Modernization Of Strategic Nuclear Weapons In Russia:  
The Emerging New Posture

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Why Study Strategic Modernization?

Modernization of strategic weapons belongs to what some call the "traditional agenda" of security studies, an area of research whose popularity has plummeted with the passing of the Cold War. The treaties signed by the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States (INF, START 1, START II, and lesser ones) as well as other steps, including the 1991 initiatives of Bush and Gorbachev, were broadly viewed as putting an end to the nuclear arms race. Accordingly, mastery of arcane nuclear war-fighting theories and the intricacies of arms control negotiations seems increasingly irrelevant. More salient issues, such as economic and political integration, ethnic conflicts, and WMD proliferation occupy the attention of policymakers and academics.

But old problems do not go away quietly. The place and the role of nuclear weapons has changed, as has the nature of interest in them, but in some way they continue to be relevant. During the Cold War, the threat of nuclear war seemed so great that any progress in arms control was welcome; common interest in preventing war was like a locomotive, which could pull superpower relations out of crises. Today, this is no longer the case. Arms control plays a visible role in great power politics (and rightly so), progress on new treaties is no longer a necessary condition for progress on other issues. To the contrary, the lack of progress or, even worse, a setback can easily disrupt broader cooperation. Arms control and the politics of nuclear balance have become a disruptive force, to an extent, as exemplified by the deadlock over START II ratification in Russia.

There are two alternative ways the politics of nuclear balance could affect relations between Russia and the United States: one is negative. Some Russian modernization options could undermine the stability of the nuclear balance and stimulate a
launched-on-warning posture; this could be perceived in the United States as a threat, in the same fashion as the Soviet arsenal was perceived as a threat in the 1970s and the 1980s. It should be noted that the Soviet Union never actually had a first-strike capability; the key here is the reaction of the United States and the modernization programs it adopted in response.

The same option could also result from the deployment of a national missile defense (NMD) system by the United States. Russia will see it as destabilizing and is likely to respond by modernization and/or buildup of its offensive forces, which, in its turn, would cause negative reaction in the United States. Given the nature of the issue, the impact on the domestic political situation in both countries is likely to be highly disruptive.

The other alternative is positive. Russian strategic modernization could proceed in a stabilizing manner and facilitate eventual transition toward a pure second strike posture. The real significance of this development, however, will not be in its impact upon the nuclear balance: nuclear war is clearly not in the cards. Rather, stable nuclear balance will enable the sides to "forget" about those weapons; the arsenals will become useless not only for combat, but also as a political instrument. Since complete nuclear disarmament is hardly possible in the foreseeable future, putting weapons "aside," relegating them to irrelevance is as close to their elimination as realistically possible. Thus, the purpose of studying strategic modernization is not to learn more about possible scenarios of a nuclear exchange, but rather to understand an important aspect of domestic politics in Russia and the United States and, through it, the dynamic of the future relationship between them.

The potentially disruptive impact of the politics of nuclear balance is demonstrated by the continuing saga of START II ratification in Russia. The shortcomings of START II have already provided fertile ground for conservative/nationalist opposition and helped mobilize voters around their platform. Whether these shortcomings are militarily significant or not seems irrelevant: what counts is how the potential imbalance is used in the political games. Although the government is likely to push START II through the parliament, it might have to make concessions in other areas of the domestic political process.

The materials presented in this paper suggest that the current modernization programs in Russia lean toward the second, positive alternative. Its future nuclear arsenal is likely to be small, conducive for strategic stability, and non-provocative. It might even be unnecessary for Russia to engage in a significant buildup effort in response to a US NMD system, if one is deployed.

The positive outcome depends on two conditions. One is the minimum level of funding. Without it, the strategic triad could quickly disintegrate. This would be a potentially dangerous development, since it might provoke a massive buildup once the economic situation improves and/or might increase the likelihood of an authoritarian regime that would mobilize resources to support such a buildup. Second, the transition toward the new posture is politically difficult: its proponents will remain vulnerable for at least the next five-seven years, until the new posture finally takes shape and Russia's international situation stabilizes.

