

THE RUSSIAN MILITARY IN THE 21st CENTURY

Alexei G. Arbatov

June 3, 1997

The views expressed in this report are those of the author. This report is cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Comments pertaining to this monograph are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5244. Comments also may be conveyed directly to the Conference Organizer, Dr. Earl H. Tilford, Jr., by calling commercial (717) 245-4086 or DSN 242-4086. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Publications and Production Office by calling commercial (717) 245-4133, DSN 242-4133, FAX (717) 245-3820, or via the Internet at rummelr@carlisle-emh2.army.mil

This monograph was originally presented at the U.S. Army War College's Annual Strategy Conference held April 22-24, 1997. The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish the paper as part of its Conference Series.

All 1995 and later Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) monographs are available on the Strategic Studies Institute Homepage for electronic dissemination. SSI's Homepage address is: <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usassi/>

FOREWORD

In April 1997, the U.S. Army War College held its Eighth Annual Strategy Conference, the topic of which was "Russia's Future as a World Power." Most of the speakers discussed various aspects of the many crises besetting Russia, and there were differing views on whether Russia would be able to surmount those crises and make the transition to a politically stable democracy and a market economy.

Dr. Alexei G. Arbatov, the Deputy Chair of the Defense Committee of the Duma, delivered the banquet address and provided the Strategic Studies Institute with the following monograph. In his remarks, Dr. Arbatov stated that political and economic reform had largely failed, and that we could reasonably fear further turmoil in the Russian economy and accompanying political and military structures. The very fact that a freely elected member of the Duma, representing one of four primary political parties, was speaking to an assembly at the U.S. Army War College indicates the distance Russia already has traveled in this decade. Nonetheless, Dr. Arbatov's remarks made clear how difficult Russia's near-term future will be.

In the following monograph, Dr. Arbatov provides a very candid appraisal of Russia's current military capabilities. But more importantly, he also outlines a vision for the future of the Russian military. His vision is set within a well-reasoned strategic context and takes into consideration a domestic economic and political environment that includes a free market economy and the further development of constitutional democracy.

The United States and Russia are working to devise a new relationship. The security dimensions of that relationship are integral to its ultimate shape. For that reason, Dr. Arbatov's observations have important implications for us all.

RICHARD H. WITHERSPOON
Colonel, U.S. Army
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

Alexei G. Arbatov is the Deputy Chairman of the Duma Defense Committee of the State Duma in the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. He is responsible for Russia's defense budget, arms control treaties, and defense industries. Dr. Arbatov was first elected to the Russian State Duma in 1993 as a member of the Democratic Party of Grigory Yavlinsky (Yabloko Party). He is a 1973 graduate of the Moscow State Institute for International Relations and has done postgraduate work at the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) of the Academy of Sciences of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Dr. Arbatov has published three books and numerous articles on international security and strategic issues, including an English language book, *Lethal Frontiers: A Soviet View On Nuclear Weapons* (Praeger, 1988).

THE RUSSIAN MILITARY IN THE 21st CENTURY

Introduction.

The very title of this monograph is quite ambiguous. On the one hand, only 3 years are left until the 21st century. This is too short a time to forecast or propose any serious change in a huge and complicated organization like the armed forces of a great power. On the other hand, each century lasts 100 years, and without a crystal ball it is impossible to predict the evolution of armed forces over such a long period, least of all at a time of dynamic and revolutionary shifts in the world's technologies, economics, the geopolitical scene, and the relative military balance between nations.

Hence, in addressing the prospects for Russia's armed forces, it seems realistic to discuss the future some 10-15 years ahead, to 2010. This is an appropriate timeframe for the fulfillment of large cycles of economic and military development in Russia and in other major states. It allows consideration of the possible realignment of principal international coalitions, and it provides time to implement major weapons programs. Accordingly, with a timeframe of 10-15 years, future trends are sufficiently imbedded in present reality to be discussed without entering the world of science fiction. Present policy choices may tangibly affect developments in 10-15 years. Besides, as presently being considered, the Russian military reform initiative is planned to proceed through its first two stages through the year 2005. What happens in that process will define how the Russian military proceeds from 2005 through 2010, the third stage of the reform initiative.

