

**Disintegration of the Soviet Union and the
US Position on the Independence of Ukraine**

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INTRODUCTION

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the new states have created a new geopolitical situation, not only in Eastern Europe, but on the global level as well. The United States lost its main enemy, the Cold War is over, and many Americans believe that there are no grounds for U.S. involvement in the affairs of the former Soviet Union. However, Russia remains a great power with a huge nuclear arsenal, and the future of economic and political reform is unclear, as is its foreign policy, especially in the so-called "near abroad." The conflicts in this region influence the domestic and foreign policies of Russia and destabilize the situation in Eastern Europe, providing new challenges for Western policy in this region.

Independent Ukraine, with a population of more than fifty million, has emerged as one of the main players in Eastern Europe, and Ukrainian-Russian relations are crucial for the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The interest in Ukraine is increasing in Western capitals.

This paper covers the period from 1989 to 1992. In order to understand the evolution of U.S. policy towards Ukraine, it is important to assess the position of the Bush administration, which was challenged by the disintegration of the Soviet Union. I intend to analyze the broad geopolitical background of American-Ukrainian relations, America's perceptions of Ukraine, and the implications for relations with Ukraine and Russia.

Before analyzing the policy of the Bush administration, it is important to briefly cover two issues: (1) insufficient knowledge about Ukrainian history in pre-perestroika times; (2) historical background of American policy towards Ukraine.

(A) UKRAINE: *TERRA INCOGNITA*?

During the first years of *perestroika* (1985-87) the overwhelming majority of politicians and scholars (including Mikhail Gorbachev and many Ukrainian intellectuals) could not have predicted the disintegration of the Soviet Union. This was true for the West as well. Therefore, the question arises: why were these changes unexpected?

Ukraine was to a great extent *terra incognita*, and not only for the West. The history of Ukraine was distorted by Soviet propaganda; many documents describing the most tragic aspects of Ukrainian history were concealed from the public, as well as from most of the scholars. Only with the advent of glasnost (which reflected the desire of the Soviet leaders to overcome "stagnation" and to "improve" the Soviet system) was it possible to reveal the real course of Ukrainian history, the role of the Ukrainian national movement, and its dynamics.

At the beginning of this century Ukrainians in the Russian empire were prohibited from publishing any materials in their language. During World War I, revolution, civil war, and the foreign invasions of 1917-20, Ukrainians were on different sides of

the barricades. Then came years of Poland's political and cultural domination (Polonization) for Western Ukraine and Stalinism for Eastern Ukraine; the famines of 1921, 1933, and 1947 (the 1933 famine, as we now know, was artificially created by Stalin and cost Ukrainians from 3 to 5 million lives¹) ; the Great Terror of the 1930s; World War II, when Ukrainians, finding themselves between Stalin and Hitler, created the Ukrainian Insurgent Army to fight on both fronts (their resistance was suppressed by the Red Army only at the beginning of the 1950s); the subtle and extremely dangerous Russification of the 1960s-1980s; and finally, Chernobyl in 1986.

One can find people who lived in Austria-Hungary, Ukrainian People's Republic, and Poland, under Soviet, German and once again Soviet rule. Many people (including many Ukrainians) believed that the process of Russification was historically objective and irreversible. But in every period of history we can also find examples of resistance, and with the first signs of liberalization during *perestroika* the latent energy was freed, involving in the process of nation- and state-building many Russified Ukrainians, as well as Russians and Jews living in Ukraine.

B) HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE U.S. APPROACH TOWARDS UKRAINE

During the turmoil of 1919-20, the Allies generally ignored the pro-Western Ukrainian People's Republic. More than seventy years later, House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt stated, in a speech on April 22, 1993, that the West had provided no support to

Ukraine when it had fallen under the Bolshevik rule.² Part of the explanation for it can be found in Ukrainian politics: a split in the Ukrainian national movement because of different political orientations; a struggle among its leaders; internal instability and rapid changes of different regimes; naiveté of socialist leaders in their belief in lasting peace; delay in building a Ukrainian army; the inexperience of Ukrainian diplomats; and the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Germany in February 1918, followed by German occupation and establishment of a pro-German regime in Ukraine for six months.

However, the main reason for the Allies' policy was the option to support the White Russians, the main force against the Bolsheviks, whose aim was to restore the Russian empire. Despite the fact that President Woodrow Wilson included the idea of self-determination of nations in American foreign policy, the United States withheld recognition of the Baltic states until 1922. The problem of self-determination of nations was not the reason for America's initial refusal to recognize the Soviet Union. Before and after recognition, criticism was directed at the undemocratic Soviet system in general, not the subjugation of nations in particular. The U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933, in the year of the artificial famine imposed on Ukraine by Stalin, was dictated by geopolitical factors. However, the United States never accepted incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union, which occurred after its diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. This provided legal and moral grounds for support of the

struggle of Baltic republics for independence during perestroika.

The situation gradually began changing with the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War. The U.S. intelligence services provided some assistance to guerilla movements in the Baltic republics and Western Ukraine. Displaced persons who became postwar immigrants were highly politicized and aware of their Ukrainian identity. Having created several diaspora organizations in the West, they became a factor in American domestic and foreign policy; the CIA and Radio Liberty also used them in the ideological struggle against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.³ As a result, in 1959, at the end of his second term, President Dwight Eisenhower added the Captive Nations resolution to his policy of "rollback." Following the demands of ethnic lobbies, he signed this resolution three weeks before his meeting with Nikita Khrushchev. Congress passed the resolution unanimously. It stated that the independence of submerged nations was in the vital interest of the United States, and called for an annual week of commemoration of "Captive Nations."⁴

However, the drafts of the resolutions appealing for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Soviet Ukraine proposed several times after World War II by members of Congress were never passed⁵: broadening of American contacts with Ukraine could be complicating negotiations with Moscow on security issues; at the same time it could be used in Soviet efforts to create the image of a "successful Soviet nationalities policy" with which to woo the

countries of the Third World.

Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that the main purpose of the Captive Nations resolution was rhetorical. In a talk with Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoliy Dobrynin on June 12, 1969, Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security, asked him not to pay attention "to separate public critical statements by the president on one East European country or another, since this is only a tribute to some layers of the U. S. population which play a role in American elections."⁶ But some argued that though the Congress also considered it a "routine response" to the electorate, it was "ignorant" of its content.⁷ The resolution not only became a factor in the ideological struggle with the Soviet Union, but also created a certain commitment by the United States to the affairs of "captive nations," compared to Western Europe, which never placed such emphasis on this question and human rights in East-West relations.

The American campaign in 1970s and 1980s for human rights in the Soviet Union also drew attention not only to the situation of Jews but to other nationalities as well: many Soviet political prisoners were Ukrainians, and Ukrainian national churches (Greek Catholic and Autocephalous Orthodox) were underground.

The Captive Nations Resolution and human rights issues were actively used by President Ronald Reagan in his policy towards the Soviet Union. He was the first president who transformed the annually observance of Captive Nations week into a public event. Reagan's language about the "evil empire" played an important role in

drawing attention to the rights of nations, though his "black white," "good-evil" approach simplified the picture and the problems of the multipolar world. In 1988 he declined Gorbachev's invitation to visit Moscow for the celebration of the millennium of the introduction of Christianity in Kiev Rus. One of the reasons was his disinclination to legitimize the Soviet policy of banning Ukrainian national churches. Reagan's influence on the events in Ukraine should not be overestimated, as the atmosphere of the Cold War impeded broadening of contacts with the West, but surely it influenced the dissident movement in Ukraine to a certain extent.

