
Vladimir Putin and Russia's Armed Forces: A Faustian Bargain?

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✦ Vladimir Putin came to power largely through a deal with Russia's armed forces, especially the General Staff. They forged this deal during wars, international crisis, and intense political struggle within the armed forces. NATO's 1999 Kosovo operation offered the General Staff the opportunity to win its campaign to redefine official Russian threat assessments and reverse defense policy by postulating the NATO threat. The General Staff avidly seized this opportunity and with the Duma began publicly attacking Russian defense policy in March 1999.¹

Russia's 1997 security concept had proclaimed there was no threat of aggression against Russia, that no state was Russia's enemy and that the armed forces' excessive size was a burden to Russia. It advocated specific military reforms, downsizing the armed forces, reducing costs, and relying mainly on nuclear weapons—specifically the new Topol-M (SS-27) ICBM until the year 2007. It was expected then that Russia would recover from its domestic crisis and could then begin devoting resources to its conventional forces.² This posture, associated with Defense Minister General Igor Sergeyev, immediately encountered the General Staff's unyielding opposition. General Anatoly Kvashnin, Chief of the General Staff, wanted to expand the General Staff's control over all Russian armed forces, argued for conventional as well as nuclear forces' modernization, and expressed a much more consistent hostility to NATO's enlargement.³

Kosovo gave Kvashnin and Putin their first opportunity. Allegedly NATO's now demonstrated threat required a posture of frozen hostility towards NATO

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and unilateral Russian efforts to resist it in the Balkans, expressed in the Russian descent upon Pristina (planned by Kvashnin, not Sergeyev), a fundamental reversal of defense-spending priorities, and a new defense doctrine. Kvashnin and Sergeyev openly clashed over threat assessment, force structure, and defense spending. Sergeyev had downplayed any possible Western aggression, downsized the bloated military, relied on nuclear deterrence, and funded new nuclear weapons. Kvashnin postulated NATO's growing conventional threat, aligned it with internal threats of secession from Russia, and demanded more spending for a comprehensive program of conventional force modernization. In 1998 Sergeyev had also persuaded President Boris Yeltsin to unify all nuclear forces and strategic aviation in one command under the strategic rocket forces. Kvashnin saw this as a deliberate repudiation of his dream of unifying all forces under his command and made no secret that he would obstruct this proposal and campaign for Sergeyev's job. Thus he secretly organized the Pristina expedition, only to find that Russia had to settle for a secondary role there.⁴

The Putin-Kvashnin Connection and the War in Chechnya

Recent revelations also demonstrate what the war in Chechnya is really all about. Plans to invade Chechnya, confirmed by former Prime Minister Sergei Stepashin, developed from March 1999 when the Chechens kidnapped MVD Major General Gennady Shpigun, to August 1999. By May 1999 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was confidentially telling U.S. analysts that there would be war in Chechnya by August.⁵ A serious reader of the Russian press would also have gathered from articles then that an operation against Chechnya to be led by the VVMVD (the Ministry of Interior's Internal Forces) was underway or being planned.⁶ According to Stepashin, this operation was to stop at the Terek River in northern Chechnya, a natural geographic barrier. Unfortunately, things developed differently.

There is also good reason to suspect that the Chechen invasion of Dagestan in August was a provocation to give a pretext for launching (or getting Yeltsin to sign off on launching) the invasion plan.⁷ Although the VVMVD failed operationally, the regular army, under the General Staff's command, expelled the Chechens from Dagestan in September 1999 after two incursions into that republic. At this time Kvashnin and Putin made their deal. The General Staff got carte blanche to occupy all of Chechnya, exterminate the terrorists (which meant massive depopulation of the area due to bombing), and to do so without operational controls from Moscow. This posture publicly remains in force even though there clearly is behind the scenes pressure to win before the presidential election of March 26, 2000.⁸ Meanwhile Putin, Yeltsin's handpicked heir, anxiously sought ways to defeat the opposition in upcoming Duma elections. Their victory could

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have led to the arrest of members of the government, presidential apparat, and even Yeltsin's family for their well-known corruption. Those trials would have set the stage for the opposition's victory in the June 2000 presidential election that could sweep out the Yeltsinites. Thus both he and Kvashnin needed what the other could offer.