In this regard the US policy toward Russia will have a lasting influence on the ongoing transition. Since Russia lacks financial and political resources today, the full impact of current US policy will be delayed until the next decade: no matter what the United States does, Russia will have to ultimately accept it, but this acceptance could be short-lived, depending on what is at stake. This means that today's reaction of the Russian government to US policy is not necessarily a reliable indicator of long-term relations; the "shadow of the future" should never be absent from policy planning in either country.

This paper begins with an analysis of the ongoing debate over the strategic modernization in Russia, reviews the policy of the government and the military leadership, and then proceeds to the available data on actual modernization programs. The last part will draw conclusions regarding the possible evolution of these views under various scenarios.

The Nuclear Debate

The well-known thesis that nuclear weapons are valued in Russia because they are the last vestige of its great-power status is generally correct but hardly sufficient to explain the attention to the nuclear arsenal. Nor is it sufficient to say that nuclear weapons are a key security guarantee. These statements yield little value in terms of predicting the size and the shape of the arsenal since they do not contain criteria by which one could judge whether the existing arsenal is sufficient, or has to be increased, or modernized, etc. Without such criteria, decision-making is virtually impossible: any decision would be arbitrary and subject to intense challenge from the opposition, both within and outside the government.

Apparently, the benefits and losses resulting from the START II Treaty are not at the center of the debate, either. The impact of START II is rather easy to calculate, and a decision would have been made earlier. Nor is the matter of funding necessarily at stake: everyone knows that Russia cannot afford to reject START III, but this does not dissuade its opponents. Some suggest that START II simply should not be ratified in order to keep more options open for the future, when the economic situation improves; others prefer to ratify START II because it does not contradict what they consider the optimal future strategic posture. Rather, the debate is about the criteria by which the Russian nuclear arsenal should be judged. An agreement on the criteria will determine its eventual size, structure, missions, and capabilities.

This frame of reference has several important implications. The most important among them is that the approval or the rejection of START II will not end the debate: the decision of the Duma will affect the probabilities of various outcomes, but will not completely foreclose any of those. If the treaty is ratified, the option of MIRVed ICBMs will not be removed completely: Russia could still return to them, for example, if the United States deploys an NMD. On the other hand, the
rejection of START II does not automatically mean that Russia will MIRV its ICBMs: it might still stick to that key provision. At this writing, the ratification resolution, which will be sent to the floor of the Duma, is likely to espouse the first option: START II would be subject to a review in the case the United States deploys an NMD to determine whether MIRVing is advisable. At the same time, the resolution will insist on even deeper reductions, a START III treaty.

Another characteristic of the debate could be detected in frank discussions with many Russian experts: the lines between various positions are not necessarily drawn according to political, ideological, or institutional boundaries. Rather, they often run within individuals: quite a few experts cannot decide on their own preferences. It would be a mistake to picture the situation in simple black and white colors, as a standoff between "liberals" and "conservatives" or between "hawks" and "doves." In this sense, the disagreements described below are relative: in some cases, they refer to whole groups, but in others they describe the uncertainty that exists in the minds of experts and politicians.

All sides in the debate share a number of positions, first and foremost that Russia needs nuclear weapons and that their role has increased since the end of the Cold War. At a minimum, they are supposed to prevent large-scale aggression and guarantee Russia's sovereignty and survival. A study of the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies (RISI) underscored that "humankind has not created a substitute to nuclear weapons in terms of their deterrent effect in the situations of escalating large-scale armed conflicts. This means that in the foreseeable future nuclear weapons will remain an important element of global politics despite all the 'inconveniences' related to their maintenance and the continuing debate over the actual role of nuclear weapons in preventing world wars during the last fifty years." In other words, the special role of nuclear weapons is determined by their real or perceived "absolute" character.