I. THE RISE OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION: THE AMERICAN REACTION

When *perestroika* started, perhaps nobody in the West expected that it would lead to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Even among the scholars who were aware of the Soviet nationalities problem, including scholars from the Ukrainian diaspora, the cautious approach predominated. One of the arguments, for instance, was that for the West "to offer a strong lead in stimulation of self-consciousness" was "hazardous," as "the plight of the Jews is quite well known." The possible expectation was "hope to ... impel oppressive governments to lighten burdens, if ever so slightly, in the USSR and elsewhere."⁸

Not surprisingly, the official U.S. approach was even more cautious: Washington was preoccupied with relations with Moscow on

global security issues. Speaking about contradictions in the Western approach towards the national question in the Soviet Union, Michael Mandelbaum pointed out that it is "an issue, as well, over which other countries have little leverage. Most Western governments are likely to prefer to ignore it, and this may well be the prudent diplomatic course;" however the "Western, and especially American, publics may insist on making it a central point in East-West relations, just as the Soviet government's treatment of dissidents and would-be emigres was forced onto the agenda in the 1970s."⁹ Gail Lapidus, arguing for a broadening of knowledge and contacts with the republics of the Soviet Union, stated that "while reaffirming the principle of national self-determination, and cognizant of the special legal status of the Baltic states," it was better to refrain "from aligning itself in support of one or another national group."¹⁰

Probably one of the most eloquent examples of the Moscow-entered approach was demonstrated by Jerry Hough. In a book published in 1990 he wrote:

Least of all should it have been assumed that the country was about to fly apart. Americans have had little experience with ethnic unrest based on linguistic demands and they have grossly overreacted to what they have been seen in the Soviet Union... Yet, it is striking how extraordinarily rare it is for ethnic groups within the borders of a country to become independent countries unless the central power has been defeated in war.

From a comparative perspective the Soviet Union looks like one of the most stable multinational countries. The non-Russian peoples are deeply divided among themselves. Historically, the ethnic and religious conflicts that are most explosive involve the blocking of the upward mobility of ambitious members of the minority... Soviet leaders have long been sensitive to the need for this mobility, and individual Lithuanians, for example, have less to gain personally from independence than does Lithuania as a collective nation.¹¹

The conclusion about the stability of the Soviet Union was not correct: at the end of 1989 the Communist Party of Lithuania declared secession from the CPSU; in March 1990 the Lithuanian popular movement, the "Sajudis," won the elections, and Lithuania proclaimed independence.

One of the explanations for the Moscow-centered approach in Washington was probably the fact that the initial platform of popular movements in the Soviet Union included a demand for a new Union treaty that would, in fact, provide for the creation of a confederation; at that time this was resisted by Gorbachev. In Ukraine not only the Rukh adhered to this position, but also the more radical and anticommunist Ukrainian Helsinki Union. There was socialist phraseology in the documents of popular movements, references to a "true Leninist nationalities policy." That is why the expectations of many specialists on Soviet nationalities were not about the "dissolution of the Soviet Party-state," but about some kind of "Bulgarization" of republics,¹² i.e., greater republican autonomy within the Soviet context. For the West it was also necessary to test the seriousness of Gorbachev's intention to reform the Soviet Union "from above." As Zbigniew Brzezinski pointed out:

the West's actual political response to secessionism should be more tempered if the Soviet Union does become engaged in a bona fide effort to redress fundamentally the existing national inequities... the West should do more than merely applaud. It should then tangibly help that experiment...a genuine confederation or commonwealth would be the best option for everyone concerned: the Russians, most of the non-Russians, and certainly the outside world.¹³

But the most important reason for the cautious official line was the fact that the United States was determined not to undermine its relations with Gorbachev on a wide range of security issues. American policymakers had already made a new and "revolutionary" approach: to move "beyond containment," as proclaimed by George Bush on May 12, 1989, to test Soviet "new thinking," and, if the new Soviet course should prove to be reliable, to assist its main enemy in its desire to be transformed and reformed. The United States was also afraid of the possible expansion of the militant Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia. By the beginning of the 1990s, one more argument for stable relations with Gorbachev was the Western concern for the payment of the large Soviet debt.

Nevertheless, the general dynamics of national movements were underestimated and the picture of events in the Soviet Union was distorted. For more than forty years, relations with the Soviet Union had defined American foreign policy to a great extent, and the psychological factor played an important role "at the highest levels" as well:

Bush's sympathy... suggested an almost emotional preference for familiar processes and gradual, orderly change, even at the sacrifice of democratic ideals. It was wholly consonant with his increasing desire to form a tacit alliance with Mikhail Gorbachev against Boris Yeltsin and others who seemed to be extremists in the context of Soviet politics.¹⁴

Difficulties in adapting to the new situation can also be explained by the crisis in Sovietology. Despite indisputable successes, there were a number of drawbacks. Sovietologist Peter Rutland summarized rather common explanations of this crisis:

- political bias, either of the left or the right;
- lack of grounding in the languages and histories of Soviet nationalities;
- difficulties in getting information;
- the seduction of leading academics into the role of media pundits;
- "professional, personal, and political rivalry left *émigré* scholars 'out in the cold,' and prevented Sovietology benefiting from their insights."¹⁵

In comparison with other studies on Soviet nationalities, Ukrainian studies were rather developed. Nevertheless, as Alexander Motyl pointed out, they "were frequently considered irrelevant to 'real' politics in the USSR, politically motivated by *émigré* agendas, and emotionally charged by nationalist perspectives. In a word, it was supposed to be 'unscholarly'."¹⁶ It also led to the underestimation of the Ukrainian national movement.

II. DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION: CHALLENGE FOR THE UNITED STATES

The practical consequences of the previously mentioned problems for American foreign policy began to arise in 1990; after the republican elections in March, popular movements shifted to the idea of independence. The independence of Ukraine was *de facto* proclaimed as the aim of Rukh in June and finally adopted by the Second Congress of Rukh in October 1990. But U.S. officials and

many leading Sovietologists still considered Ukraine and Belarus to be the main supporters of the Kremlin's attempts to preserve the Soviet Union. It created a serious gap of approaches between the Ukrainian national movement and U.S. official policy. Before 1990 there was no contradiction between American rhetoric in support of national self-determination and the programming documents of the popular movements; from now on this divergence became clear.