According to British analyst Mark Galeotti,

The result was an unholy pact. Russian intelligence sources have confirmed for me that it went something like this: Kvashnin would give Putin a victorious little war. In return Kvashnin expected a higher profile for the general staff; funding that would more than cover the cost of the invasion; and a completely free hand to fight the war as he saw fit, free of political interference. A deal was struck on September 20 with a final proviso: if it could all be done without too many Russian casualties—never a vote winner—Putin would get a suitable victory just before the Duma elections. Thus war returned to the Caucasus.⁹

Thus the army was let loose upon Chechnya more for sectoral and personal interest than for repelling terrorists. Tragically, the army has proven it cannot win in Chechnya, and finally on January 31, 2000 deputy chief of Staff Col. General Valery Manilov, a prominent military spokesman, admitted that one could not speak of victory regarding this war.¹⁰ Indeed, Russia refuses to admit it is fighting a war. The Chechen operation is called an antiterrorist operation or an armed conflict, a self-serving definition but part of the larger record of official mendacity that so typifies Russia's conduct of this war. Finally, high officials now admit that the costs of the war will far exceed its original budget and inflict more suffering and crisis upon Russia's already over-burdened economy and population.¹¹

Russian commanders, operating under Kvashnin, were eager to eliminate the Chechen threat and avenge their defeat in 1994–96. They believed they could deliver a short victorious war to Putin and Yeltsin for which Kvashnin would receive Sergeyev's job. Now Putin no longer needs Kvashnin and, by disregarding Sergeyev's advice to stop at the Terek River, Kvashnin has enmeshed Russia in a protracted, costly, brutal war which probably cannot be won and which also imposes considerable foreign political costs. Kvashnin's hopes of supplanting Sergeyev no longer seem so rosy.¹²

But meanwhile Putin and his allies won a decisive electoral victory in the Duma. Yeltsin resigned, perhaps as part of a deal with the army and other sectors, making Putin president, and allowing him—under the guise of constitutional obligation—to advance the date of the presidential election and appear almost unbeatable. Putin will win a plebiscite, not an election, and rule for four more years. Putin and his allies also received new opportunities to enrich themselves or their political supporters through a newly created military aviation firm controlled

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by members of the government. This firm will apparently be used, or was at least so intended, to enrich government coffers before the presidential election, giving Putin and his cronies power, secure funding sources, and opportunities to consolidate that power.¹³

Kvashnin's Agenda

Although the General Staff received the funding needed to fight now in Chechnya, the war's prolongation, high casualties, and costs greatly exceed prewar forecasts and will not end before the presidential elections. Those spiraling costs will exact severe pressures across Russian politics quite soon. Kvashnin also apparently won authorization for his comprehensive program of force modernization. Future defense spending will feature major increases in aerospace systems; microelectronics; electro-optical systems; new strategic, tactical, and miniature nuclear weapons; the first Borey-class nuclear submarines armed with the new SS-NX-28 SLBM, the navy; and C3I technologies for both IW and nuclear C3I. Naval spending on force development will double in order to finish new ships by 2008. Current plans also include increasing Russia's sea-based strategic nuclear forces to 55 percent of the total by 2005. These expenditures entail a 50 percent rise in the defense budget, 70 percent rise in the state's defense order for the year 2000, and an 80 percent increase in R&D.¹⁴

Russia also is pouring funds into research on directed energy weapons: lasers, microwave radiation emitters, and particle-beam generators using subatomic particles to destroy targets at the speed of light; a new mass plasma weapon that could ionize the atmosphere and destroy incoming missiles and enemy aircraft; anti-stealth radar; indigenous stealthy ALCMs; newly tested anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems, e.g., the S-400, with a range of 250 miles; and a plasma coating to make fifth generation Russian aircraft invisible.¹⁵ This enormous program will be partly financed by expanded arms sales abroad, mainly to China and India.¹⁶ Putin, like his predecessors and the defense industry, shares the Soviet delusion that arms sales are the locomotive of general industrial recovery.¹⁷ Putin also evidently seeks a true alliance, not just partnership, with China and enjoys military support for that policy.¹⁸

