacji i Wegier w latach 1994-1997. Wybrane zagadnienia. Analiz. Ósrodek Studiów Wschodnich. Warszawa, kwiecień 1997; see also Nowy model współpracy FR z państwami Europy Środkowej. Przegląd prasowy, Nr. 50 (237), 7 lipca 1995; Poland accepted the zero variant with regard to the debts, because there were also justified demands of the Russian Federation.

³⁴⁵ See Felgenhauer, P.: Russia's Arms Sales Lobbies. Perspective, Vol. V, No. 1, September - October 1994.

³⁴⁶ Polityka Rosji..., op. cit., pp. 4-5.

airplanes“.³⁴⁷ Any way, no progress has been made in negotiations on acquitting the Czech debt whose value, the highest among all the CEE countries, has been continuously growing due to the respective interests.

4.3.2.5.2. Success in Budapest

Hungary was the first among the Visegrád countries to agree with deliveries of weapons as a form of debt acquittal. The respective agreement signed in summer 1993 supposed Russia to deliver 28 MIG-29 fighters worth USD 800 million.³⁴⁸ The fighters were delivered in the course of 1994. In this way, Russia acquitted a half of the debt whose original value was USD 1.7 bil.

In April 1994, during Chernomyrdin's visit to Budapest, Russia appreciated the positive standpoint of Hungary, and expressed the will to pay back the remaining sum not only by weapons but also other commodities, and also possibly by investments in Hungary. On March 7, 1995, during premier Horn's visit to Moscow, an agreement was reached that a part of the Russian debt (USD 60-70 million) would be acquitted by the deliveries of coal and/or natural gas to the Ukrainian power plants that would produce electric power for Hungary. Another part of the debt worth USD 250-300 million would be paid by armaments for the Hungarian frontier guard, and some USD 200 million would be repaid by deliveries of mechanical engineering products, such as combined harvesters, tractors, etc.³⁴⁹

In 1996, Russia delivered Hungary 40 BTR-80 armored vehicles. In addition, Hungary intends to meet the needs of its army and the Ministry of Interior by deliveries of 450 METIS anti-tank rockets, 15 self-moving howitzers, 100 NIVA jeeps, etc. These deliveries should reduce Russian debt to less than USD 400 mil.³⁵⁰ It may be concluded that Hungary's favor on resumed deliveries of Russian weapons as a form of debt acquittal was considered by Russia a pattern for subsequent negotiations with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Bulgaria.³⁵¹

4.3.2.5.3. The greatest success in Bratislava

The Slovak government was inspired by the Hungarian example. Premier Vladimír Mečiar accused the Hungarian government by stating that "this step (imports of the Russian military technology - the author) would violate stability in the region". As a retaliatory measure, he suggested to purchase Russian weapons worth USD 180 million.³⁵² The agreement on the conditions of acquittal of the Russian debt to Slovakia was entered into in June 1994 in Moscow, and its value was specified to USD 1.6 billion.³⁵³

In as early as August 1993, the respective Ministers of Defense Imrich Andreják and Pavel Grachev reached an agreement on the delivery of five MIG-29 fighters worth USD 180

³⁴⁷ Piskáček, J.: Ruská armáda chce zpět. Ro zšíření NATO vadí vojenskopol myslovému komplexu. Denní Telegraf, 13 February, 1997.

³⁴⁸ Póti, L.: From Subordination to Partnership: Hungarian-Russian relations, 1990-1997. Hungarian Institute of International Affairs. Foreign Policy papers No. 7, 1997, p. 9.

³⁴⁹ Nowy model współpracy FR z państwami Europy Środkowej, op. cit. p. 4.

³⁵⁰ Polityka Rosji...op. cit., p. 27.

³⁵¹ In 1994, Bulgaria and Russia entered into agreement, base done which Russia would pay about half of its debt (USD 500 mil.) by deliveries of military technology: 100 T-72 tanks, 100 BMP-1 armoured vehicles, and 12 MIG-24 fighters. See Nowy model współpracy FR z państwami Europy Środkowej, op. cit. p. 4.

³⁵² Pravda, 4.08. 1993.