After Lithuania proclaimed its independence in March 1990 and Gorbachev announced an economic blockade against this republic, U.S. criticism of Gorbachev was rather subdued. The only real response was a month-long delay before signing a treaty granting the Soviet Union the status of most favored nation." However, now American scholars and decision-makers began to think about the possibility of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In October 1990, the Council on Foreign Relations organized a symposium on Soviet nationalities and American foreign policy. The general prediction was that the rise of nations in the Soviet Union would continue, and that the West might face a lot of problems: nuclear proliferation, Russian fascism, Islamic fundamentalism, Balkanization, mass emigration: therefore, the West could not step aside. It had to adopt a new "activist" policy, not simply react to the events. It was stressed that Washington would not adopt "a policy of linkage that makes the Kremlin access to U.S. markets (including credit markets) contingent on its agreement to wholesale decolonization." At the same time, it was pointed out that "Gorbachev has become part of the problem (in this case, the

nationality problem), not the solution."¹⁸ Therefore, it was considered necessary to establish an official U.S. presence in all the republics of the Soviet Union, and to provide more direct assistance to republics, not through the center.¹⁹

The new challenge to American policy was created at the beginning of January 1991: bloody provocations in the Baltics coincided with the Gulf War. As the United States was interested in Gorbachev's support in the Gulf, its reaction was even more cautious than that of the EC, which suspended \$1 billion in aid to the Soviet Union. When a U.S.-Soviet summit scheduled for February was cancelled, the United States denied that it had any relation to the events in the Baltics. It is necessary to stress that the U.S. approach to Yeltsin and his supporters at that time was cautious too: Washington was still mainly preoccupied with relations with Gorbachev, and "Bush did not wish to inflame Gorbachev by seeming to court his adversaries."²⁰

What were the approaches to these problems within academic circles? Richard Pipes argued that, taking into account the future disintegration of the Soviet Union which at best could be preserved as "a loose economic community of fully sovereign states on the model of the early EEC or European Free Trade Association," Washington should shift all economic aid to republics, and to supply to the center "only food shipments and managerial know-how which would be helpful in developing business in the Soviet Union."²¹

The arguments of his opponents, Jerry Hough and Steven Cohen, were that radicals in the Soviet Union, such as Yeltsin, did not have influence, and their radicalism could undermine the reforms. Hough made incorrect parallels with American history:

We must not equate democracy with the avoidance of force to preserve the Union. Lincoln used force.... If the democrats stand for the dissolution of the union, they will be defeated... Gorbachev has acted as he has in recent months not because of army-KGB pressure, but because of the need to place himself in the electoral center of the Slavic Republics.

He forecasted:

There is no way republics are going to break away in the next decade or so...economic reform is going ahead very seriously and will accelerate.²²

Lapidus took a more flexible approach based on the premise that Gorbachev now acted together with reactionary forces, and Yeltsin became the symbol for uniting democratic forces; however, the question of whether the Soviet Union would exist was wrong. The problem was what kind of federation would emerge.²³

The official policy of the United States was to broaden contacts with the republics. At the same time, answering the question about possibilities of recognition of their independence, Counsellor of the Department of State Robert Zoellick pointed out: "We do not support the 'break-up' of the Soviet Union, and I cannot, speculate on the criteria of circumstances under which the U.S. might 'recognize' the independence of entities that might emerge... there is a different situation, obviously with the Baltics, whose aspirations for independence we back."²⁴

The Congress was probably better prepared than the

administration to understand the aspirations of popular movements in the republics. First, support of the ethnic lobby was of great importance for many Congressmen. Second, many members of Congress worked in 1970s and 1980s on human rights cases in Ukraine. They knew the situation and, moreover, they knew much about former political prisoners who now became the leaders of several national democratic organizations. They had no pro-Moscow stereotypes towards these people. The campaign for human rights provided a kind of alliance between liberal Democrats and hard-line anti-communist Republicans.²⁵

As a result, several documents devoted to the situation in Ukraine were passed by Congress, among them the November 15, 1989 Senate letter asking President Bush to urge Gorbachev to legalize the banned Ukrainian churches, and the 1990 Joint Resolution authorizing a week of commemoration for the victims of the 1932-33 forced famine in Ukraine.²⁶ One hundred and sixty-five members of Congress sent letters to Gorbachev demanding the release of Stepan Khmara, one of the most radical deputies of the Ukrainian Parliament, who was arrested in November 1990 by communist authorities.

The visits of the Rukh's leaders to the United States were of great importance as well. They helped to overcome the effects of Soviet propaganda, which tried to describe the Rukh as a dangerous nationalist movement. The most successful, perhaps, was the visit made in September 1990 by Mykhailo Horyn, a former political prisoner who was one of the founders of the Ukrainian Helsinki

Union and the Ukrainian Republican Party, head of the Rukh's Secretariat. While Gorbachev successfully persuaded Bush and Baker to avoid meetings with him, Horyn managed (with the help of the diaspora) to meet with four members of the cabinet, including Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney.²⁷

In late July 1991, Bush and Gorbachev signed START-I, which was of extreme importance because it was the first document to reduce, not just to limit, nuclear weapons. During the meeting with Bush, Gorbachev inserted some remarks about Yugoslavia: he wished to persuade Bush before his visit to Kiev that Ukrainian secession might lead to a Yugoslav-type war. Bush was worried that "Gorbachev's accomplishments [were] being lost in all this talk about independence." Therefore, he himself inserted into the draft of his Kiev speech several passages intended, as he said, to make the speech "more sensitive to Gorbachev's problems."²⁸

As Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott describe, the welcome of the American president in Kiev was in sharp contrast to the reception in Moscow, "where much of the populace regarded him as just one more foreign dignitary coming to pay homage to the most unpopular man in the Soviet Union." But it did not change Bush's approach. Perhaps it even strengthened his intention to support Gorbachev. In Kiev, Bush referred to his listeners as "Soviet citizens" and compared federalism in the United States and in the Soviet Union: "As a federation ourselves, we want good relations, improved relations, with the republics." (Bush's approach was not unique for the West. In 1990, Margaret Thatcher compared Ukraine to

California, causing anger among Ukrainian MPs.) He stressed that the United States "will not aid those who promote a suicidal nationalism based on ethnic hatred." Obviously it was aimed at Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, "but Bush also knew that there were similar ethnic passions in Ukraine, and his warning thus applied to his listeners in Kiev as well."²⁹ If Bush was really trying to send a message not only to the Caucasus but to Ukraine as well, it was, as I argue below, a misunderstanding of the policy of the Ukrainian national movement towards ethnic minorities.

The next day the speech was condemned in the Senate by Democrat Dennis DeConcini. In the *New York Times* William Safire referred to Bush's statements as a "dismaying 'Chicken Kiev speech'." Paul Goble, former special assistant for the Soviet Nationalities in the U. S. State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, even argued that Bush unintentionally sent a message to hard-liners in the Kremlin and "gave the green light to the coup plotters - who moved less than three weeks later - by suggesting that the United States would support virtually any steps to guarantee the territorial integrity and stability of the Soviet Union."³⁰ Goble also mentions that in the first reaction to the coup Bush said that he believed that Soviet Vice-President Gennadiy Yanayev might be a reformist. But later these words were deleted from television reports.³¹

Bush's position showed Ukrainians that the United States underestimated their national aspirations. George Urban, former director of Radio Free Europe, analyzed the bitterness of the

leaders of the Ukrainian national movement in these words:

By Western standards these are naive people. Their naivety is their strength, the source of their appeal, but also their Achilles' heel. They have taken our admonitions about human rights, self-determination, and especially our commitments under the Helsinki documents very seriously.³²

However, it is necessary to add that the leaders of the Ukrainian national movement, among whom were both former political prisoners and former members of the Communist Party who quit in 1990³³, were realistic enough to begin a peaceful transition to an independent state without ethnic conflicts. Their tactics were to split the communist camp in Ukraine and to attract some part of the group to the idea of national independence. These tactics were based on the understanding of political stalemate in Ukraine. However, the price of a smooth transition to independence was the inability of the ruling elite to start reforms.