Third, military reform, as conceived and executed by Sergeyev, is being shelved. Russia will not soon have a professional army and will rely mainly on conscripts. Insufficient funds and unattractive conditions cannot induce men to become professional soldiers. The military still rejects professionalization, claiming that soldiers who serve for pay are mercenaries.¹⁹ More prosaically, professional soldiers would be costly, would demand their rights, and would resist being a continuing source of serf labor for the generals, hence their real objection to professional soldiers. The army will remain one of luckless boys who are poorly

educated, technologically untrained, often physically or psychologically ill (if not actually convicted criminals), ill-fed, ill-housed, and ill-clad, and who endure continuous abuse, exploitation, and brutalization.²⁰

This army also suffers from pervasive and growing criminality in the officer corps and drug addiction in the ranks. Through August, 1999 officers in the North Caucasian Military District—the same troops now facing the Chechens—routinely sold their soldiers into slavery

and drug addiction! Soldiers have also been forced into slave labor for generals or corporations!²¹ Commanders and generals deny such reports of abuses, especially as they directly benefit from and participate in the endemic corruption and criminality. But the truth

Putin shares the Soviet delusion that arms sales are the locomotive of general industrial recovery.

emerges in Russian forces' brutal and anomic behavior in Chechnya. Military institutions led by such abusive, corrupt, mendacious, autocratic, and self-serving generals inevitably produce demoralized men who often engage in self-defeating, criminal, unproductive, violent, sub-optimal, and anomic behavior—they do not produce a trained professional army.

Putin has thus removed military reform from the agenda at least until the Chechen war ends. Since this war will certainly be protracted, this postponement may last years, and dashes hopes for a truly modern army. Commanders argued that reorganization at the height of a so-far-successful campaign is misguided. They also argue that new “organizational and staff measures” will allegedly antagonize generals in the field “who habitually distrust” staff moves. Third, they say, it will disrupt the now well-functioning organizational structure of forces cobbled together from all Russia.²²

However, other factors are also involved in military reform. There were two main plans for reforming the armed forces, one by the General Staff and one by the Duma Defense Committee led by Roman Popkovich. Putin and Kvashnin ultimately preferred the Duma plan, allegedly because experts claim it is “more constructive.”

But, most importantly, if it is implemented the Defense Ministry, as a structural subunit of the government, will lose authority over the state's military organization (incidentally, under the constitution the Defense Ministry has only the function of supporting the army).²³

Kvashnin tried to ramrod this plan through the Security Council without debate through a presidential edict, operationally subordinate all Russian armed forces to the General Staff, create a unified system of technical, rear support giving the General Staff control over their logistics, place all forces under the concept of “Russian Federation Armed Forces,” and include the industrial and scien-

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tific complex in the concept of military organization.²⁴ His actions epitomize what *Izvestiya* called the “undercover” way in which major defense policies are decided:

There is no normal, considered, calm discussion of how to really make Russia’s military organization more economical and efficient. There is only a growing stream of intrigues. [And] Everyone is looking for allies in corridors of power.²⁵

Kvashnin’s program also raises other serious issues. Only 100,000 of the MOD’s forces are combat capable, and they are mainly in Chechnya. Obviously, generals have trouble explaining why Russia cannot maximize its military power and why so many generals command nonexistent formations and depots. More dangerously, his plan would concentrate all of Russia’s power ministries and military agencies in one “strong fist,” as he recommended in late 1997. Andrei Kokoshin, as Secretary of the Security Council, scotched the plan in 1997–98, not least because of its obvious political dangers. But evidently the war in Chechnya, where operational unification occurred under the General Staff’s auspices, led the plan’s supporters to revive it and further extend their power at the expense of the rule of law and democratic accountability.²⁶ Thus Putin sacrificed military reform to the generals’ dictates and interests and postponed modernization to serve departmental and sectoral interests in the General Staff’s campaign against the MOD.

Perhaps the military’s most intriguing move to gain control over its own operations is the MOD’s new Military Bank. This bank is supposed to receive the accounts of the Ministry and of the military-industrial complex. It will service the multimillion ruble military budget, aims to be one of Russia’s largest banks, e.g., paying wages to soldiers and engaging in credit card operations, and will service import-export operations (one of Russia’s most lucrative and corrupt economic sectors). The MOD did not inform the Ministry of Finance about this bank, and the latter wants to know the source of the bank’s funds since there was no line in the state budget for it. It also is unclear whether or not the MOD can legally tap extra-budgetary funds for this purpose.²⁷

Most revealingly, the MOD has authorized the bank to service its accounts “only in particular regions and for particular operations.” The MOD justifies efforts to usurp the Ministry of Finance and State Budget and establish this sheltered and privileged banking system because of its frustration with the Ministry of Finance. The MOD claims that “transferring the army to a system of account settlements through the Federal Treasury would lead to the ruin of the system of national defense and eliminate the state.”²⁸ In other words, since the Ministry of Finance will not give the military the funding it wants and claims to deserve (and it has constantly asked for sums that would ruin the state), let alone what the Duma has authorized, the MOD will take the money itself. The threats to democracy and civilian control of the armed forces if this usurpation of execu-

tive and legislative authority can continue are profound. But this bank clearly reveals the military's determination to remain unaccountable to the law, government, or the Duma.