³⁵³ Pravda, 25.06. 1994.

million.³⁵⁴ The agreement seems to have been extended, because the new Minister of Defense Ján Sitek advised at the end of 1995 that "in December, we received six PCs. of MiG-29, and two others will follow. Maybe, we will also receive from Russia an S-300 anti-aircraft system".³⁵⁵ One year later, the Minister of Defense Ján Sitek negotiated in Moscow about the purchase of six hi-tech KA-50 helicopters (the so-called Black Sharks).³⁵⁶ On December 10, 1996, the Russian *Izvestiya* daily informed of the delivery of six KA-50 helicopters to Slovakia as an accomplished fact; hence, the Slovak army was to become the first army, apart from the Russian one, to own these helicopters. In addition, *Izvestiya* maintained that similar contracts would at least partly enable the Russian producers to return to the former COMECON markets.³⁵⁷

In October 1997, the Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Economic Affairs Viktor Pachomov stated that the 1998 deliveries of Russian military technology to Slovakia within the debt acquittal would amount to USD 140 million. The State Secretary of the Slovak Ministry of Defense Jozef Gajdoš acknowledged the information that the Slovak army would purchase an S-300 anti-aircraft rocket system in 1998. In addition, he confirmed continuous interest of the Slovak party in the import of five KA-50 combat helicopters, known as the Black Shark.³⁵⁸

In February 1997, the Deputy Premier of the Slovak government Sergey Kozlík informed that the Russian debt amounted to USD 1.2 billion at that time, and the Russian party would deliver the goods worth USD 160 million in 1997.³⁵⁹ In other words, the Russian debt to Slovakia was about USD 1 billion as of the end of 1997. In 1996 and 1997, the game of acquitting the Russian debt to Slovakia was joined by the Russian private capital.

4.3.2.5.4. Debt repayment and Russian interest groups. A model case: the Devín Bank

The Deputy Premier of the Slovak government Sergey Kozlík stated that Slovakia had imported the MiG-29 fighters for prices lower than Hungary in 1994, and that full credit for mediation of the transaction was to be given to the Devín Bank, with the headquarters in Bratislava. The bank was said to have saved USD 3.35 million per each of MiG-29. The Devín Bank was remunerated for this successful, "almost Russian-Russian transaction" within the Russian debt to Slovakia, by the provision from the Slovak government worth SKK 296 million.³⁶⁰

On January 14, 1997, the Slovak government decided to establish a national air company, the Slovak Airlines (SA) whose operation start was planned for the late 1997. The then Minister of Transport Alexander Rezeš stated that SA would be provided with six Russian airplanes by the end of 1997, delivered within acquittal of the Russian debt.³⁶¹ The company president Viliam Veteska provided closer information on SA development plans and on airplane import. He informed that the delivery would include four TU 154 M airplanes, IL 86 and IL 96. The next stage would include TU 334 and IL 114 airplanes. The first SA's international lines would be Bratislava - Moscow, Bratislava - Košice - Moscow, and Poprad - Moscow.³⁶² In June 1997, SA

³⁵⁴ SME, 31.08. 1993.

³⁵⁵ Pravda, 22.12. 1995.

³⁵⁶ SME, 25.11. 1996; Práca, 25.11. 1996.

³⁵⁷ *Izvestiya*, 10.12. 1996.

³⁵⁸ Trend, No. 42, 1997.

³⁵⁹ Práca, 27.02. 1997.

³⁶⁰ SME, 7.11. 1996.

³⁶¹ *Hospodárske noviny*, 15.01. 1997.

³⁶² *Hospodárske noviny*, 24.01. 1997.

without owning a single airplane, signed an agreement on future cooperation with the Russian Aeroflot.³⁶³

The largest SA shareholders are the Daughter Company of the Devín Bank, called the Devín Group, s.r.o. (33.5 per cent) and Wili, a.s., a Slovak-Russian company, concentrating on tourism (28.9 per cent). Both companies make also use of Russian capital. A purely Russian SA shareholder will be the OKB Jakovlev (3.2 per cent), and the non-identified "powerful economic Slovak subjects" will own 34.2 per cent of SA shares.³⁶⁴ In other words, the Slovak paradox of Russian state debt repayment consists in the fact that the debt is paying of "by the Russian government to Russian business companies" in the Slovak Republic.