From here, it follows that nuclear weapons can compensate for Russia's inferiority in conventional armed forces relative to NATO and China. The new military doctrine, which is expected to be adopted sometime in 1998, will provide for the use of nuclear weapons "in the case of an immediate threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia that has emerged as a result of an external aggression." This will be a reaffirmation of the provision of the 1993 doctrine, which, in its turn, repudiated the 1982 Soviet policy of no-first-use. The 1993 first-use plank was also confirmed in the 1997 national security concept.

Having introduced the first-use plank, however, the 1993 doctrine retained certain restrictions on the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states in line with the negative guarantees provided by the Soviet Union (as well as all other "legitimate" nuclear states) in connection with the Treaty on the NonProliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Only nuclear-weapons states and their allies can be threatened with nuclear weapons. The new, 1998 doctrine will keep these limitations together with the first-use provision: Anatoli Klimenko and Aleksandr Koltukov underlined that the 1993 document enjoyed the support of the Foreign Ministry (meaning, it did not contradict international obligations) and thus it was decided to keep it. They also noted that while the doctrine was still under development unnamed experts attempted to broaden the first-use plank.

A broader, less official approach to the use of nuclear weapons includes, for example, deterrence against "a belt of unstable, and sometimes unfriendly, states and countries, which covertly seek weapons of mass destruction." This definition embraces the majority of states to the south of Russia; it is interesting to note, however, that the recent shifts in Russia's relations with Iran and Iraq have probably weakened the perceived necessity to rely on nuclear weapons. Still, some states could be viewed as "candidates" for deterrence by nuclear weapons, e.g. Pakistan, whose policy in Afghanistan and Central Asia is assessed in Russia as unfriendly.

The disagreements within the Russian elite regarding nuclear weapons rather closely mirror the debates in the United States in the end of 1960s--early 1970s and in the 1980s between the proponents of mutual assured destruction (MAD), war-fighting, and war-winning approaches with just one important exception: almost no one in Russia advocates a transition to defense programs similar to SDI. A comparison of the current debate in Russia to the 30-year old debate in the United States sheds additional light on its substance and the views expressed by different sides. It could also provide a better grasp on how various doctrines emerge. Some are likely to relate to the nature of nuclear weapons, others to the conventional balance, still others to specific weapons systems that provide new capabilities.

To a large extent, the perceptions and the prescriptions regarding nuclear weapons appear to be determined by two related variables. One is the relationship with the United States and NATO, another is the prospect that the United States might deploy an NMD system and yield the Russian deterrent potential useless. These variables are related to the extent that the latter could be viewed as part of a "devious plan" to dominate and subjugate Russia. They differ to the extent that the NMD could be conceptualized as an independent phenomenon: the United States does not harbor hostile plans toward Russia, but, regardless of intentions, the deployment of an NMD could undermine the hedge against future threats that might unexpectedly emerge, for example, as a result of elections ten or twenty years from now.

The "Minimalists:" Back to the Classic Age of Deterrence

Broadly speaking, there are two loose, ill-defined groups. One could be called the "minimalists"--those who perceive a limited role for nuclear weapons and favor a relatively small arsenal. Another is the "maximalists"--those who tend to assign a broad range of missions to nuclear weapons and insist that Russia needs a large arsenal.

On the question of relations with the West, very few members of the Russian political establishment continue to adhere to the 1992-style positive view of these relations. But the end of the "honeymoon" conceals two rather distinct interpretations of
the events, past and future. Most "minimalists" say that there are no fundamental differences between Russia and the United States, but cooperation is difficult and sometimes impossible because the United States simply does not want it. In their view, the United States often substitutes cooperation with complete acceptance of its position by Russia and tends to label any disagreement as a return to the Soviet/imperial policy. Examples abound, from the early disagreements on Bosnia to the continuing conflicts around NATO enlargement and Iraq.