Immediately after the failure of the coup in August 1991, the American approach towards the new realities was tested on the question of recognition of Baltic states. Germany urged other Western countries to recognize their independence even before the failure of the coup, and at the EC ministerial meeting on August 27, all twelve of the EC countries recognized the Baltics. But Bush decided not to create additional trouble for Gorbachev, and promised to wait until September 2 in order to recognize Baltics *after* their recognition by the Soviet Union. Only after Gorbachev failed to secure recognition through the Soviet parliament did Bush recognize the Baltics on September 2, before the Soviet recognition on September 6.

Germany was also in favor of increasing aid to the Soviet Union. However, proposals made by Congressman Richard Gephardt, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin and Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn were supported neither by Republicans nor Democrats because of the recession in the United States: it would have been dangerous for Bush to support these plans on the eve of the forthcoming elections. At a meeting in London in late August, G-7 officials recommended additional shipments of food and medicine but rejected financial aid. At the end of 1991, the position of the Bush administration began to change. However, over 70 percent of the aid given to the Soviet Union came from the EC, and, as French President François Mitterand argued, the idea of a U.S.-sponsored aid conference put forward by the Bush administration was intended to secure America's leading role among the Allies after the Cold War, while the G-7 had already assumed the leadership role in coordinating aid to the former Soviet Union (FSU).³⁴

The first official U.S. commentary on the future of the Soviet Union was made by Secretary of State James Baker on September 5. He formulated five principles of U.S. policy towards the republics, which included a peaceful solution of the future of the Soviet Union by the peoples of each republic through democratic elections, respect for human rights, especially "equal treatment of minorities," and changes of the borders consistent only with CSCE principles. He expressed his hope for the continuation of some central authority with which the United States and its allies could work.

As Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott point out, Bush and his national security adviser Brent Scowcroft also hoped that "the Soviet Union would survive in some coherent form - preferably a federation of republics with strong economic and military ties to the center." Afraid of the future of nuclear weapons in the republics, Bush decided to propose a postscript to the START treaty. However, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney was "uneasy" about further strategic arms reductions. He argued that the break-up of the Soviet Union would also add to the pressure from Congress for radical cuts in defense expenditures. Nevertheless, Bush made his proposal on September 27. By proposing bilateral concessions he intended to strengthen Gorbachev in his dealings with the Soviet military; "he was also offering Gorbachev a fig leaf behind which to conceal the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from non-Russian republics."³⁵

Gorbachev not only welcomed Bush's offer as a "major step" but replied with a new proposal "that he hoped would return him to the center of the world stage. But few listened. The Soviet Union was breaking apart, and there was nothing that either Bush or Gorbachev could do about it."³⁶

By the end of November, however, it seemed that Cheney came to realize the necessity of shifting from a "Moscow only" policy to consideration of the republics as well, overcoming the dominance of Baker's approach. The disagreement was about how to get more influence in the new states: by quick recognition (Cheney) or by

recognition as the reward for, fulfillment of certain conditions (Baker). There was also pressure from Congress for quick recognition. The resolution adopted by the Senate on November 20 called on the president to recognize Ukraine's independence should the December 1, 1991 referendum confirm the Ukrainian Parliament's declaration of independence.

To a great extent, these steps can be explained not only by the understanding of new geopolitical realities, but also by the coming elections. In early November, during a special election to fill the Senate seat from Pennsylvania after Republican Senator John Heinz died in an airplane crash, the Bush-supported candidate was defeated. According to polls, one of the reasons for this was that voters of East European descent were disappointed by Bush's cautious position on the recognition of the Baltic states.³⁷ Bush was not eager to repeat the same mistake with Ukraine.

At a meeting with Ukrainian-Americans at the White House on November 28, Bush indicated that the United States would recognize the independence of Ukraine after the referendum on December 1. Gorbachev's recognition of Ukraine's independence was not mentioned as a precondition of this step. This was an important shift in American policy. However, when Gorbachev called Bush and said he was "disappointed" that the United States acted "prematurely, Baker conceded to his aides that Gorbachev's complaint about the U.S. position on Ukrainian independence had some merit; it was a bad precedent for the United States so badly to 'jump the gun'... Scowcroft agreed, admitting, 'I think we've signaled a more

forward-leaning policy than we had in mind.' He warned the president that by shifting sides so blatantly, 'we may prejudice relations between Kiev and Moscow.'"³⁸

But this shift was balanced by taking into account Yeltsin's new role: the United States promised to wait to officially recognize Ukrainian independence until Russia had done so.

On December 8 and 9 of 1991, the Commonwealth of Independent States was established. The leaders of the three Slavic republics first informed Bush about their decision, and then informed Gorbachev, causing him to become angry. From then on the Bush administration was no longer eager to support Gorbachev.

The United States expressed its support of the creation of the Commonwealth structure. In November 1991, a group of nuclear security specialists argued that "the United States still has an incentive to prefer as little disintegration as possible ... the United States may have little leverage on the disintegration question. But it can try to create incentives for union rather than independence."³⁹

On December 12, Baker stressed that U.S. priorities which were essential for American recognition of the new states were, in the following order: (1) military and especially nuclear security; (2) democracy; (3) market-oriented economies. Having received a positive response from the Ukrainian government regarding these principles and the international obligations of Ukraine as one of the state-successors of the Soviet Union under the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

(NPT), the United States recognized Ukraine as well as Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan after the resignation of Gorbachev on December 25.

III. THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND INDEPENDENT UKRAINE

The situation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union demanded new theoretical reconsiderations. It is possible to single out schematically two opposite approaches which continue to exist: the "Russia-first" approach, also known as "moderate globalism," and the "Russia-second" approach, sometimes viewed as the "Cold War II" scenario or "radical globalism."⁴⁰

The "Russia-first" approach stresses that the main threat: is a weak Russia, because patriotic feelings of offended Russians may lead to extreme nationalism; that is why it is dangerous to try to isolate and weaken Russia. Moscow's central role in the FSU, where Russia has "vital, special interests," is recognized by a positive attitude towards "some form of a common market and collective security framework." The "Russia-first" approach is also based on the arguments that "Russia was the central force in the destruction of the Soviet totalitarian state" and that without democratic Russia there will be no other democratic states. The policy of other new states is sometimes viewed as threatening Russia's interests.⁴¹

The grounds for the "Russia-second" approach is that Russia remains unreliable, and threatens U.S. interests. According to

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Soviet disintegration was "more than overshadowed by the disintegration of the great Russian empire." Therefore, it would be a mistake to concentrate only on the socioeconomic recovery of Russia, and "any Russian efforts to isolate and eventually again to subordinate Ukraine through the maintenance of a Moscow-controlled outpost in Crimea, for example ... should be viewed as obstacles to effective financial and economic assistance." While his opponents advised Western politicians to "quietly discourage" the Lithuanian proposal for the formation of a regional group of western republics of the ESU, Brzezinski called for "intermediary forms of involvement with Europe" and for support for "a Baltic Sea/Black Sea zone of enhanced cooperation."⁴²

This approach stresses that Western cooperation with Yeltsin to solve the problems of other republics led to the acceleration of disintegration, and that is why it was counterproductive. According to Paul Goble, one of the most eloquent proponents of these views, it is necessary to pay attention to the diversity of the republics, and it is impossible to make generalized judgments based on specific cases: the emergence of Gamsakhurdia as a leader in Georgia did not mean that the same anti-democratic scenario would result in other states .⁴³

The "Russia-second" approach also stresses that the future of Russian reform is obscure because of the possibility of disintegration and because of Russia's huge size, which creates difficulties for reform and limited possibilities of Western

assistance.⁴⁴ At the same time, "a Western-oriented Ukraine, with its large Russian population, could engage Russia in the west."⁴⁵

Despite growing tension in the relations among former Soviet republics, the main threat to stability in the East is their domestic situation regarding the ability to begin successful economic and political reforms. Ukraine faces a huge challenge: building a nation-state, civil society, democracy, and market simultaneously. But it cannot be achieved in one step.