Russian National Security

These sizable concessions to the General Staff will cost Russia dearly. They practically guarantee that the army will continue living in a fantasy world, resist true democratization, and remain maladapted to contemporary challenges. But Kvashnin wrung equally dangerous concessions from the government in 1999 regarding the draft defense doctrine and national security concept published in October 1999 and January 2000 respectively. These documents' content and the sequence of their publication carry ominous messages.

Since the draft doctrine is supposed to concretize the national security concept's precepts, the fact that it preceded the concept shows the General Staff's determination to dominate all discussions on defense policy. These documents' contents also regress to the Soviet mentality. According to this view, military and other threats to Russia, mainly from the United States and NATO, are growing for the first time since 1991. They stem from Washington's determination to create a unipolar world and NATO's unilateral recourse to war against Serbia over Kosovo. NATO ignored Russia's interests, threatened Russia's position in the Transcaspian, Baltic, and Ukraine, used humanitarian intervention as a cloak for war, and bypassed the UN in deciding for war. These actions confirmed Moscow's belief that NATO cannot be trusted, lies, disregards Russian interests, and is fundamentally an anti-Russian, American-dominated military-political organization that aims to exclude Russia from Europe and the former Soviet empire. Until and unless NATO recants and accepts Russia as an equal and gives Russia a veto on its activities, rapprochement with it is impossible.²⁹

The military links together multiple internal and external threats issuing from NATO and ties them to the nightmare scenario of NATO's potential support for a Chechen-like secessionist movement.³⁰ Moreover, since official threat assessments conjoin domestic and foreign threats and the domestic police and other military forces have proven themselves incapable of dealing with these threats, the new security concept and draft defense doctrine implicitly approve use of the army for domestic operations. That policy risks further intensifying the already high level of military corruption while simultaneously further degrading military training and readiness to defend Russia from abroad. In fact, experts agree that fusing military and police forces and missions is a hallmark of the failing state, a condition not far removed from Russian reality.³¹

Yet this expanded scope for the army's activity occurs as foreign military threats are also supposedly growing. While threats of world war, including nuclear

war, have diminished and mechanisms to safeguard international peace regionally and globally have developed, doctrine writers discern the formation and strengthening of regional power centers, national-ethnic and religious extremism, and separatist trends associated with those threats. These latter trends foster the escalation of local wars and armed

The Russian General Staff is demanding the destruction of the state and economy to serve its fantasies of competing with Washington and NATO.

conflicts, strengthen regional arms races, encourage proliferation of WMD and delivery systems, aggravate information contestation (Protivoborstvo in Russian), and expand transnational threats—crime, narcotics, terrorism, and illegal arms sales.³²

These actual and potential threats create basic destabilizing factors of the military-political situation, for example: support for extremist nationalist, ethnic, religious, separatist, and terrorist movements and organizations; the use of informational and other non-traditional means and technologies for destructive military-political goals; diminished effectiveness of international security organizations, particularly the United Nations and the OSCE; operations involving military force that circumvent generally recognized principles and rules of international law without UN Security Council sanction; and violation of international arms control treaties, such as the U.S.'s intention to amend or withdraw from the ABM treaty.³³

Russia's active foreign policy and the maintenance of a sufficient military potential, including nuclear deterrence, presently avert direct and traditional forms of aggression against Russia and its allies. Still, "a number of potential (including large-scale) external and internal threats to Russia and its allies' military security remain and are strengthening in a number of directions."³⁴ The official national security concept goes further, charging that the sum total of specific internal and external threats, encompassing all the threats arising out of Russia's socio-economic catastrophe, "can present a threat to Russia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including the possibility of direct military aggression against Russia."³⁵ Likewise, its earlier first draft stated, "The spectrum of threats connected with international terrorism, including the possible use of weapons of mass destruction, is widening."³⁶ Or, according to the final version, "the level and scope of military threats are growing."³⁷