More specifically, there is growing dissatisfaction with the failure of the United States to accommodate Russian complaints about START I implementation. According to the Russian view, these problems could be solved, but the United States does not wish to; a narrower focus is on the US Navy, which, some say, refuses to budge even where it is possible and necessary. A more traditional area of concern is the ABM Treaty: the American arguments in favor of a national missile defense are simply not taken seriously by Russian experts. The agreements on demarcation of tactical and strategic defenses signed in New York in the fall of 1997 were met with wide-spread dissatisfaction as well: they are viewed as insufficient since the United States can still interpret them to allow development of TMD systems, which, in Russian eyes, have strategic potential. Some Russian experts believe that a more restrictive agreement was possible, but the United States refused to accept it (of course, many US experts will not agree, but it is significant that this perception is widely spread in Russia).

Still, the situation is far from critical, and patience and diplomacy are seen as the main policy tools. This line has been evident in the acceptance of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council "in exchange" for NATO enlargement and in the maneuvers around Iraq in the fall of 1997 and in the early 1998. Within this paradigm, nuclear weapons are important, but are expected to back up policy rather than play an independent role. In addition to a fundamental role as a security guarantee, they also guard against uncertainties in the future: a real large-scale conflict with NATO and/or deployment of a national missile defense by the United States.

These views produce the perception of a rather limited role for nuclear weapons. In many respects, it is close to what Bernard Brodie wrote in 1946: "The first and most vital step in any American security program for the age of atomic bombs is to take measures to guarantee to ourselves in case of attack the possibility of retaliation in kind." The "minimalist" view of nuclear weapons is also in line with the views postulated in the first Soviet official recognition of possession of nuclear weapons, in 1951: the TASS statement declared that the purpose of Soviet nuclear weapons was deterrence of nuclear war. The core of this view is the ability to retaliate in case of an attack--a nuclear attack in the "classic" formulation or a large-scale conventional attack under a more recent policy.

A more liberal version of the "minimalist" view was expressed by Sergei Kortunov: "The optimal version of Russia's nuclear strategy today is a variant of non-aggressive, non-offensive and non-provocative (one could even say 'friendly'), but also credible deterrence, which should be aimed not only at the USA, but 'at all azimuths'--a Russian version of the classic French, de Gaulle's doctrine of 'dissuasion' as opposed to the American doctrine of 'deterrence' through the threat of annihilation. Although this view enjoys some popularity, it is yet hardly feasible politically or even bureaucratically: the military and politicians would still search for "objective" criteria to determine "how much is enough," and these criteria will inescapably be relative to the US nuclear arsenal, which is the largest in the world. Still, this might represent the future of Russian thinking on nuclear weapons if external and domestic conditions are right.

The dominant view of "minimalists" today does not boil down to simple existential deterrence, in which the very presence of nuclear weapons deters the other side. Rather, the core principle is that of assured second strike capability, in line with McNamara's doctrinal innovations of the 1960s. Following McNamara, Russian experts and military planners attach considerable value to the ability to "ride out" the first strike and still retain a second-strike capability. In this, they are closer to the views expounded by Paul Nitze who said that even in the early days of the nuclear era he and his associates believed that "the quality of deterrence depends upon one's ability to deal with the potential failure of deterrence. The vital factor is that one's ability to deal with the contingency of deterrence failing be understood by the other side."

The requirements outlined by Nitze are considerable. First, the number and/or the survivability of nuclear weapons must be sufficient to ride out a first strike by the other side. Second, the number and the quality of nuclear weapons that survive the first strike of the other side must be sufficient for it to believe that second-strike capability exists. Third, the surviving weapons must match reasonably liberal estimates of unacceptable damage. This calls for a rather large arsenal of deployed nuclear weapons, which, in turn, presents the risk of a classic security dilemma: in pursuit of second-strike capability "my" nuclear arsenal becomes so large that the other side begins to worry about its second-strike capability.