The Devín Bank was established in 1992 by trade unions and the Slovak Union of product cooperatives. In the course of 1992-1993, it wrestled with serious economic problems threatening its mere existence. Help came from Russia: in 1993, it was VTF Moscow, and in 1994, MF Moscow (Mezhdunarodnaya Finansovaya Korporatsiya). Russian capital also participated in another shareholder, the APIS company, with the headquarters in Horne Rakovce (district of Turčianske Teplice). In 1993, the bank management included only one Russian citizen Dmitriy Panyushkin. However, in 1994 it was a representative of the VTF Energia Dmitriy Panyushkin that became the chairman of the Board of Directors. Moreover, APIS, VTF, and MFK owned 52.7 per cent of the bank shares. Karol Martinka was appointed a new bank director, who succeeded in persuading the third Mečiar's government to disengage the Russian debt in 1996-1998 through the Devín Bank. Interestingly, the imported MIG-29s appeared in the customs statistics as an imported item as early as in January 1996, and the Devín Bank was awarded a commission from the government for that. Nonetheless, by the mid-1996, no Russian airplane crossed the Slovak border.³⁶⁵ Another remarkable fact is that while the governmental commission to the Devín Bank for importing the MIGs in the amount of almost SKK 300 million was paid in the first half-year, the Devín Bank's official profit as of June 30, 1996 was only to SKK 11 million.³⁶⁶ In other words, the method of deblocking of the Russian debt poses many "commercial queries" with unambiguous political undertone.

Igor Cibula, an advisor to the Democratic Union in the field of defense and security policy, and Director of the Slovak Foreign Intelligence Service at the time of Jozef Moravčík's government (March 1994 - September 1994) commented on the *political background* of operations of the Devín Bank in the SR and its relations to the Slovak government as follows: "The Devín Bank is not only a common bank institute; it serves for exerting Russian influence in our country. It should be emphasized that this bank is closely connected to Prime Minister V. Mečiar, not only through Mrs. Martinková who substituted for Mrs. Nagyová.³⁶⁷ Mr. Mečiar has contacts to the Chairman of the Board of Directors of this bank, Mr. Gorodkov. Mr. Mečiar interceded with the Russian ambassador Mr. Zotov on behalf of this bank. *I dare say that the Devín Bank is a kind of a Trojan horse of Russian interests in Slovakia*" (italics mine).³⁶⁸ On another occasion, I. Cibula stated that "PM Mečiar was personally informed about, and engaged in, the participation of

³⁶³ Trend, 18.06. 1997.

³⁶⁴ Hospodárske noviny, 15.01. 1997.

³⁶⁵ Čurianová, A.: Rusi v Devín banke. Slovenský profit, No. 12, 1997, p. 2.

³⁶⁶ Práca, 5.03. 1997.

³⁶⁷ Anna Nagyová was a personal secretary of premier Mečiar for many years. Later on, she became a chief of the Government Office. Mrs. Martinkova is a wife of the then Devín Bank's Director Karol Martinka.

³⁶⁸ Cibula, I.: Deblokácia slovenských pohľadov a dávok voči Rusku. Interview pre Slobodnú Európu - Ivan Štulajter. Práca, 5 March, 1997.

Russian shareholders in the Devín Bank from the very beginning. Today, the connection is so strong that it effected, thanks to Meiar's background role, changes at the Ministry of Finance. victim of the disputes as to who would perform deblocations (of Russia's debt), became the then State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance Rudolf Autner who had not agreed with the deblocation through the Devín Bank. Another interesting point is that Mr. Autner's position was assumed by Tatiana Šilhanová, a Deputy Director of the Devín Bank.³⁶⁹ It should be added that these facts and circumstances have not been confuted in a trustworthy way by those who are involved in this matter, including the Slovak PM.