Within this temporal framework, the following monograph discusses Russia's military alternatives appropriate to its new security requirements, projected economic conditions, technological capabilities, and possible changes in the international situation which might affect Russia and its relationship with other major powers. Even at that, many issues relevant to the subject, like industrial and financial projections, problems of defense conversion, possible advances in military technology, demographic considerations, the draft and mobilization, have to be left out or discussed only superficially. All of these issues are part of the comprehensive notion of military reform; something larger than the narrow notion of reforming the armed forces. In this monograph, based strictly on unclassified sources, the latter topic will be the subject of analysis.

Russia's New Security Environment.

At least through the next 10-15 years, Russia's external security concerns, interests, and requirements will be determined by the monumental changes in the international situation since 1989. In all their variety, the frame of reference for Moscow's security policy is comprised of three main realities or axes.

The first reality is that the Soviet empire has disintegrated. Russia has lost its near and far allies and its fourteen subjects of the old Soviet Union. Even the Russian nucleus has started to split as evidenced in the recent bloody fighting in Chechnya. The Russian Federation comprises about 60 percent of the population and economy of the old USSR, and occupies 76 percent of its territory. Its present frontiers are, for long stretches, purely symbolic. Russian national values, ideology, and security perceptions have been deeply split by disputes between many different and sometimes diametrically opposed political groups.

Not only the geopolitical parameters of Russia have been reduced, but the nation finds itself in an entirely new international environment. In the past, the geopolitical space controlled by Moscow directly bordered on the territories controlled or protected by China and the United States. Political and military juxtaposition along those frontiers was sometimes dangerous, but usually quite stable, clear and predictable. Now, to Russia's west and to the south there are former Soviet republics within which there is a high degree political, economic, and social instability. Many are open to outside influences like radical Islamic fundamentalism. Some exist in a state of internal tension and even open armed conflict with various secessionist factions. Some have bitter controversies among themselves and with Russia.

The second reality is that the Russian Federation is passing through a deep and protracted economic and social crisis, the end of which is far from sight. An unprecedented decline in production, a financial crisis, the growth of foreign debt, and the heavy loss of gold reserves have made Russia depend on the Big Seven financial powers, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. At the same time, Russia remains a great power. Its immense natural and human resources, huge and established industrial base, its military assets, and the historical legacy of great power status attained during the Soviet era--all assure its status at a much higher level than its present economic position would warrant.

Russia remains one of the world's leading military powers. Russian forces have been reduced as part of the partition of the armed forces among the republics of the former Soviet Union. Certainly there have been reductions in the numbers of troops and weapons due to unilateral cutbacks and in accordance with

treaties signed between Russia, the United States, and NATO; i.e., INF-SRF, CFE, and START I. But Russia is still formidable in its military might. It is second only to the United States in nuclear weapons, and Russia remains the strongest power in Europe and Asia in terms of its conventional ground, air, and naval forces.

At present, the number of troops on active duty number about 1.7 million. By the end of 1997, this number will have been reduced to 1.5 million military (and 800,000 civilians). This makes the Russian armed forces comparable in size to that of the United States and several times larger than even the biggest of the European armies.

It goes without saying that the military balance in Europe has changed dramatically during the last few years. But even at that, Russia will have 1.5-2 times as many tanks and 4-5 times as many combat aircraft as Germany or as the United States has stationed in Europe. Furthermore, beyond the Urals, Russia has up to 5,000 tanks and more than 2,000 combat aircraft. Russian strategic nuclear forces presently consist of about 6,000 warheads. By the year 2006, depending upon whether or not the START II treaty is ratified and implemented, that number will be somewhere between 2,000 and 4,000. Even at 2,000 warheads, Russia's strategic nuclear forces will be 2-3 times larger than those of Britain, France, and China combined, even if their planned modernization programs are fully implemented.

The third reality is the character of the changes in the world at large. The bipolarity of the Cold War most probably is being replaced not by American hegemony but by genuine multipolarity. The time of global superpowers, in itself a historical rarity, has come to an end. The primary players, apart from the United States, will now be Western Europe, China, Japan, a number of strong subregional states, and associations of states. Russia, if it manages to halt its internal disintegration and correctly defines its place in the new system of international relationships, will remain in the ranks of the world players.

It is at least conceivable that in 10-15 years new alliances could lead to a new world bipolarity. For instance, the United States and China and the Pacific rim might supersede Europe as the primary zone of confrontation. In that case, Europe and Russia might be moved to the periphery of world politics.