Nitze, like many others, solved this dilemma by simply assuming that the United States would never attack, so the Soviet Union did not have to worry about the survivability of its deterrent force, it was only the US headache. But, of course, the security dilemma would still emerge, and an arms race would (and did) follow. Another solution is launch-on-warning, whereby weapons do not have to ride out the first strike of the other side because they are launched before the incoming warheads reach targets.

A way to avoid the security dilemma was proposed by the Scowcroft commission in 1983: reduction of vulnerability of weapons, specifically through the deployment of single-warhead mobile ICBMs--the route which the Soviet Union was already taking and the United States planned to take. In this way one can, theoretically, retain a second-strike capability without inadvertently creating a first-strike capability. Apparently, this is the favorite option of the Russian"minimalists."
MIRVed ICBMs are supposed to perform two functions. One is making a US NMD incapable of defending against a Russian large (probably the same as or larger than the START II limit of 3,500 warheads, and include a significant number of MIRVed ICBMs). To avoid this gloomy scenario, they insist that Russia's nuclear arsenal should be rather limited. Nuclear inferiority would weaken Russia's ability to resist because it would not be able to up the ante in geopolitical positions. The prescriptions of Russian "minimalists" do not necessarily match all postulates of the "classic" deterrence theory, in particular the NSC-68 requirement of a sizable conventional force to supplement nuclear deterrence, nor do they appear to fully account for the complex problems of misperception, credibility, etc. A detailed discussion of these belongs elsewhere. It is sufficient to note that the threat of an East-West military conflict is seen as low, and this helps to decrease many concerns that otherwise could have emerged.

To summarize, the "minimalists" see nuclear weapons as an insurance against a possible future threat, which will not necessarily materialize; thus the insurance can be minimal. This insurance is not immediately usable, like any insurance, and the size should be a reasonable compromise between the need to guard against uncertainty and the risk of buying an excessively expensive policy.

The "Maximalists:" Back to a War-Fighting Capability

A considerable part of the Russian elite suspects, however, that more than just the unwillingness to cooperate or high-handed American behavior is at stake. Many think that the goals of the United States are outright anti-Russian and that the threat to the country's survival is much more imminent and requires a more robust military response.

The "maximalists" tend to conceptualize US policy toward Russia in terms of Zbigniew Brzezinski's writings. His idea is essentially about dividing Russia into several parts, of which the Western third should be integrated into the "Atlanticist Europe," the Eastern third fall into China's sphere of influence, while the middle would remain a "political black hole." This proposal, predictably, infuriated the Russian political establishment, and some suspect that Brzezinski simply made public the real goals of the United States. If one adds to this the perception of threats from other "azimuths" such as China, Islamic countries, etc., then the prescription would be obvious: Russia needs a large nuclear force capable of performing various missions, both strategic and theater-wide, to deter and if necessary defeat almost any country or group of countries. Nuclear weapons are supposed to have immediate value as a foreign policy tool and be useful in a wide variety of global and local conflicts (after all, within this world-view every local conflict is only part of a larger, global US strategy aimed at eliminating Russia).

Same as with the "minimalists," the recommendations of this group largely mirror relevant American theories. Consider, for example, the warning Richard Perle gave after the collapse of the Berlin Wall but before the collapse of the Soviet Union: it would be dangerous, he wrote, to "disarm the West after the Cold War [and] ... run the risk that we might yet again make Europe safe for the exertion of Soviet military power." One only needs to replace the Soviet Union with the United States in that quote and adjust for the geopolitical situation to arrive at a statement by Sergei Glaziev, a prominent nationalist politician: "[We need to] rethink our foreign policy and defense doctrine, as well as the national security doctrine. The thesis about the absence of enemies to Russia is obviously wrong. ...[We need to] create necessary conditions for preservation and development of strategic nuclear forces as a necessary and the most important element of national security. ...[We should] abstain from ratification, implementation, and signing of treaties, which could reduce the effectiveness of Russia's strategic nuclear forces, and particularly those [treaties] that provide for unilateral concessions." Much as some US theorists during the Cold War expected a first disarming Soviet nuclear strike, these experts believe that the United States could strike first, or at least achieve a position where a successful first strike would be possible. This concern is similar to that of the American proponents of the infamous "bomber gap" and the "missile gap" in the late 1950s -- that the United States would use its theoretical ability to defeat Russia in a nuclear war to chip away at its interests and geopolitical positions. Nuclear inferiority would weaken Russia's ability to resist because it would not be able to up the ante in an (inevitable?) brinkmanship game. To avoid this gloomy scenario, they insist that Russia's nuclear arsenal should be rather large (probably the same as or larger than the START II limit of 3,500 warheads, and include a significant number of MIRVed ICBMs).