4.3.2.5.5. Summary: Russian debt repayment and the Visegrád countries

Slovakia has a special position among the Visegrád countries because imports of armaments and military technology from 1994 to 1997 were implemented only within acquittal of the Russian debt. Hungary, which was the first country to agree with deblocation in the form of deliveries of Russian military technology, did not confine itself to the Russian technology, and also purchased, for example, a technology from China and from Western countries³⁷⁰, not to speak of the approach of the Czech party, which is willing to redeem the Russian debt with only minimum share of weapon deliveries from the RF. In addition, at the beginning of 1996, the Ministers of Defense of the CR and Poland agreed on coordinating the purchase of aircraft technology for both Czech and Polish armies in view of their future NATO membership. Both parties are mainly interested in the purchase of the American F-16 fighter, the Swedish Jas-39 Gripen fighter, and possibly the French Mirage 2000.³⁷¹

It is generally known that the strictly rejecting attitude of the CR to the purchase of a new Russian military technology within the debt acquittal is, figuratively speaking, a thorn in Russia's flesh. At that, the Russian debt to the CR is the largest among the CEE countries (USD 3.52 billions, including the interests), which means that the CR might import the largest quantity of Russian armaments from among the Visegrád countries, and might, therefore, become the most attractive partner for the RF in the CEE region. The "Slovak facility" in this respect is used by the Russian party for indirect pressure on the CR. Alexander Kondratyev, an trade agent of Rosovoruzhenie expressed the following idea during the IDEE'94 military technology exhibition in Trenčín (Slovakia): "It will be much easier for you to come to terms with us than with the NATO-ers (...) the CR rejected to modernize its army with the non-western military systems, and the SR may make the most of the opportunity offered (...)".³⁷² The SR did make the most of this opportunity, "it did not come to terms with the NATO-ers", and preferred an absolutely opposite approach in this respect than that of its Visegrad neighbors.

As far as Russian debt repayment is concerned, attention should be paid to two risks bearing on the CEE countries: 1. Russian support to and taking advantage of rivalry among the CEE countries for the sake of deliveries of Russian military technology to this region; 2. Support to the objectives of Russian private businesses.

³⁶⁹ Sme, 11.03. 1997.

³⁷⁰ Pravda, 11.01. 1994.

³⁷¹ Národná obroda, 9.03. 1996.

³⁷² Proved, 11.10. 1994.

By having been the first country to consent to the debt repayment in the form of deliveries of military technology in 1993, Hungary instigated the same step on the part of Slovakia, and later on Bulgaria. Consent of these countries enabled Russia to exercise pressure on the Czech Republic in talks on this issue. It is first of all Russia that benefits from this rivalry among the CEE countries, within debt acquittal, Russia in recent years exported to these countries weapons worth almost USD 2 billion, with approximately the same sum outstanding. If we add the debt to the CR in the amount of USD 3.5 billion, the potential weapon deliveries amount to USD 5 billion. Consequently, the CEE countries go on to be an interesting market for Russian producers of weapons even in near future.

The Slovak experience indicates that the repayment of the Russian debt may be under certain circumstances misused as a *commercial tool* for pushing the objectives of Russian lobbies under the protection of the Russian government. This engenders possible corruption of officials of both parties, and *Russification* of governmental structures in the CEE countries. The notion of "Russification" refers to transfer of behavioral models of the Russian political and economic élite to the CEE countries. One would be naive to assume that the Slovak experience in this respect is an exception to the rule in the CEE region.

5. Conclusions

We shall briefly draw the most important conclusions from the research implemented:

1. The Central Europe did not dominate Russian political topics in the first half of the 1990s. The Russian foreign policy started to pay more attention to the CEE countries in connection with the NATO extension in autumn 1993. Russian professional public "discovered the CEE" in as late as 1995. In summarizing Russian debate about the CEE regions four basic approaches may be distinguished: 1. Geopolitical frightening of the Central European countries that they will be devoured by the West, Germany, etc. if they do not join Russia, a view characteristic of Russian extreme nationalists; 2. Appeal for coordination of "European policy" between Russia and the CEE countries, a standpoint of pro-European oriented Westernizers; 3. At first sight contradictor effort, aimed at military neutrality of the CEE countries, required by Russian security bodies, and the effort to preclude the formation of an economic buffer zone which would become an obstacle to Russia's trade with countries of the West Europe - a view of the realists (Eurasian direction); 4. Appeal for restoration of broad relations with the CEE countries as partners worth attention "in themselves" - an approach of the post-Soviet nostalgists. In the second part of the 1990s, it was the position of the moderate realists, which came to be widely accepted. In their view, Russia will never again be able to resume its political and economic influence upon the CEE region.