However, this does not seem very likely. It is more probable that a truly multipolar world will remain for a long time. This period of multilateral diplomacy, a complicated pattern of conflicts, and overlapping interests of states will continue. In the midst of this international environment, coalitions will

shift in some regions of the world while multilateral and supra-governmental institutions emerge in others.

Beyond the "near abroad," Russia will be facing a number of states or alliances with considerable armed forces. In the West, NATO will probably enlarge and, with the acceptance of new member states, bring its armed forces closer to the border of Russia. In addition to possessing a 3:1 or 4:1 superiority in conventional weapons, NATO will have a clear-cut nuclear superiority over Russia in both tactical and strategic nuclear forces.

At the southern rim, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan may present a security problem for Russia individually or in some combination. Most probably this threat would be indirect-- manifesting itself through their support of regimes, movements, or policies in the Transcaucasus and in Central Asia which are directed against Russia or its allies. Another possibility is that these states will support secessionist activities against the federal government of Russia, as was the case in Chechnya.

Russia, however, will be able to retain a clear-cut conventional military superiority over all these potential opponents. If this superiority is not effective in achieving Russian goals, that would signify wrong policy goals or misapplication of military power. As for Turkey, if it acts independently of NATO, it will not represent much of a challenge for Russia, especially if Moscow allies itself with other states in the region, like Armenia, and relies on them to provide the bulk of the ground forces. If, on the other hand, Turkey is supported by NATO, then the conflict might escalate to challenge Russia's military power on a global scale.

In the Far East, two powers, Japan and China, theoretically could present a threat to Russia. However, Japan's offensive conventional capabilities against Russia will be quite limited for at least the next decade. Any unilateral attempt by Japan to take the Kurile Islands or Sakhalin Island by force is inconceivable, and it is highly unlikely that Washington would agree to support Japan in such an endeavor.

China is a special case. Its geostrategic location, long history of territorial disputes with Russia, and its current military build-up might encourage Beijing to adopt expansionist policies toward Siberia and the Russian Far East or against Kazakhstan and Moscow's other central Asian allies. In 10-15 years, China may achieve conventional offensive superiority along the border of the Transbaikal and maritime provinces. Chinese forces would have the shorter lines of communications, making it difficult for Russian forces to interdict them. In contrast, Russian forces would have to travel from their European bases and would be susceptible to Chinese interdiction. On the

other hand, Russia will retain its tactical and strategic nuclear advantage. Moscow's credible nuclear deterrent will ensure escalation dominance over China well into the 21st century.

Furthermore, China's conventional arms build-up depends on massive importation of weapons and military technology from Russia. Moscow, therefore, has effective means of restraining, or at least constraining, the emergence of this hypothetical threat.

Current Paradoxes in Russian Defense Posture.

The first and fundamental deficiency in the current military policy and reform program is a great relaxation in civilian control of the military. This has left the armed forces virtually on their own during these times of profound change within the armed forces and in their political, ideological, strategic, economic, and demographic environments. The current disorganized condition of the administrative structures in the Russian government and the growing autonomy of bureaucracies have combined to have a tremendous negative effect on the defense establishment. This is an especially dangerous development when taken against the background of a society and state in transition from a centralized to a free market economy and from a communist to a democratic political system.

Moreover, this lack of political control has produced tremendous confusion and mismanagement, and has complicated our much needed military reform efforts. It has created enormous additional hardships for the Russian military by hampering the orderly reduction and redeployment of forces, convulsing the process of defense conversion, fostering chaos in the military personnel system, and adversely affecting housing for most of its officers.

In the absence of a consistent security policy or budgetary guidance from above, military reform has been implemented by adapting traditional military institutions, concepts, and functions to the conditions presented by severe budgetary limitations. The armed services and the departments of the Russian General Staff have been trying to preserve as much of their strategic doctrines, personnel levels, deployment patterns, arsenals, and missions as possible, but this has come at the expense of readiness, training, maintenance, and modernization. Their ability to perform the novel tasks warranted by the new security environment is scant, at best.

Institutionally, the Russian armed forces are very much like those of other nations in their tendency to retain as much as possible of their traditional strategic roles and operational missions while giving lip service to the realities of the post-Cold War environment. Therefore, institutional interests in self-

preservation determine policy formulation for force structure and deployment, with the primary constraint being budgetary limitations. This drives the threat assessment. Things should, of course, be the other way around with threat assessments driving budgetary requirements, force structures and levels, and deployment. To some extent all large institutions, civilian as well as military, are subject to this kind of institutional behavior. But in Russia, it has become elevated to the highest degree due to the general domestic disarray which is taking place against the background of an unprecedented uncertainty in the external security environment.