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The key difference between the "minimalists" and the "maximalists" regarding the value of MIRVed ICBMs boils down to the following. The former propose MIRVing only in response to a US NMD (and not all of them think it necessary), the proposed scale of MIRVing is limited. The latter consider MIRVing essential irrespective of the NMD, and when (rather than if) it is deployed, the number of MIRVed ICBMs should be increased even further. The scale of MIRVing is massive with or without NMD and "heavy"--up to ten warheads per missile rather than up to three for the "minimalists."

Two of the leading opponents of START II a deputy head of the International Affairs Committee of the Duma Alexei Podberezkin and his advisor Anton Surikov asserted: "Specialists think that in the case of ratification of START II and especially if in five-six years Washington would decide to annul the 1972 ABM Treaty, then in ten years Russia would lose the ability to inflict guaranteed unacceptable damage to the United States in a response strike." They argue that Russia should transfer to its territory the production of heavy SS18 ICBMs (R-36M2 in Soviet designation) and deploy 154 of those in the existing silos; in the case the United States deploys an NMD, Russia should additionally deploy 180 heavy ICBMs. In an earlier publication Anton Surikov suggested that deploying up to seven warheads on Topol-M was possible and advisable.

A crucial element in this system of views are tactical nuclear weapons, which are expected to compensate for NATO's superiority in conventional armed forces--superiority that will increase after the enlargement of NATO. Tactical weapons should enable Russia to feel more self-assured in local/regional conflicts and either help prevent or terminate them at favorable conditions. During his tenure as a minister of defense, Igor Rodionov declared that in the view of NATO enlargement Russia "might objectively face the task of increasing tactical nuclear weapons at [its] borders." One of the most vocal proponents of greater reliance on TNF, Gen. Vladimir Belous (Ret.) proclaimed that "in contrast to strategic weapons, whose central mission is 'deterrence' and, in the case it did not succeed, 'punishment,' tactical weapons, even as they perform the function of deterrence, could fulfill the mission of 'repulsing' aggression." In line with NATO's Cold War period rationalization, the "maximalists" suggest that without tactical nuclear weapons Russia might have to choose between defeat and an all-out war. The ability to prevail at the tactical level is supposed to take care of this grim choice.

Overall, the perception of an imminent threat has created a host of (still rather poorly developed) theories analogous to American doctrines of limited nuclear strike, flexible response, limited war, escalation dominance, etc. The purpose is to enable nuclear weapons to achieve a broad variety of missions when less than survival of the country is at stake. To support these missions the strategic force should be capable of a limited exchange, or a "demonstration" strike (similar to what Alexander Haig proposed in the 1980s), or of deadlocking the strategic situation in order to improve the chances of success at the substrategic level. Broad missions also require a substantial tactical nuclear potential capable of deterring NATO's conventional forces and dealing with other contingencies (such as conflicts to the south of Russia).