As in Soviet times, such threat assessments justify vastly enlarged programs of conventional and nuclear weapons' modernization described above.³⁸ Since Russia's entire budget is \$21 billion and the armed forces already consume the second-largest share of this sum (after debt servicing), the General Staff is literally demanding the destruction of the state and economy to service its fanta-

sies of competing with Washington and NATO. Since 1991 the military has habitually offered the government a worst-case scenario as the basis for its fiscal demands and still envisions an army twice as large as can be maintained.³⁹ Moreover, its techniques for modeling enemy threats are apparently very inflated and highly suspect.⁴⁰ Essentially, the General Staff remains in the Soviet bunker. Attempts to realize even part of this program condemn Russia to perpetual insecurity, poverty, and unwinnable wars in and around its peripheries. Chechen counteroffensives in January 2000 underscore the army's continuing tactical, operational, and strategic defects that preclude success in the wars it has to win to defend Russia's integrity.

Nuclear War

Worse yet, the new security concept proclaims Russia's intention to strike first with nuclear weapons across a range of conventional contingencies. Russia has repeatedly announced that it will deter even smaller-scale conventional attacks against key installations or allies (i.e. extended deterrence) with nuclear weapons. The new draft defense doctrine and security concept reiterated those statements, while analysts and officials also told the author that NATO's invasion of Kosovo had stimulated doctrine writers to add scenarios for the use of tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) against purely conventional attacks.⁴¹

Thus in December, 1999, Colonel General Vladimir Yakovlev, CINC of Russia's nuclear forces, stated that

Russia, for objective reasons, is forced to lower the threshold for using nuclear weapons, extend the nuclear deterrent to smaller-scale conflicts and openly warn potential opponents about this.⁴²

The reasons were Russia's financial crisis—which meant rocket forces receive about half the funds they need—and the emergence of regional powers armed with missiles and nuclear technology. Meanwhile Russia would continue to replace old arms with new Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missiles.⁴³

Russia's national security concept goes further. It postulates all-encompassing and growing military and non-military threats to Russian security, including the proliferation of WMD and their delivery vehicles. It proclaimed a readiness to strike first with nuclear weapons in the event of threats to Russian vital interests that cannot be otherwise resolved. And it corroborated earlier statements that Russia had adopted a limited nuclear war strategy in the bizarre belief, first stated in 1997 by Baturin, that it could control such a war.⁴⁴ This posture is not surprising in view of the dilapidated conditions of its armed forces, but it is terribly alarming given Russia's eroding command-and-control capability and

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launch-on-warning policy.

Specifically the new security concept stated that a vital task of the Russian Federation's armed forces is to exercise deterrence to prevent aggression on any scale, nuclear or otherwise against Russia and its allies. It thus extended this deterrence to those allies, presumably CIS members. "Nuclear weapons should be capable of inflicting the desired extent of damage against any aggressor state or coalition of states in any conditions and circumstances."⁴⁵ The Concept also stated that nuclear weapons use would become possible "in the event or need to repulse armed aggression, if all other measures of resolving the crisis situation have been exhausted and proven ineffective."⁴⁶

Russian nuclear weapons serve two critical, not necessarily complementary functions. First, they deter a wide range of contingencies along the spectrum of conflict that could conceivably threaten Russia. Second, they are also warfighting instruments that can conceivably be used against a wide range of threats arising out of actual conflict situations. Their use is to be tailored to the particular threat at hand, as implied by the phrases "aggression on any scale, nuclear or otherwise" and "to the desired extent of damage" in the security concept.⁴⁷ These phrases and policies tally with renewed Russian interest in using TNW as actual instruments of warfighting, and the policy decision to adopt this strategy of limited nuclear war scenarios was probably discussed at an important meeting of the Security Council on April 29, 1999 devoted to nuclear policy.⁴⁸ Thus the security concept and draft defense doctrine proclaim limited nuclear war as Russia's official strategy in response to many different kinds of contingencies.

This policy derives from Security Council Secretary Yuri Baturin's January, 1997 reform plan. It stated that Russia, when confronting local wars that expand, due to outside assistance, into large-scale conventional wars, reserves the right to use nuclear weapons as first strike and preemptive weapons. This allegedly limited first strike serves to regain escalation dominance and force a return to the status quo.⁴⁹ This policy also reflects the bizarre, unsettling, and unprecedented belief that somehow Moscow can control escalation and nuclear war by initiating the latter.