In recent years, the shallow declarations by Russia's top political leaders that Russia has no foreign enemies or opponents (something that was included in the 1993 version of Russian military doctrine) has put the military in a quandary. Is the Russian military not supposed to prepare for any war? If so, then that would bring into question their very reason for being. Or is the Russian military to prepare for and plan for war with all those states located around Russia or those nations with forces that can directly threaten Russian territory?

It follows from the new military doctrine and numerous statements made by top military commanders, including the present Minister of Defense, that planning contingencies are numerous and complex. They include being prepared for wars in the west, south, and east; large-scale and theater-wide operations as well as limited and local operations, or some combination of these which would make for war on a global scale. Russian forces must be prepared to fight alongside probable allies or to fight alone. Our armed forces allegedly must be capable of deterring a potential foe as powerful and sophisticated as the NATO Alliance, or as primitive as Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas, by being ready to fight effectively against either or both, if need be. It follows that Russian forces have to be ready to counter any hostile invasion of Russian territory, and capable of mounting military interventions in the "near abroad" and beyond when needed.

The inability of the top political and military leaders to make difficult choices from a number of competing priorities has led to spreading limited resources much too thinly, and thereby undermining our overall defense capabilities. But making difficult choices entails risks which bureaucrats are unwilling to take. Such decisions must be imposed by a determined political leadership operating from outside the defense establishment.

The second paradox is that despite all its declarations that the United States, NATO, and other Western powers no longer constitute a threat to Russia, our military requirements, at least 50-60 percent of them, still revolve around contingency

planning for a major war with the United States and NATO in the West and with the United States and Japan in the East. I can only assume that Western contingency planners regard Russia in much the same way. In any event, our military planners, professionally if not emotionally, miss the "Blue Threat" every bit as much as American military planners must miss the "Red Threat."

After all, it is easy to reason that if the other party may not be an opponent today, it may become one again in the future. And since "they" possess huge military capabilities, it is only prudent to hedge against the worst case scenario. In our case, that worst case scenario is seen as a hostile NATO bolstered with the added forces of some of our former Warsaw Pact allies. The sacramental rule of the Cold War was that military capabilities are to be taken into account, not political intentions. Capabilities, after all, take many years to shift while political intentions can change overnight. I am confident that U.S. defense planners share this strategic concept with their Russian counterparts, although they are less outspoken about it.

Therefore, for all the dramatic changes that have taken place politically over the last decade, very little has changed in the fundamental way either Russia or the United States approaches contingency planning. The factors that seriously affect Russian planning are the financial situation, which is in a crisis, the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Central Europe to within 250-300 miles of the Kremlin. Indeed, it has been a long time since the Moscow Military District was our front-line area of defense.

The third paradox is the dichotomy afflicting Russia's defensive posture. On the one hand, due to the present and foreseeable balance of forces, Russia cannot hope to mount a serious challenge to Western military power. The possibility that NATO may unite with some of Moscow's former Warsaw Pact allies or some of the former republics of the Soviet Union only means, from our perspective, that the Russian urban, administrative, and industrial heart-land will be within the combat radius of even tactical aircraft. As recently as 1988, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies held a quantitative edge over NATO of about 3-1 in main weapons of conventional ground and air forces. But as a consequence of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and as a result of reductions in compliance with the CFE Treaty, today Russia is quantitatively inferior to NATO forces by a ratio of from 1-2 to 1-3. With NATO first phase enlargement, this ratio will change to a 1-4 imbalance. And, if some of the former Soviet republics join NATO, the odds will increase to 1-5 or beyond. Given the ability of NATO and the West to mobilize superior economic and technological resources, the discrepancy is even more alarming from a Russian

perspective. Chillingly, in the case of revived hostilities, only nuclear weapons can be relied upon to negate this gaping imbalance.

Planning for a war with the West makes Russian defense requirements virtually open-ended. Whatever the share of limited resources allocated to such a profound contingency, the armed forces cannot come close to attaining even minimally sufficient defense capabilities.