The advocates of a more limited approach to nuclear weapons, the "minimalists," display a rather ambiguous attitude toward tactical nuclear weapons. They seem to avoid public statements on this subject and rarely offer ideas on how exactly these weapons could be used. A mainstream think tank, the Institute of Geopolitical and Military Forecasts (part of IMEMO) cautiously suggested that "Russia needs a certain tactical nuclear weapons potential as one of [the] guarantees of national security in the case of possible radical changes in the European or Asian strategic scenes. TNF could also be [a] somewhat useful addition in the case the balance in conventional armed forces is disrupted; they could be used primarily as a political tool to prevent war." But they also said that the existing TNF arsenals were excessive and could be significantly reduced. Caution is easy to explain by the domestic political situation in Russia, as well as its uncertain international situation: the enlargement of NATO has significantly increased the value of tactical nuclear weapons.

In a recent publication, Alexei Arbatov pointed at a fundamental contradiction related to tactical nuclear weapons. On one hand, there is widespread consensus that Russia needs them to balance NATO's conventional superiority; on the other, the United States could destroy up to 70 percent of Russian strategic weapons using only its tactical nuclear and conventional weapons. A first strike using a combination of strategic and tactical weapons, he said, would be 1.5-2 times more effective than the one with only strategic weapons. Thus, Russia would do best if only it had tactical nuclear weapons, but this is hardly possible.

The brief description of the views espoused by the two groups, the "minimalists" and the "maximalists," reveals that differences between them relate to fundamental concepts of nuclear weapons and their role in the international system. Regardless, there are certain trends common both. They are situation-specific and are caused by shared concerns over possible unfavorable developments in the international environment: doubts still linger about US policy, particularly the prospect of deployment of an NMD. Of course, the proposed responses radically differ, but it seems significant that at least some concerns are shared and the groups are apparently moving closer. It is not inconceivable that the above-mentioned ambiguity in the minds of some experts and politicians stems from this--for example, when the "minimalist" view of nuclear weapons contradicts the "maximalist" assessment of the international situation. The perceived weakness of the current Administration and the influence of Congressional Republicans who advocate an NMD increases the propensity to seek a
hedge against unpleasant surprises. Unless the United States takes these concerns and uncertainties seriously, the still slow drift of the Russian political establishment toward negative expectations could become widespread.

In terms of START II, it is worth repeating that the treaty itself is of relatively marginal concern and few actually like it. For the "minimalists," START II is consistent with their image of the future Russian nuclear arsenal and, in addition, it helps somewhat constrain the US arsenal. Though critical of many provisions of START II, they are willing to go along with it. The "maximalists" oppose START II not simply because they are concerned about its deficiencies, but primarily because it is inconsistent with their preference for the future Russian arsenal. Regardless, the "minimalists" might still abandon START II if they come to the conclusion that a future US NMD system would deprive Russia of its retaliatory capability.

References

1. INF-Intermediate Nuclear Forces, i.e. the 1987 Treaty, which eliminated land-based missiles with the range from 500 to 5,500 lan; START I-Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, the 1991 Treaty, which reduced the strategic weapons of the Soviet Union and the United States to 6,000 accountable warheads (due to special accounting rules, the actual number of warheads was higher for both sides); START II-the 1993 Treaty, which reduced the strategic weapons of Russia and the United States to 3,500 warheads (the number of accountable and real warheads is equal under the rules of that treaty). The INF Treaty has been implemented, START I is being implemented now, START II has not been ratified by Russia.

2. In the late September-early October, 1991 Presidents Bush and Gorbachev made unilateral, more or less parallel statements with regard to both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. Both sides canceled one ICBM program each, the Soviet Union promised to unilaterally reduce its strategic forces under START I to 5,000 warheads, and-the most significant part-both sides promised to significantly reduce their tactical nuclear weapons by removing to central storage facilities or eliminating warheads for all land- and sea-based tactical delivery systems and a significant portion of warheads for air-based non-strategic delivery systems. These statements also included other important steps.


5. The new doctrine has not been released yet, but its main provisions are described in fair detail in: Anatoli Klimenko and Aleksandr Koltukov, "Osnovni Document Voennogo Stroitelstva" (The Key Document of the Military Posture), Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie, 13 February 1998, p. 4. The authors were part of the team charged with drafting the document and the text of their article was evidently sanctioned by a higher authority.