Putin's Possible Agenda

Putin certainly grasps at least some of the risks inherent in military efforts to dominate defense policy, even though he shares the threat assessment linking internal and external threats and supports the priority of arms sales, the military's doctrine and national security concept, and their nuclear provisions. His initial steps suggest that having climbed to power on the military ladder, he will now kick that ladder away. He removed, or said he removed, the most outspoken generals in Chechnya who threatened civil war if the politicians took control of

the war and the CINC of the Ministry of Interior troops. Their failure to capture Grozny on time and their tactics that led to insupportable high casualties allegedly provided more than enough grounds for their removal. Yet it turns out they remained in their commands, giving another sign of Moscow's disjointed military policy and perhaps dangerously imperfect control over the armed forces.⁵⁰ Putin did successfully fire the MVD troop commander, siding with the Army's complaints about those forces in the botched Grozny operation. He also revised the national security concept to place more emphasis on internal threats of terrorism and crime, not foreign aggression.⁵¹ This decision can only strengthen the FSB, and the Ministry of Interior and its forces (MVD and VV MVD) over the army because those threats are their province. Yet as the army will likely undertake more domestic responsibilities, this decision may increase inter-service tensions and chances for future MVD-MOD conflicts.

Putin will probably not again give the army *carte blanche* to fight another war inside Russia. Anything that strengthens the FSB, as the Duma has done, giving it broader powers against terrorism and crime, weakens the army if for no other reason than the FSB exercises constant surveillance over the army and will have more scope for restraining the army.⁵² Dismissing or threatening to dismiss generals in Chechnya also strikes at Kvashnin as they were his protégés. Perhaps this is why they were not really fired. Putin's emphasis on a strong state and centralized control makes it likely that he will use the armed forces, seek to enhance their power, and embrace at least a modified version of their threat assessment, but not let them direct his policies.

Indeed, his mandate and orientation is statist and centralizing, to rebuild central state controls and effectiveness., e.g., by restoring compulsory military education in the schools.⁵³ Undoubtedly after Yeltsin such a program is desperately needed, but it is neither a democratic vision nor Kvashnin's version of a military-dominated state where the military possess their own independent source of financing and control over defense policy that excludes civilian authority. Although he is admittedly imbued with the notion that orders are supreme and in a sense above the law, Putin, not Kvashnin, will give the orders. Putin favors strict state regulation of critical sectors of the economy, such as defense spending.⁵⁴ Finally, his vision of the state would, if Russia's situation were normalized or if he had his way, stop the General Staff in its tracks. Replying to a question as to whether the generals had too much power, he said,

As far as the generals' excessive authority is concerned, generals are not stupid, but they do have their own way of thinking and they should stay focused on military affairs in general. Maybe our Ministry of Defense should even be headed by a civilian. In a normal state it would, but our state is weak. We compensate for this weakness by putting people from law enforcement and the military in positions that should be occupied by civilians.⁵⁵

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This is not the voice of a captive of the General Staff. Indeed, in February, 2000 Putin ordered the FSB (Federal Security Service), Russia's domestic intelligence agency to monitor military personnel's political allegiance and become, once again a centralized organization unifying both counterintelligence and the political police within the army. This may be in response to rumors of military coups, but it certainly is not the behavior of a captive of the MOD or General Staff.⁵⁶ And it is easy to see this not unusual Russian combination of patriotic statist and reformer, as well as cynic (what else could be the product of a long KGB apprenticeship and service at the top of Yeltsin's government?) repudiate his supporters and emerge as the "survivor of all his heirs."

Faustian Bargains

Clearly, a series of Faustian bargains has occurred with Putin getting the better of the deal. He got his war, the illusion of apparent victory and the image of a staunch and resolute patriot. Thus he engineered an election victory and facilitated Yeltsin's resignation at the top of his game rather than as a decrepit old crook. Supposedly the military and General Staff thought they won an easy military victory that would justify their ascendancy and give them massive increases in defense spending and control over defense and foreign policy. Instead, they will be blamed for the inevitable defeat in Chechnya once this war's prolongation becomes evident to all. Nor will they have the power to strike at Putin because he has already begun to curb Kvashnin and the armed forces due to their attempts to usurp civilian authority. Furthermore, this program of military modernization cannot be achieved. Any intelligent observer understands that it will bankrupt Russia and is based upon fantasies about arms sales, China as an ally, the NATO threat, and the most enduring of foundational myths, Russia's inevitable return to greatness. Thus the military made a bad bargain whose constraints will soon become clear to everyone.