On the other hand, there is no conceivable contingency involving Russia's armed forces in the near abroad that could justify sustaining present conventional force levels. In time, China might provide the exception by threatening the Russian Far East, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, or Tajikistan, but that is not now the case. Whether China develops as a threat, however, very much depends on Russia's current military reform and its ongoing arms and technology transfers to Beijing. It also depends on Moscow's future relationship with the buffer states named above and the course of future relations with Japan.

There is a fourth paradox. Over the next 5 years, the present policy, driven as it is by bureaucratic inertia and the lack of any political guidance, will keep Russia's armed forces numerically quite large even as they continue to deteriorate qualitatively. Fortunately, no major external threat looms. But eventually the old capital invested in the Soviet Army will be spent out of the current Russian Army. There is, therefore, the possibility that by the time a definitive threat manifests itself, Russia will have to face that threat with small and completely inadequate forces equipped with obsolete weapons.

The fact is that present expenditures for maintenance of its large armed forces depletes those ever diminishing resources available for training and housing and for research, development, and procurement. With the Gross National Product (GNP) about 15 percent of that of the United States, Russia supports a military establishment of approximately the same size to include 2.5 million men and women in uniform and civilian employees, and about 1.2 million others serving in border guard, internal troop, and railway guard units.

From the first-class superpower armed forces of the Soviet Union, one equal to that of the United States in conventional and nuclear forces, and superior in some aspects, Russia is drifting toward the kind of armed forces China had in the early 1970s. In 10-15 years, the Russian military may look like the People's Liberation Army of old; large, technologically backward, and supported by a few hundred vulnerable nuclear weapons linked to an inadequate C^{3<D>}I system. These forces would be lacking in mobility and, quite possibly, poorly trained. By comparison to

the West, the scientific community would be meager, and the once robust Russian military industrial complex will have deteriorated. Russia's armed forces would not be capable of defending the nation from external threats. They may, indeed, become a major threat to Russia's own internal security and stability. And that is a very frightening possibility.

Russia's Future Defense Requirements.

Russia, quite obviously, needs a different military reform program if it is to provide for its security to 2010. Without going into much detail, it is clear that radical reductions in force, redeployments, and restructuring are needed in view of the current and probable future international security environment, projected contingencies, and the nation's economic challenges.

The European portion of the former Soviet Union, including Russia, where traditionally the largest concentrations of forces have been deployed, has to become our primary area for stationing reserves and storing supplies. This goes against the expediency of available infrastructure and traditional strategic priorities, but it fits within the parameters of the new strategic and political realities.

It is, in fact, up to Russia's political leaders to explicitly order the military not to plan for any large-scale conventional war with the United States, NATO, or Japan. The only exception should be to assure enough of a second strike nuclear capability, limited only by START treaties, to provide for deterrence. If NATO extends to the East, without finding accommodation with Russia's interests, a few "trip-wire" ground forces consisting of heavy divisions approximate to areas of potential tensions, as well as a limited, survivable, and flexible tactical nuclear force of 100-200 warheads, should be sufficient to deter any aggression from that direction.

Moreover, Russia does not need the 6,400 tanks and 2,450 aircraft apportioned to it under CFE nor does Ukraine need the 4,000 tanks and 1,000 aircraft apportioned to it. Neither faces an external threat from Europe, and they should not create the perception of a threat to one another. Russia could easily reduce its forces in this region to 500-800 aircraft and 1,000-2,000 tanks. The other former republics of the Soviet Union need to maintain even less robust forces.

NATO, for its part, should implement further cuts in armed forces in Europe; and the United States, whose superiority in tactical aircraft is of the greatest concern to the Russian military, should reduce aircraft inventories. Furthermore, it would be in everyone's best interest if the nations of the former

Warsaw Pact would refrain from aligning themselves with NATO. The best hope for future peace in Eastern and Central Europe is for those nations to develop nonoffensive military capabilities, to pursue nonalignment, and to be open to good relations with Russia.

The primary new stationing areas for the Russian armed forces should be the North Caucasus, South Urals, and the Far East. This would correspond to the contingencies Russia has for Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China, and for countering the danger posed by the expansion of Islamic fundamentalism into the Muslim populations in its southern Volga regions. The defense of Russian territory and the ability to assist its allies among the former republics of the Soviet Union require neither massive nor permanent deployments of Russian forces abroad or in the Far East. Forward deployed screening forces and a developed logistical infrastructure to include pre-positioned supplies to accommodate rapidly deployed reinforcing units would suffice.