The period after the referendum on the independence of Ukraine was the best period in which to start economic reform. The overwhelming majority of not only Ukrainians, but also Russians, Jews, and other nationalities, supported independence. Even in Crimea during the referendum of December 1991, a majority voted for Ukrainian independence. To a great extent, this can be explained by the expectations for a better economic situation in independent Ukraine. Therefore, despite the fact that many people were not in favor of market reform (which at first would lead to a lower standard of living), it was the best time to begin the reform, and, in this way, to reduce separatist and pro-Russian sentiments. There are many possible reasons why action was not taken: Kravchuk didn't really want reform because he was part of the former *nomenklatura*; because of his cautious political style; because of the pressure from his pro-communist entourage; because of his fears that Russia would try to exploit anti-market moods in order to stimulate separatist movements. Ian Brzezinski, a Kiev-based security official with the Parliament's Council of Advisers, points out:

"Kravchuk sees major security problems with economic reform. The potential of Russian pressure combined with internal strains in eastern Ukraine, which would bear the weight of economic reform, is a real concern."⁴⁶ However, this does not absolve the Ukrainian ruling elite of responsibility for its inability to start reforms.

Ukrainian leaders were disturbed by the deterioration of relations with Russia and the inattention of the United States. They interpreted these approaches as signs of the necessity to rely on their own forces and to shift from an idealist to a realist interpretation of world politics.

First, relations with democrats in Russia became tense. Throughout the whole period of *perestroika*, Yeltsin's prestige among Ukrainian democrats was very high. However, several days after the coup, when Ukrainian independence was proclaimed, the members of the close entourage of the Russian President stated that territorial borders between Russia and Ukraine might be revised if Ukraine decided to leave the union.

It was a real blow even to those who stood in favor of preserving some kind of confederation with Russia. Then came the problem of how to divide foreign assets as well as property of the former Soviet Union, such as the Black Sea Fleet. Dimitri Simes from Carnegie Endowment for International Peace recognized that "in the aftermath of the putsch Yeltsin and his associates aggravated the situation by taking over many central ministries and unilaterally positioning Russia as heir to the Soviet Union."⁴⁷

It was not by chance. A Russian version of the "Monroe doctrine" continues to exist and to dominate Russian politics. These views were expressed not only by Zhirinovskiy or Rutskoj, but also by figures from Yeltsin's milieu such as Migranian and Stankevitch.⁴⁸

Very often the interpretations of East European history by former Sovietologists remain to be Russocentric. Simes, for example, wrote that "Kiev was the birthplace of the Russian nation. It was there a thousand years ago that the Russians adopted Christianity." However, even Soviet historiography did not consider the population of Kiev Rus as Russian: it was called "Old Russian ("Rusyn")", and was viewed as a "cradle" of three "brother-nations."⁴⁹

Sergo Mikoyan argues that under the Soviet rule Russians were exploited more than other nationalities, and that a "Ukrainian mafia" controlled the Politburo, and overestimates the role of ultranationalist groups in Ukraine which are by now on the margins of Ukrainian politics. If the United States considers the Caribbean and Central America zones of vital interest, continues Mikoyan, why does America use a "double standard" and not recognize the "special rights" of Russia?⁵⁰

Even such a prominent figure as Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his recent interviews, compares the secession of some republics of the Soviet Union to possible secession of southern states from the United States because of the influence of the Spanish-Speaking population.⁵¹

Very soon these views were reflected in actions of the Russian parliament. In January 1992, a Russian parliamentary committee proposed to look into the legality of Khrushchev's transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine in 1954. On March 12 Kravchuk announced a temporary halt of the removal of tactical missiles to Russia (in addition to pressure from Russia, Ukraine had not received any compensation for nuclear materials) . While disapproving of this step, Motyl gives the following explanation: "Kravchuk's move was a transparent plea for attention and understanding." However, he continues, the next day the *New York Times* recommended that the U.S. use positive incentives to induce Russia to disarm, but employ negative ones - that is, the threat of "no Western assistance" - toward Ukraine. So, "the moral is clear: Russia is trustworthy, while Ukraine is not. Plead with the former, get tough with the latter."⁵²

By May 6, tactical nuclear weapons were sent to Russia without any compensation. In mid-May, the Crimean parliament proclaimed independence from Ukraine (but then withheld it) . On May 21-22, the Supreme Soviet of Russia declared that the 1954 transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine was "without the force of law" and that this question should be solved with the participation of the Crimea. While the West condemned the Serbs in the similar situation, there was no Western reaction in 1992 regarding Russian policy toward the Crimea.

On May 23, under these circumstances, Ukraine signed the Lisbon Protocol, joining START-I, but also began to seek security

guarantees. However, inexperienced Ukrainian diplomats made several mistakes. According to Motyl:

(1) decisive steps toward building their own armed forces were taken after signing the commonwealth accords, which referred to single joint commands. This damaged relations not only with Russia, but also with the West, which was disturbed by the "emergence" of half a million troops;

(2) the decision to claim *all* of the Black Sea Fleet caused relations with Russia to deteriorate;

(3) in stopping withdrawal of tactical missiles, Kiev paid too heavy a price for international recognition "by appearing irresponsible and willing to jeopardize international peace."⁵³

Could these steps taken by Ukraine, especially the last one, justify a negative American reaction? The answer is yes. However, it is necessary not to forget that the very existence of the Ukrainian state was at stake because of the Russian position. And in these circumstances, the United States nevertheless seemed to be interested only in one thing: nuclear arms.

Summing up the position of the Bush administration on Ukraine, the Chief U.S. Negotiator on Safe and Secure Dismantlement of Nuclear Weapons, James Goodby, stressed that it was debatable whether the United States overemphasized the role of Russia. Moreover, there were no important reformers in Ukraine compared with Russia. In general, Bush rightly perceived the new threats, and his diplomacy was preventive. He achieved the removal of tactical missiles from non-Russian republics and converted START-I

into a multilateral agreement with the Lisbon Protocol. He had support of the Democratic Party in Congress too. But Bush's approach was hard-line, and in the new circumstances after the 1992 American presidential elections and the changes in Russia and Ukraine, it had to be modified.⁵⁴

From the point of view of many scholars in the United States, the importance of the nuclear problem was overestimated by each player; it was given symbolic value.⁵⁵ Henry Kissinger pointed out that "the United States has been remarkably slow in dealing with the new republics... .The rare visits of U.S. officials deal almost exclusively with the nuclear issue, an important but limited dialogue."⁵⁶ During Senate hearings in June 1993 Senator Joseph Biden remarked to Special Adviser to the Secretary of State Strobe Talbott:

while we are, at the same time, debating and not resolving, whether we are going to continue nuclear testing; and while the Chinese continue a policy as the rogue nation, along with Korea, in the international community; and while the Russians are contemplating making it easier for India to become a more potent force militarily, it seems to me, at a minimum, that it complicates your job when you sit, down in Kiev to make the case that they should be responsible in fulfilling their international obligations.⁵⁷

(Nevertheless, these arguments may also support the official American view that the success of non-proliferation policies are is being tested in Ukraine.)