2. Four basic doctrines of Moscow's foreign policy with regard to the CEE region may be distinguished in the period after the World-War II (two Soviet and two Russian ones):

The essence of Brezhnev's doctrine may be defined as "group-based limitation of sovereignty of the CEE countries, and their satellite position with regard to Moscow; unrivalled influence of Moscow in the region, including an unwritten right of direct military intervention for the sake of defense of political and security interests of the East Bloc, the right which could not be affected by any third party".

Kvitsinsky's doctrine (1988-1991) may be characterized as follows: the Central European countries cease to be satellites of the Soviet Union, and are sovereign actors of international relations; nonetheless, they should coordinate their foreign and security policy with the USSR, and should prefer neutrality to integration into the security structures of the West.

Kozyrev's doctrine (1992-1995) maintains that "Russia will avoid international isolation only if it approaches the security structures of the West along with the CEE countries". This process may not be based on any bias against Russia. At the same time, a Pan-European security system should be established on the territory ranging from the Atlantic to the Urals. This system should be subordinated to NATO. In addition, Russia should become an integral part of an institutionalized security system in Europe.

A critical role in forming both internal and foreign policy of the Russian Federation was played by the dramatic events in Moscow in autumn 1993. A state of emergency was ordered, and the Parliament was forcedly dissolved. The new constitution, adopted by the referendum on December 12, 1993, gave rise to an autocratic presidential regime with a marginal position of the new Parliament. Russia manifested that it was not in a position to implement the transformation processes in such a way, which would enable it to become a compatible part of the advanced

world either in terms of values or interests. In November 1993, a new military doctrine was approved which contained more aggressive elements than that of the last years of existence of the USSR. The role and the power of Kozyrev's ministry in forming Russian foreign policy after autumn 1993 were considerably restricted. Much more space, compared to 1992-1993, was in this respect provided to representatives of the so-called power ministries. The role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in defining foreign policy was again strengthened by Yevgeniy Primakov after the presidential elections of 1996.

Primakov's doctrine (after 1996) is based on a thesis that while Russia cannot keep abreast of the USA's leading role in international policy, it can significantly contribute to the development of the so-called multipolar world, which will reestablish Russia as one of the centers of international politics. As to the post-Soviet space and the CEE region, Primakov's policy is similar to that of his predecessor in terms of practical steps. From the conceptual point of view, however, it does not pursue the goals of approaching the Western structures along with the CEE countries. In this respect, Primakov's strategy is much more realistic, which allowed him to put the NATO extension talks in the first half of 1997 on pragmatic footing.

3. Russian diplomacy succeeded in the fact that the Russia-NATO talks on the latter's eastward enlargement did not finish by signing the Foundation Act in May 1997; the talks go on within the OSCE, and also concern adaptation of the CFE agreement and the European security model for the 21st century. Signing the Foundation Act cannot be considered a clear victory of any of the parties. While NATO managed to get an indirect Russian consent to the first wave of its enlargement, it met Russia's demand for its return to the European security agenda after the end of the cold war and the disintegration of the USSR at a qualitatively higher level compared to the period of 1991 to 1997. Further NATO enlargement, if any, will take place in a much more intricate web of European security obligations. In the Foundation Act, Primakov succeeded in separating the Russia-NATO relations in Europe from the global Russia-USA relations. As a result of the expected NATO enlargement, the European security architecture will not be based on a hierarchical system within the OSCE, rather, it will have the nature of pluralistic relations among security institutions existing next to each other. Within the context of this new situation, one may expect a growing number of realistic elements and higher flexibility in individual and sub-regional approaches of Russian foreign policy to the post-Soviet space, Europe, and the CEE region.

4. The center of gravity of Russian security policy "after Madrid" will be on negotiations on CFE adaptation so that a modernized CFE or a new CFE II may be approved, if possible, prior to entry of the first CEE countries into the NATO in 1999. From the mid-term perspective, emphasis will be laid on the negotiations within the OSCE on a general model of European security for the 21st century. The main goal pursued by Russia in both of these cases is to make the first NATO eastward enlargement wave the last one. Russian diplomacy will attempt at reaching any success in bilateral relations with any CEE country, which would contribute to the above mentioned goal, or which would improve the position of Russia in its negotiations on security issues. In this sense, Russia will continue its alternative security policy in the CEE region. In spite of the expected entry of the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary into NATO in 1999, the main goal of Russia's security policy is, as before, the preservation and contract-based stipulation of a neutral and non-nuclear statute of *the remaining CEE countries*. This effort is clearly manifested by Russian 1997 initiatives concerning the offer of security guarantees to the Baltic countries, based on the security-for-neutrality principle, as well as the demonstrated readiness of Russia to provide security guarantees to Slovakia if it makes decision in favor of neutrality