The bulk of Russia's forces, structured for rapid deployment in a national emergency, would be permanently based in the Moscow, Urals, and Volga military districts, as presently planned. These forces should be fewer in number than currently envisioned and configured differently, but provided with better airlift and close air support assets. Instead of the 11 planned heavy and light divisions, this force could consist of no more than 1-2 heavy divisions and 2-3 light division equivalents. In addition, 2-3 division equivalents would be sufficient to provide a "trip-wire" near the western frontiers while 4-5 divisions might be stationed in the North Caucasus and the Transcaucasus. There needs to be at least one division in Central Asia, as well.

Due to the long lines of communications and their vulnerability, a somewhat larger group of forces eventually will need to be permanently deployed in the Transbaikal area and in the Far East. These will not number nearly as many as the 600 thousand troops deployed there in the 1970s and 1980s. Rather, some 5-7 heavy division equivalents would be sufficient, and would fit under the ceiling on deployments within a 100 kilometer border belt currently being negotiated between Moscow and Beijing.

To use the American way of formulating defense requirements, Russian conventional forces would be able to fight one major war and two half wars. This means that they may be called on to implement large-scale, theater-wide operations comparable to Operation Desert Shield/Storm in one region, such as the Transcaucasus, Central Asia, or the Far East, for which mobile forces would provide for rapid reinforcement from their bases in the Urals or in European Russia. These forces, including frontal aviation, would be assigned the mission of reinforcing Russian

forces stationed at the Central Asia, Transbaikal, or Far East strategic regions. Simultaneously, they also would be able to help Russia's allied republics, primarily Armenia and Kazakhstan, to repel any aggression from across their borders. The same mobile forces also would be able to conduct two small-scale local military actions simultaneously wherever needed in or around Russia or as part of a multilateral U.N. peace-enforcement or peace-keeping operation.

In terms of numbers, Russian armed forces should number about 1-1.2 million active duty personnel by 1998. By 2001, a force of 800-900 thousand would seem to be a realistic and sound goal. By this date, Russia should have moved to an all volunteer force. This is actually possible since at present the uniformed personnel in the Russian armed forces are about 60-70 percent professional and 40-30 percent conscripted. This is due in part to a huge shortage of manpower and to the fact that most units are, indeed, undermanned. With the same expenditures on personnel as in 1997, Russia could maintain a force of 800 thousand fully-equipped and combat ready forces consisting only of professionals. The primary difficulty is how to get from where we are to where we ought to be, given current economic, social, and political challenges. This is the most difficult issue facing our military reform initiative.

The objective is to accelerate our reduction in forces to acquire a much smaller but better force over the next 5-10 years. We need to downsize to save resources while improving long neglected areas of support, maintenance, mobility, and housing. Russia also has to preserve the core of its existing military industrial complex so that the nation can be assured of the capability for meeting unpredictable and unforeseen challenges that may arise after the year 2000.

Releasing career officers to preserve the traditional force structure of remaining units is, for the initial 3-4 years, more expensive than keeping them in service. Keeping most of the officers on board while sharply reducing the number of enlisted men in the armed forces, and slashing the number of conscripts, is a cost-cutting alternative, but it really doesn't save that much over a 3-4 year period. Furthermore, Russia would not be served well by armed forces top heavy in senior officers but lacking in junior officers, NCOs, and enlisted personnel.

Such a major transformation requires a massive program to retrain officers for new positions in the military. This is easier than teaching them to become civilian employees, and, besides, we have a vast military education system already in place. This element of our military reform initiative will necessitate reshuffling human and material assets between the armed services, disbanding many units, and cutting the staffs of

our central bureaucracy, as well as forming a relatively small number of highly professional, all-volunteer units as the core of a new Russian army. Meanwhile, Russia must preserve large stockpiles of weapons and equipment in secure storage to supply the newly organized units. Resources have to be provided to increase pay, allow for better housing, assure maintenance, and enhance training.

For the intermediate stage, in order to effect savings in personnel costs, Russia probably should have numerous cadre units and a small number of fully-complemented units. In the next stage, the ratio between cadre units and fully-complemented units would be slowly reversed. During this time, the savings could be applied to maintenance and to better training, weapons procurement, and research and development. This approach would, obviously, run counter to institutional interests and traditions. Only a determined and strong civilian leadership will be able to meet the monumental challenges of this new era.