When in November 1992 Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma announced that Ukraine was unwilling to give strategic nuclear weapons to Russia, the United States finally offered Ukraine \$175 million for dismantlement if Ukraine ratified START-I and acceded

to the NPT. However, as Heather Wilson, Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control on the National Security Council Staff in 1989-91, argues:

In reality, this linkage made little sense. The assistance the U.S. would provide, if used properly, would bring Ukraine into de facto compliance with the terms of the START treaty even if the Rada did not ratify it. Rather than work the practical problem, de-mate the warheads, and destroy the ICBMs and their silos, the U.S. held out for Ukrainian ratification of a document negotiated before Ukraine existed as an independent state.⁵⁸

How was this policy viewed in Ukraine? In a journal published with the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Eduard Lysytzyn points out that "hasty" and energetic U.S. policy was in the interests of the United States. But was it positive for Ukraine? He argues that the United States "forgot" about Belarus soon after its nuclear disarmament.⁵⁹ It is also necessary to mention that although Ukraine agreed to a non-nuclear future, Kiev and other capitals lacked the understanding of the technical difficulties to fulfill this aim.

All of these factors led to gradual changes, both in public *opinion* and in the official line of the Ukrainian government: those who saw nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip began to gain momentum. This camp included a large spectrum of political forces, from nationalists (UNA-UNSO and Stepan Khmara) through national democrats (Ihor Yukhnovsky), and from centrists (Leonid Kuchma) through socialists (Olexander Moroz).⁶⁰

By the end of 1992, the situation of stalemate on the nuclear issue emerged. For a breakthrough, it would be necessary to broaden the agenda of American-Ukrainian relations.

CONCLUSION: LESSONS AND PERSPECTIVES

There are objective differences in the respective approaches of Washington and Kiev to security problems. After the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States has viewed nuclear proliferation as the main danger for its security. Traditionally, Washington was oriented toward dialogue with Moscow to try to solve the problems of nuclear security. At the same time, unlike Russian diplomacy towards the West, Ukrainian foreign policy and the manner in which it was propagated were less skillful and less successful. As a result, from the point of view of the American public, Ukraine appeared in the same category with Northern Korea, Iraq, and Libya. At the first half of 1993, the Clinton administration essentially followed Bush's policy towards Ukraine, namely Baker's hard-line approach.

For Ukraine the problem of nuclear weapons is subordinated to the more profound security problem - internal and external stability connected to a great extent with the relations with Russia. Therefore, from the Ukrainian point of view it was necessary to broaden the agenda of dialogue with the United States. On one hand, Ukrainian inconsistency in handling the nuclear problem did harm to Kiev's reputation and led to its isolation, but on the other, it helped to draw the attention of the West to the necessity of a deeper understanding of security matters in this region.

The new phase in American-Ukrainian relations was signaled during the visit of U.S. Ambassador-at-Large Strobe Talbott to Kiev in May 1993. Talbott broadened the agenda beyond nuclear issues, emphasized "partnership" between the two countries, and proposed U.S. mediation between Ukraine and Russia on nuclear and other issues.

The success of nationalist and communist forces during parliamentary elections in Russia in December 1994 was shocking for the United States. But even before these elections Yeltsin's diplomacy became more tough *vis-à-vis* the West. These changes increased Ukrainian importance in U.S. policy in the region.

The Ukrainian position was also changing. Deep economic crisis and the threat of isolation in the international arena led Ukraine to concessions. The Trilateral Statement signed in January 1994 by the presidents of the United States, Russia, and Ukraine envisaged that the warheads of all Ukrainian SS-24s would be removed within ten months, and other nuclear warheads would be transferred to Russia "in the shortest possible time." In exchange, Ukraine was promised enriched uranium from these warheads as fuel for nuclear power stations, and financial help from the United States for dismantlement of these warheads. It became an important victory for Clinton in the sphere of foreign policy.

At the end of January 1994, the Ukrainian parliament ratified the START-I treaty without conditions. U.S. analysts rightly saw the parliament's move as a reaction to the success of pro-Russian forces during presidential elections in Crimea. However, Ukrainian

parliament postponed access to the NPT. The serious argument was the fact that, according to the Trilateral Statement, only after Ukraine accedes to the NPT, will the United States and Russia "reaffirm their commitment to Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of the CSCE Final Act, to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of the CSCE member states and recognize that border changes can be made only by peaceful and consensual means."⁶¹ These obligations were too vague for Kiev.

Ukraine joined the program "Partnership for Peace" proposed by the United States as the compromise to satisfy the desire of Eastern European countries for security guarantees. It envisaged consultations, exchanges between the military, and assistance from NATO in developing different programs. It had a great symbolic effect; however, it provided no real guarantees.

Thus, the main importance of the Trilateral Statement for Ukraine was overcoming the threat of isolation and making a breakthrough in American-Ukrainian relations. It led to changes not only in American rhetoric, but also in attitudes,⁶² and, moreover, in the general approach of the U.S. decision-makers. The United States supported territorial integrity of Ukraine not only in July 1993, after Russian Supreme Soviet passed a resolution declaring Sevastopol to be a part of Russia, but also after separatist decisions made by Crimean leaders in May 1994.

Parliamentary elections in Ukraine in March 1994 strengthened the positions of Communist and pro-Russian forces. However, it is important for the public in the West to understand that any

attempts to "reunite" Ukraine with Russia would lead to war. Moreover, as Roman Szporluk points out, Ukrainian Communists "will reinforce the anti-Yeltsin and anti-Western camp in Russian domestic politics." ⁶³ It seems that Moscow prefers another scenario: to dictate its policy to a weak Ukraine. But this is also not in the interests of the West. It could create the perspective of "Yugoslavization" of Ukraine and once again aggravate the problem of nuclear weapons on its soil.

After the crisis over Crimea in May 1994, Anders Aslund, director of the Stockholm Institute of East European Economics, wrote: "To induce Ukraine to focus on its economy and shed its nervousness about Russian ambitions, the West could help by offering some sort of security guarantees."⁶⁴ Speaking about possible guarantees against Russian intervention, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak proposed:

A military response would surely be ruled out, but there are other options: warning Moscow of an automatic cutoff of all Western financial and economic assistance; announcing that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic would join NATO within six months; ending all pretense of offering Russia even partial membership in the Group of Seven economic club.⁶⁵

President Kuchma, elected in July 1994, stresses the necessity of radical reform and, at the same time, the necessity of closer ties with Russia. He has persuaded the Ukrainian Parliament to accede to the NPT. In turn, Ukraine has received security assurances (though not guarantees) from the United States, Russia, Great Britain, and France. However, these assurances don't preclude the possibility that Russia will exert pressure on Ukraine, which once again will impede Ukrainian

reforms.