6. The 1993 military doctrine was published in Izvestiya, 18 November 1993. The national security concept (Kontseptsiya Natsionalnoi Bezopasnosti Rossiiskoi Federatsii) was approved by Boris Yeltsin on December 17, 1997.


10. For a brief overview of these complaints see Gennadi Obolenski, "O 'Serykh zonakh' Budushchikh Peregovorov po Dogovoru SNV-3" (On the 'Gray Areas' of the Future START III Talks), Yadernaya Bezopasnost, No. 6-7, 1997, p. 4-5. The Russian government avoids public discussion of this issue; its complaints are pursued confidentially through the appropriate channels (the JCIC-the Joint Compliance and Inspections Commission established under START 1). Still, on at least one occasion the concern was aired in the Duma: on February 4, 1998 Gennadi Zuyganov, the leader of the Russian Communist Party, noted that the United States was "violating" START I, which makes ratification of START II impossible (Interfax, 4 February 1998).

11. See Anatoli Dyakov, George Lewis, Pavel Podvig, and Theodore Postol, Razrushenie Dogovora po PRO' (The Destruction of the ABM Treaty), Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie, 3-9 October, 1997, p. 1; and "0 Dogovore Mezhdu RF i SshA o Dalneishem Sokrashchenii i Ogranichenii Strategicheskikh Nastupatelnykh Foruzhenni 1993 g." (On the Treaty Between the RF and the USA on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms of 1993), Obozrevatel'-Observer, No. 1, 1998 (http://www.orc.ru/~observer). These two pieces are interesting because they represent the case when the same view is expressed by the experts who belong to opposite camps: the first was published by the Center for
We Have to Stop Relying on Others


22. It is interesting that despite his obvious anti-Russian bias and numerous inconsistencies (e.g., Brzezinski’s “grants” China its “own” sphere of influence, but vehemently denies the same to Russia), Brzezinski does reflect broader trends in policy planning, to an extent. A recent RAND study, for example, recommends as a long-term policy that the United States should “consolidate [its] global leadership and preclude the rise of a global rival or peer competitor as well as multipolarity.”


17. Ratifikatsiya Dogovora SNV-2: Resheniya, Problemy, Perspektivy (Ratification of START II Treaty: Solutions, Problems, Prospects), (Moscow: Spiritual Heritage Foundation - RAU-Corporation, 1996), p. 40. The name “Spiritual Heritage Foundation” is ironically similar to an equally conservative American organization, The Heritage Foundation. Another irony is that RAU-Corporation is an offspring of the Russian-American University (RAU), which is another highly conservative, nationalist organization.


13. Pravda, 6 October 1991. It is interesting to note that nuclear weapons were supposed to deter US nuclear weapons rather than a conventional attack, and be used in a retaliatory strike. This stands in contrast to the recent reformulation of the nuclear strategy (the transition toward the first use) and probably was directly related to the Soviet superiority in conventional armed forces.


27. See, for example, Albert Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1959, the Gaither Commission report, and the associated discussion.


31. Anton Surikov, "SNV-2: Protvoretskaya Ostaiutsya" (START II: Contradictions Persist), *Yadernyi Kontrol*, No. 18-19, 1996. Anton Surikov should be considered a reliable source on technical details if only because he clearly draws upon the vast insider's knowledge of his father, Viktor Surikov, a prominent Soviet designer of ICBMs.


36. The Russian text actually uses an even more cautious language here: "would not be without use."


39. The recent scandal around a White House intern Monica Lewinsky attracts attention in Russia precisely in terms of its impact on US foreign policy. See, for example an article by Irina Zhinkina under a telling headline: "Zavisit li Chelovechestvo ot Moniki Levinski?" (Does the Humankind Depend on Monica Lewinsky?), *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 13 February 1998, p. 6.