5. Russian professional circles, which exert a significant influence upon Russia's foreign policy, voiced at the beginning of 1997 an idea of a modified approach to the CEE region. Rather than on geopolitical factors, the emphasis was to be laid on geoeconomic factors. A philosophy of the so-called "asymmetric response" was developed whose gist consists in the thesis: Russia should respond to the NATO's military expansion by economic expansion to the CEE region. The authors of this philosophy maintain that Russia's strategic goal should consist in the development of cooperation with and closer relations to the EU in the CEE region. Russia may become a strategic partner of the EU in the CEE if it opens its markets to those industries of the EU-associated countries in this region, which face the most significant transformation-related problems (heavy industry, mechanical engineering, power industry, agriculture, etc.), thus facilitating these countries to integrate into the EU. The provision of more favorable conditions for export from the CEE countries to the Russian market should entitle Russia to require them to make certain concessions and to reflect Russia's interests within the trilateral EU - CEE - Russia cooperation.

The economic élites in the CEE, connected with the former centralized and highly subsidized state-owned industries, tend to seek a "soft market" in Russia because of problems concerning sales of outdated production in the advanced markets. Following the victory of post-communist parties in Poland and Hungary in 1994, these countries started to appeal for more *pragmatic* relations to Russia and for the "return to Eastern markets". Discussions on this topic in Poland were of crucial significance for further steps of the CEE countries. In the end, the idea of the "soft markets" was refused because it might slow down the economic reforms, and lead to "Russification" of the economy, which would postpone the entry into the EU to a later date. A similar conclusion was drawn from the discussions in Hungary. The Czech Republic did not pay much attention to this issue, mainly because the power has not yet been in hands of a political party connected with the economic élites of the former state-owned economy. Discussions on this topic seem to be postponed to future. An unambiguous decision has been made by the Slovak government whose long-term strategy till 2005 relies on the revitalization of engineering industry through increased exports to the Eastern markets.

6. Russia, which resulted from the development in the 1990s, represents an *alternative model of political and economic transformation in postcommunist area and for CEE countries*, which have been developing new and stable democratic institutions. The Russian model of transformation may become under certain critical development conditions attractive to politically and economically inertial post-communist structures and autocratic political forces in the CEE countries. The Russian economic reform was largely reduced to privatization, and was not accompanied with political reforms and development of democratic institutions. On the contrary, it was the goals of a quickly formed post-privatization oligarchy, trying to fix the existing status quo in the society at all costs, which pressed on introduction of an autocratic regime (the "electoral democracy" model). Thanks to its rich raw-material basis, Russia is able to survive economically even if it rejects to observe the Western economic efficiency criteria. If this mode is put into practice, which is very probable, Russia will be modernized on the basis of the traditional industrial development model. In the majority of the CIS countries, a specific form of the so-called "cooperative capitalism" has emerged, which is based on close connections between the state and the economy. The post-Soviet space as a system of economic, political, social, and security relations has survived. There is a real threat that this backward economic and political space will affect the former socialist countries and the CEE by its gravitational forces. The most serious threat to the CEE countries "from the East" does not consist in direct military aggression;

rather, it bears on destabilization of political and economic institutions according to the "Eastern model".

7. Following the break-up of the USSR, Russia lost direct military, political, and ideological instruments for exerting the influence upon the CEE region. However, the period of 1992-1993 indicated that not all of the CEE countries are equally ready to implement the reforms, and that the process of transformation will require a much longer time than originally expected. In some countries, the process of reforms started to encounter resistance of the anti-reform political forces. The post-communist CEE came to be once again haunted by the scare of nationalism. A number of new international problems emerged as a result of national rivalry and ethnic tensions. This development enabled Russia to return *politically* to the CEE. Russian diplomacy showed its readiness (especially after 1993) to politically support those political CEE élites which attempted at finding a third way of transformation, and which entered into controversy with the Western partners in respect of the "dialogue about democracy". The most typical example is Slovakia.