In this case the United States could help reforms in Ukraine. Taking into account its own interest in a final solution to the nuclear problem and a stable Ukraine, the United States could continue to encourage the Ukrainian leadership to implement the reforms which have been announced. These reforms would lead, for a certain period, to a further decrease in the standard of living. They have prompted sharp criticism from the left in the Ukrainian Parliament, which has stronger support from the Russified eastern and southern regions and eventually could be used by Russia in order to exert pressure on Kiev. In this case, U.S. support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine would be extremely important for reform in Ukraine, and, moreover, for the fate of the Ukrainian state.

However, for Kiev it is necessary to understand that Russia's place in American policy will always be greater than that of Ukraine. Therefore, in developing relations with Ukraine, "unlike other cold wars - incipient or actual - the Ukrainian-Russian case involves a third party (the United States) well placed to influence the relations of the antagonists because it shares their interests."⁶⁶ If the last assumption is true, the role which the United States could play in securing stability and transition to democracy in the region should not be overlooked.

1. Stanislav Kulchytski, *Tsina "velykoho perelomu"* (Kyiv: Ukraina, 1991), pp. 355-356.
2. Cited in Olexandr Dubyna, "SSHA - Ukraina: vid tysku do 'novogo partnerstva'?" *Polityka i chas*, No. 9 (September 1993), p. 16.
3. For more details, see Alexander J. Motyl, *Sovietology, Rationality, Nationality: Coming to Grips with Nationalism in the USSR* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 132-146.
4. Department of State, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents. 1959* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office [U.S.G.P.O.], 1963), pp. 878-879.
5. Victor Cherniavsky and Serhiy Cherniavsky, "Dovhyi shliakh do vyznannia," *Polityka i chas*, No. 2 (February 1992), pp. 38-43.
6. Serge Schmemmann, "Soviet Archives: Paper Trail of a Rigid, Authoritarian System," *New York Times*, February 8, 1991, p. A8.
7. For detailed coverage of the influence of domestic politics on U.S. policy towards Ukraine, see Susan D. Fink, "From 'Chicken Kiev' to Ukrainian Independence: Domestic Politics in U.S. Foreign Policy toward Ukraine," in Robert A. De Lossa, ed., *Nationalities Papers* [(Special volume on Ukraine)] (forthcoming). I am grateful to the editors of the journal for the possibility to be acquainted with the manuscript of the article.
8. Donald W. Treadgold, "Nationalism and Its Implications," in Robert Conquest, ed., *The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), pp. 392, 394.
9. Michael Mandelbaum, "Ending the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 2 (Spring 1989), p. 34.
10. Gail Lapidus, "Gorbachev's Nationalities Problem," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Fall 1989), p. 108.
11. Jerry F. Hough, *Russia and the West: Gorbachev and the Politics of Reform* (New York: Touchstone, 1990), p. 206
12. See, for example, Alexander J. Motyl, "The Sobering of Gorbachev: Nationality, Restructuring, and the West," in Seweryn Bialer, ed., *Politics, Society,*

and Nationality inside Gorbachev's Russia (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1989), p. 171.

13. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Post-Communism Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 5 (Winter 1989/1990), p. 20.

14. Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), p.87.

15. Peter Rutland, "Sovietology: Notes for a Post-Mortem," *The National Interest*, No. 31 (Spring 1993), p. 112.

16. Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine After Totalitarianism* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), p.5.

17. For a more detailed account, see Allan L. Kagedan, "American and French Responses to the Lithuanian Unilateral Declaration of Independence," in Miron Rezun, ed., *Nationalism and the Breakup of an Empire: Russia and Its Periphery* (Westport, Conn. Praeger, 1992), pp. 157-167.

18. Michael Mandelbaum, ed., *The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union: American Foreign Policy and the Disintegration of the USSR* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991), pp. 12-14, 55-62, 90-98.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 98-99.

20. Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, p. 287.

21. Richard Pipes, "The Soviet Union Adrift", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (1991), pp. 85-86.

22. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Subcommittee on European Affairs, *Soviet Disunion: the American Response*, 102nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1991 (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O.,), pp. 46, 56, 67-69, 72, 118-119.

23. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, *Recent developments in the Baltics*, 102nd Cong., 1st sess., 1991 (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O.), pp. 5-7, 33-34, 36-37.

24. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Subcommittee on European Affairs, *Soviet Disunion: the*

American Response, pp. 36, 125.

25. See Fink, "From 'Chicken Kiev' to Ukrainian Independence: Domestic Politics in U.S. Foreign Policy toward Ukraine."

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Cited in Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, pp. 414, 417-418.

29. Ibid., pp. 417-418.

30. Paul Goble, "For Russia, Another Cruel August?" *Christian Science Monitor*, August 5, 1992.

31. Author's interview with Paul Goble on April 6, 1994.

32. George Urban, "The Awakening", *The National Interest*, No. 27 (Spring 1992), p. 45.

33. Levko Lukianenko, the leader of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, was sentenced in 1961 to death but then spent 27 years in prison; in 1990 he was elected to the first Ukrainian Parliament.

34. William W. Newmann, "History Accelerates: the Diplomacy of Co-operation and Fragmentation," in James E. Goodby and Benoit Morel, ed., *The Limited Partnership: Building a Russian-US Security Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 41-44, 53-54.

35. Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels*, pp. 443, 446.

36. Ibid., p. 446.

37. Ibid., p. 448.

38. Ibid., p. 449.

39. For their arguments and recommendations how to reach this aim, see Kurt M. Campbell, Ashton B. Carter, Steven E. Miller, and Charles A. Zraket, *Soviet Nuclear Fission: Control of the Nuclear Arsenal in a Disintegrating Soviet Union*, CSIA Studies in International Security, No. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, 1991), p. 69-70.

40. See, for example, Jim Hoagland, "The Russia Debate: Nixon vs. Brzezinski," *Washington Post*, March 26, 1992, p. A21; William C. Bodie, "Ukraine and Russian-American Relations," in George Ginsburgs, Alvin Rubinstein, and Oles Smoliansky, eds., *Russia and America: From Rivalry to Reconciliation* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), pp. 115-117; Olexandr Dubyna, "SSHA-Ukraina", pp. 16-20.

41. See, for example, Dimitri K. Simes, "America and the Post-Soviet Republics," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No.3 (Summer 1992), pp. 73, 76; 78, 81, 87.

42. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Cold War and Its Aftermath," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Fall 1992), pp. 47-49.

43. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, *United States Policy Toward the Commonwealth of Independent States*, 102nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1992, pp. 26-27; Paul Goble, "Forget the Soviet Union," *Foreign Policy*, No. 86 (Spring 1992), p. 58; Paul Goble, "Ten Issues in Search of a Policy: America's Failed Approach to the Post-Soviet States," *Current History*, Vol. 92, No. 576 (October 1993), pp. 305-308.