Eventually, of the 800 thousand-soldier army, some 200 thousand could be allocated to strategic forces and C³<D>I; 150 thousand soldiers would be committed to the Air/Air Defense forces, 150 thousand to the Navy, and 300 thousand to the Ground and Rapid Deployment Forces (RDF); plus another 100 thousand to central and local staffs, various administrative organizations, and the military education system.

In the new Russian Army, the Russian Air Force, after merging with the air forces of Air Defense, should acquire a much more prominent role in providing air defense in the European Russia and the Far East, as well as ground support and long-range interdiction for contingencies in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Far East. The new Russian Army will also depend on air assets for strategic and tactical mobility for the RDF. All this can be done with 1,000 to 1,500 combat and transport aircraft.

The role of the ground forces should be confined to preserving some forward positions with a screening force, rapid deployment, and reinforcement for large-scale, intensive, but relatively short duration commitments like Operation Desert Storm, or longer small-scale operations either in areas of specific interest or under U.N. authorization around the world. All in all, 15-17 heavy and 2-3 light division equivalents would be enough for these missions. In case of the emergence of a "greater than expected threat," reserves of former contract soldiers, personnel from other organizations like the Border Guards, and equipment and weapons from pre-positioned and prepared stocks could be matched to core cadre units which, in peacetime, are manned mostly by officers. These might be used to expand the Army by 100 percent over a few months time.

The Navy's mission should be basically defensive. The Northern Fleet should have the fleet ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) protection mission. The Pacific fleet will have the mission of protecting sea lines of communications and, with the Black Sea Fleet, will conduct relief operations and work in multinational operations under U.N. auspices. Even so, the Black Sea Fleet should be sharply reduced, and the Baltic Fleet may be virtually disbanded and turned into a shore patrol force. A total of 70-80 large combat ships, 40-50 attack submarines, and 200-300 shore-based naval aircraft would be adequate for those missions.

Finally, Russian Strategic Forces, after the merging of land, sea, and air components, early warning and space systems under the Strategic Rocket Forces' operational command, should be designed to have a second-strike retaliatory capability sufficient for selective countervalue targeting against all relevant industrial targets or limited counterforce capabilities against the strategic forces of a third nuclear state. The command and control system must be improved and made more survivable and reliable as a matter of first priority, given the deep reductions in force levels and their alert status. Strategic Rocket Forces must have the capability to retarget quickly so that they can be viable against any existing nuclear power.

Existing military industrial mobilization assets are also "dead capital" in that they consume huge amounts of resources such as energy for heating and light and people for security. They need to be radically trimmed and turned over to the private sector. Our new doctrine and strategy should revolve around being ready to fight with weapons and equipment in service or in storage. The new Russian Army will be, very much, a "come to war as you are" kind of force. This should suffice for any localized or regional conflict. Should Russia become engaged in any other kind of war, it is quite likely that its industries would be attacked by conventional precision-guided weapons, therefore making it difficult to build up the arsenal after the war began. The only mobilization assets worth retaining are those for production of ammunition, fuel and spare parts, as well as those that support the repair and maintenance infrastructure.

Conclusions.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that Russia's defense requirements to 2010 envision an army that is very different from that of any present military power. Although Russia's resources, allocated to defense, are presently comparable to those of Germany or France, its present and projected geostrategic situation, as well as the existing armed forces and defense industrial infrastructure hardly permit any reduction of forces down to the level of those nations. Besides, the costs of

reduction and conversion on that scale would be prohibitive.

Rather, the new Russian Army needs to be unique and innovative. It should be capable of taking its place among the armed forces of the nuclear superpowers in terms of its strategic forces and their capabilities, and doing so preferably within the framework of the START treaties. Its conventional forces will be far smaller than in the past but still somewhat larger than those of the most powerful European armies, while being structurally different. It will be uniquely Russia's Army, a force capable of defending the nation against plausible threats while fitting into Russia's new market economy and democratic political system.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General Richard A. Chilcoat
Commandant

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

Director
Colonel Richard H. Witherspoon

Director of Research
Dr. Earl H. Tilford, Jr.

Author
Dr. Alexei G. Arbatov

Director of Publications and Production
Ms. Marianne P. Cowling

Publications Assistant
Ms. Rita A. Rummel

Composition
Mrs. Mary Jane Semple

Cover Artist
Mr. James E. Kistler