In addition, the necessary preconditions have been established for Russia to exert its political influence in the region by polishing up the Pan-Slavonic doctrine. Since Pan-Slavism originated as an ideology of Slavonic nations of the CEE region in the first half of the 19th century, the present situation of instability, evoking the feelings of menace, may and does create the preconditions for its "ideological and political" reproduction. This mainly bears on new Slavonic *national* states that came into existence after the break-up of federation states (USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia). In these countries, there are nationally oriented forces that derive their legitimacy from the message of the first generation of national élites of the CEE Slavs living in the mid-19th century. The ideas of that generation were based on the ideology of Slavophilism and Pan-Slavism. Expectations related to the Slavonic mission of Russia have been expressed at the political level only by Serbia and Slovakia. It should be, however, noted that the possibility of using political and ideological instruments in the contemporary Russian policy in relation to the CEE countries is not universal, and is limited by the will of political élites in individual countries to voluntarily apply Russia for its political support. It follows from the case of Slovakia, the reason consists in effort to make use of Russia as an instrument for defending and implementing one's own interests both at home and abroad.

8. As a result of discrepancies between the Russian economic legislation and the internationally recognized standards, the lack of any clearly defined rules at the Russian market, a high level of corruption, and state interventions into the economic development, Russia of the 1990s did not meet the WTO membership conditions. This fact, and international obligations of the CEE countries following from their membership in the WTO and their respective EU association agreements, prevented them from the liberalization of trade with the Russian Federation. Consequently, they could not do away with the enormous drop in their mutual trade after the break-up of the COMECON. Due to their high level of dependence on imports of raw-materials, notably natural gas and crude oil, inherited from the COMECON, the CEE countries must cope with the highly negative trade balance with Russia. On the other hand, the EU member countries became the main trade partners of the CEE countries and Russia. The CEE countries, thanks to much more successful economic reforms, as well as association agreements with the EU, were in a position to adapt themselves more quickly to the new market conditions and commence their economic growth. This is reflected in a continuously growing economic gap between Russia and the CEE countries in the course of the 1990s.

The monopoly gas syndicate Gazprom with its long-term strategy and interests is the only significant Russian economic actor in the CEE region. Through the establishment of joint-ventures in the CEE countries, Gazprom has been trying to maintain its economic position at the CEE markets, to control the existing and to build up new transit gas-pipelines, with the aim of maintaining and, in the future, increasing its share in the growing EU markets. The only CEE country, in which Gazprom failed to establish a joint venture, is the Czech Republic. Gazprom attempted in these countries - with various level of success - to take advantage of their deficits in trade with Russia by instrumentalizing and increasing their dependence on deliveries of Russian natural gas. Therefore, Gazprom came with an idea of a joint Trade House, which would be partly based on the gas-for-goods trade principle. This offer, on the one hand, would enable those industries, which has been struggling with serious problems (heavy industry, mechanical engineering, agriculture, etc.), to survive; however, on the other hand, it would conserve their backwardness, and aggravate their prospects for modernization of economy in accordance with the Western model, and consequently their chances to join the EU. From among the Visegrád countries, it was only Slovakia that agreed to accept this offer, and to increase its dependence on Russian natural gas deliveries. Given a sluggish reform of power industries in the CEE countries (with the exception of Hungary), Gazprom had to enter into negotiations with the governments of the CEE countries. In pursuing its economic interests it was supported by the Russian government. There are well-founded reasons to believe that, in pursuing its trade goals, Gazprom made use of various KGB networks controlled from Moscow (Chemapol case - CR, Oleksy case - Poland), as well as open threats (Russian ambassadors to the CR N. Ryabov and to the SR S. Zotov - March 1997) resembling the relations from the previous period. In addition, the Russian Intelligence Service suspected to coordinate at least a part of Russian organized crime abroad and a part of the exported capital in order to influence the situation in the CEE countries to the benefit of the Russian economic elite's interests in the CEE region. Irrespective of the Russian pressure, the CR and Hungary made decisions on systematic diversification of gas delivery sources and routes, which entails reduced share of Gazprom in their markets. The contracts with Gazprom concerning operation of the Yamal-Europe gas-pipeline imply that the level of dependence of Poland upon Russian gas deliveries will grow. The only country whose unilateral dependence upon Russian deliveries has been preserved is Slovakia. Moreover, the activities of the joint Slovak-Russian Slovrusgaz company are also focused on the Czech market, which should help Gazprom to compensate the failure in direct penetration to the Czech market by means of a joint-venture.