But what does Russia get? First of all, Russia's new military-political leaders have again shown themselves ready to risk war and Russia's territorial integrity to achieve their personal and sectoral goals. They have also demonstrated the regime's utter inability to devise and implement effective democratic controls upon the military. Surprisingly few analysts mention this defect when they assess Russian "democracy."⁵⁷ Despite wrenching socio-economic, demographic, and ecological crises, Russia now must also pay for war and further delay its reconstruction and democratization. Instead of peaceful progress it fights again with the will-o'-the-wisp of great power status and military conquest. Instead of bread it will get a circus, and not even an interesting one at that. Even Faust got a better deal from the devil. ❧

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Notes

The views expressed here do not in any way represent those of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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2. Moscow, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, in Russian, December 26, 1997, FBIS SOV, 97-364, December 30, 1997.

3. Kvashnin's ideas appear in the following interviews, Moscow, Interfax AiK, in Russian, August 25-31, 1997, FBIS-SOV-97-190-S, October 2, 1997, and 97-265, September 23, 1997; Kaliningrad, Kaliningradskaya Pravda, in Russian, August 31, 1997, Foreign Broadcast Information Service Military Affairs (Henceforth FBIS UMA) 97-259, August 31, 1997; St. Petersburg Times, November 17-23, 1997, from Johnson's Russia List, djohnson@erols.com, no. 1371, November 17, 1997.

4. Stephen Blank, "Russia Rises to Perceived Threats," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, February, 2000, pp. 24-26.

5. This is based on interviews with the American scholar in question who must remain anonymous. See also Stepashin's revelations.

6. *Ibid.*, and Stephen Blank, "The Origins of the War in Chechnya," Paper to be presented to the annual convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, New York City, April 14, 2000.

7. This has been widely rumored in the foreign and Russian press.

8. Mark Galeotti, "Why There's a War in Chechnya," *Washington Post Weekly*, December 20 and 27, 1999, p. 25.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Newsline, January 31, 2000.

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44. Moscow, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, in Russian, January 22, 1997, FBIS-SOV-97-015, January 24, 1997, FBIS SOV, January 14, 2000, and the article by Deputy defense Minister, Vladimir Mikhailov, Moscow, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, in Russian, October 12, 1999, FBIS SOV, October 12, 1999 which lays out the limited nuclear war strategy explicitly as did the national security concept.

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50. Moscow, *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, in Russian, January 10, 2000, FBIS SOV, January 10, 2000.

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52. This goes back at least to 1995, if not earlier, for example, see the law on the FSB, Moscow, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, in Russian, April 12, 1995, FBIS-SOV-95-076, April 20, 1995, pp. 19-28, Moscow, *Segodnya*, in Russian, February 16, 1995, FBIS-SOV-95-033, February 17, 1995, p. 19. For the current situation see Konstantin Preobrazhensky, "FSB-Army Relations a Well-Kept Secret," *St. Petersburg Times*, December 16-20, 1996.

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54. Moscow, ITAR-TASS, in Russian, November 24, 1999, FBIS SOV, November 24, 1999, Moscow, RIA, in English, December 23, 1999, FBIS SOV, December 23, 1999, Andrew Jack,

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55. Moscow, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (Internet Version), in Russian, December 7, 1999, FBIS SOV, December 7, 1999. Putin here also voices his unhappiness over the fact that out of Russia’s 1.2 million man army only 90,000 troops were available for Chechnya, a sign of some unhappiness with the military.

56. Chazan, P. A21 By restoring the FSB’s Special Departments and ordering them to prevent an activity “by individuals aimed at harming Russia’s security”, and all mutinies and plots against the established constitutional order, Putin also allowed the FSB to recruit informers from within the army “on a confidential basis.”

57. E.G. Archie Brown, “Russia and Democratization,” *Problems of Post-Communism*, XLVI, No. 65, September-October, 1999, pp. 3–13 wholly omits mention of these issues of control over the multiple militaries and police forces.