44. Paul Goble, "Ten Issues in Search of a Policy", p. 306-307; Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, pp. 185-186. In academic circles there were even arguments in favor of nuclear status for Ukraine (e.g., by John Mearsheimer). But his article published in *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993), according to Strobe Talbott, who at that time was Ambassador at Large in the Clinton administration), was "balanced" in the same issue by an article by Steven E. Miller, which was based on the same arguments as Clinton's policy and reflected the dominant view (Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on European Affairs, *U.S. Policy on Ukrainian Security*, 103rd Cong., 1st sess., 1993, p. 25).

45. Adrian Karatnytsky, "The Ukrainian Factor", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Summer 1992), p. 107.

46. Cited in Steven Erlanger, "Ukraine's Opportunity: Western Suspicions of Russia", *New York Times*, April 17, 1994, p.8.

47. Dimitri K. Simes, "America and the Post-Soviet Republics", p. 80.

48. For a detailed coverage of Russian policy of restoring its influence in the FSU, see Fiona Hill and Pamela Jewett, *"Back in the USSR": Russia's Intervention in the Former Soviet Republics and the Implications for the United States Policy Toward Russia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1994); Mark Smith, *Pax Russica: Russia's Monroe Doctrine*, Whitehall Paper Series 21 (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1993).

49. Dimitri K. Simes, "America and the Post-Soviet Republics," p. 82.

50. Sergo A. Mikoyan, "Understanding Ukraine," in George Ginsburgs, Alvin Rubinstein, and Oles Smoliansky, eds., *Russia and America: From Rivalry to Reconciliation*, pp. 151-153.

51. Cited in *Boston Globe*, May 5, 1994, p. 10.

52. Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, p.180.

53. Ibid., p. 109-111.

54. This view was presented at a seminar at Massachusetts Institute of Technology on May 4, 1994.

55. See, for example, William H. Kincade and Natalie Melnyczuk, "Eurasia Letter: Unneighborly Neighbors," *Foreign Policy*, No. 96 (Spring 1994), pp.86 - 87; William W. Newmann, "History Accelerates", pp. 48 - 49. Legal aspects were not simple too. There were weighty arguments that Ukraine had legal and moral obligations to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear power in the "shortest period of time". At the same time the official Ukrainian argument was that the Ukrainian case was to a great extent unique. It was also argued by a number of Western experts that the NPT was "silent on the issue of inherited nuclear weapons"(See, for example, William H. Kincade and Natalie Melnyczuk, "Eurasia Letter," p. 87). John Lepingwell pointed out that by the beginning of 1994 Kravchuk's letter to Bush in May 1992, regarding the signing of the Lisbon Protocol, was the only document where Ukraine specified terms to eliminate all nuclear weapons on its territory (7 years). He added: "the letter's status under international law would seem to be lower than that of a formal treaty. such as protocol itself, although such

accompanying statements are typically considered an integral part of the agreement." (John W. R. Lepingwell, "Negotiations over Nuclear Weapons: The Past as Prologue?" *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 28 January 1994, p. 10).

56. Henry H. Kissinger, "The New Russian Question," *Newsweek*, February 10, 1992, p. 34.

57. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Subcommittee on European Affairs, *U.S. Policy on Ukrainian Security* p. 30-31.

58. Heather Wilson, "Missed Opportunities," *The National Interest*, N 34 (Winter 1993/94), pp. 31-32.

59. Eduard Lysytzyn, "Pered vyborom: Pro deiaki aspekty jadernoi polityky Ukrainy," *Polityka i chas*, N 9 (September 1993), pp.29-34.

60. For details, see Bohdan Nahaylo, "The Shaping of Ukrainian Attitudes toward Nuclear Arms," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 8, (February 19, 1993), pp. 21-45.

61. Cited from *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 3, No. 4, January 28, 1994, p. 14.

62. See, for instance, "1994 May Be Ukraine's Year. U.S. Policy Shifts Away From Russia," *Washington Post*, February 14, 1994, p. 23.

63. Roman Szporluk, "Reflections on Ukraine after 1994: The Dilemmas of Nationhood," *The Harriman Institute Forum*, Vol. 7, No. 6, p. 2.

64. *New York Times*, June 10, 1994, p. A29.

65. *Washington Post*, June 9, 1994, p. A27.

66. William H. Kincade and Natalie Melnychuk, "Eurasia Letter: Unneighborly Neighbors," p. 104. Two years earlier George Urban, stressing the necessity of an active American role in the region, tried to analyze it not only from strategic but also from cultural and philosophical perspectives: "Some of the problems with which Ukrainians and Russians confront us are obscure, metaphysical, and very Slavic. They take us into first and last things in human and extra-human existence. They do not sit well with our pragmatic and utilitarian turn of mind. But these are questions history has put on our agenda; we may not always like them, but we

cannot evade them. It may well be that our distant successors, chronicling the decline and-fall of the Soviet empire, will say of our age that the world's reorientation toward a safer and less warlike order had its roots in the great seed-bed of Slavic suffering" (George Urban, "The Awakening," p. 46).

The Soviet flag being lowered from the Kremlin and replaced with the flag of Russia on 25 December 1991, a day before the USSR was officially dissolved. Date. 1988-1991[a]. In 1988, Gorbachev started to lose control of two regions of the Soviet Union, as the Baltic republics were now leaning towards independence, and the Caucasus descended into violence and civil war. On July 1, 1988, the fourth and last day of a bruising 19th Party Conference, Gorbachev won the backing of the tired delegates for his last-minute proposal to create a new supreme legislative body called the Congress of People's Deputies. Alternately, the United States could shift support to Yeltsin and the leaders of the Republics and provide support for a controlled restructuring or possible breakup of the Soviet Union. The final option consisted of lending conditional support to Gorbachev, leveraging aid and assistance in return for more rapid and radical political and economic reforms. A few days after the coup, Ukraine and Belarus declared their independence from the Soviet Union. The Baltic States, which had earlier declared their independence, sought international recognition. Amidst quick, dramatic changes across the landscape of the Soviet Union, Bush administration officials prioritized the prevention of nuclear catastrophe, the curbing of ethnic violence, and the stable transition to new political orders. The US was made up of states that saw the benefit of union and freely entered said union. Yes, economic differences led to our civil war and the forced reunification of the rebelling states, but once the economic differences were removed so was the dissent. In the time frame you point out, there was no reason for the US to dissolve, there was no turmoil, there were no states wanting freedom. The leaders of the USSR were sitting in a fortress made of sand. They had on several occasions had to intervene militarily in satellite countries of the Eastern Block to suppress freedom movements, once in The events of August 1991, when the Soviet Union State Committee on the State of Emergency (GKChP) attempted a coup, gave the impetus to the proclamation of Ukrainian... "I think the very independence of Ukraine was historically inevitable. All nations differently walked to freedom, to their rights through the blood, through suffering, sometimes even through terrible torments. But the idea of independence and freedom has always been dominant in Ukraine. That is why it [the independence] would happen sooner or later. Independent Ukraine, with a population of more than fifty million, has emerged as one of the main players in Eastern Europe, and Ukrainian-Russian relations are crucial for the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The interest in Ukraine is increasing in Western capitals. This paper covers the period from 1989 to 1992. When perestroika started, perhaps nobody in the West expected that it would lead to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Even among the scholars who were aware of the Soviet nationalities problem, including scholars from the Ukrainian diaspora, the cautious approach predominated.