9. An important item on the agenda of the relations between Russia and the CEE countries in the 1990s concerns the repayment of Russian debt to the former partners of the USSR within the COMECON. Russia offered the CEE countries to pay the debt in the form of deliveries of military technology with the aim to: 1) preserve their military-technological dependence inherited from the Warsaw Treaty; 2) resume export of weapons to the CEE markets. Slovakia has a special position among the Visegrád countries because military technology was imported from 1994 to 1997 only within acquittal of the Russian debt. Hungary, which was the first country to agree with the debt deblocation in the form of deliveries of Russian military technology, did not confine itself to the Russian technology, and purchased also, for example, a technology from China and from Western countries. The Czech Republic rejected to redeem the Russian debt by deliveries of military technology. Poland accepted a zero variant with regard to the debts.

As far as Russian debt deblocation is concerned, attention should be paid to two risks bearing on the CEE countries: 1. Russian support to and taking advantage of rivalry among the CEE countries for the deliveries of Russian military technology to this region; 2. support to the

objectives of Russian private businesses. By having been the first country to consent to the debt deblocation in the form of the deliveries of military technology in 1993, Hungary instigated the same step on the part of Slovakia, and later on Bulgaria. Consent of these countries enabled Russia to exercise pressure on the Czech Republic in its talks on this issue. It is first of all Russia that benefits from this rivalry among the CEE countries; within debt acquittal, Russia in recent years exported to these countries weapons worth almost USD 2 billion with approximately the same sum outstanding. If we add the debt to the CR in the amount of USD 3.5 billion the potential weapon deliveries amount to USD 5 billion. Consequently, the CEE goes on to be an interesting market for Russian armaments producers.

The Slovak experience indicates that deblocation of the Russian debt may be under certain circumstances misused as a *commercial tool* for pushing the objectives of Russian lobbies under protection of the Russian government. This engenders possible corruption of officials of both parties, and transfer of behavioral models of the Russian political and economic élite to the CEE countries. One would be naive to assume that the Slovak experience in this respect is an exception to the rule in the CEE region.

10. Further development of the relations between Russia and the CEE countries will mainly depend on the development of the internal political and economic developments both in Russia and the CEE countries. These relations will be increasingly lose their regional nature, which was manifested in the 1990s. According to the most probable future scenario, Russia will represent an alternative model of political and economic transformation in the post-communist world, including its alternative security policy with regard to the transatlantic community. Russia does not have any tools for exercising direct pressure on the CEE countries any longer. Therefore, the goals of internal and foreign policy of the single CEE countries will primarily depend on the political will of their élites. If Russia goes on to represent an internal political and foreign alternative, the development of close relations with Russia will constitute risks for the process of transformation in the CEE countries based on the Western model. If Russia ceases to represent a transformation alternative, this being a less probable scenario, this will establish more convenient conditions for the development of its relations with the majority of the CEE countries.

Future development of the Russia-Central Europe relations will be substantially affected by the processes, which are under way in the Western integration structures, in NATO and the EU. In case of erosion of these structures, Europe may witness a resumed classical concert of the world-powers, characteristic of the 19th and the early 20th centuries, in which Russia had always "played its role". This development would in fact put an end to any prospects of gradual changes in Russia in terms of standardization of internal political and economic conditions (i.e., its gradual "Europeization"). In addition, this would considerably hamper, or even inhibit, successful completion of the reform process in the post-communist countries of the CEE. Some of these countries, especially those with autocratic tendencies, would fall within the zone of "Russian influence". This would give rise to a new wave of rivalry among the CEE nations, and jeopardize the European security.

The only positive scenario is to maintain the present quality and pace of integration processes within the NATO, and primarily, to maintain its strategic initiative with regard to the post-communist Europe. Any future development in this direction is preconditioned by strengthening and intensifying the role both of NATO and EU in CEE as the best possible guarantee of successful reforms in the CEE countries and, possibly, in the future, in Russia. It is the only scenario that establishes optimum conditions for further development of standard, equal, and mutually advantageous relations between Russia and the CEE countries.

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