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**RUSSIA'S
GEOPOLITICAL
INTERESTS
IN THE BALTIC AREA**

Ari Puheloinen

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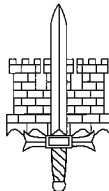
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FINLAND

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Ari Puheloinen

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Harvard University



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INTRODUCTION

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the western defense lines of the Soviet Union/Russia were withdrawn 700-1000 kilometers eastward. The border of Russia in the west between the Gulf of Finland and the Black Sea runs now roughly along the same lines as in the late sixteenth century. The Baltic area was then under the rule of Poland and Sweden. Russia took possession of the entire Baltic coastline down to Riga in 1721, in the reign of Peter the Great, and absorbed Baltic Lithuania in 1795 (under Catherine the Great).

In those days the Baltic area was important to Russia, a continental power building its fleet, seeking naval supremacy, and in need of a defensive zone around its new capital, St Petersburg.

In more recent times, too, it is commonly said that the Baltic area has been a high priority in Russian/Soviet geopolitical thinking in Europe. But is this really so? Have the basic geopolitical factors remained unchanged since the era of Peter the Great? These are some of the questions this paper seeks to address.

In the 1990s the relationships between the states in and around the Baltic region¹ will have growing implications for European security. Geopolitical changes in the area of the Baltic states have an impact on adjacent regions as well, including Denmark,

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Germany, Finland, Poland, Russia and Sweden. The implications of NATO's decisions on enlargement should be carefully considered. Recently it has become clear that the Baltic states will not be among the Alliance's first new members, contrary to their own wishes. There is fear among these states that they will be left in a grey zone, exposed to Russian pressure. If ignored, Baltic security concerns may have an unfavorable effect on the stability of East Central Europe, as well as in the Nordic regions. Hence it is necessary that NATO's decisions about enlargement take into consideration principles concerning the security of the Baltic countries.

Russian sensitivities are mentioned among the reasons for NATO's reluctance to include the Baltic states in the first phase of the Alliance's enlargement. When the Baltic countries became independent, Russia/Soviet Union lost ports and air defense locations in the region. As NATO members, the Baltic states would influence the access to St Petersburg, and the Russian Kaliningrad exclave would be more deeply separated from Russia proper. Some Russian officials have warned that Russia would take countermeasures if the Baltic countries were to join NATO, and in the mid-1990's some made statements going so far as to hint at a Russian invasion.² Subsequent developments in Russia and NATO-Russia relations have proved these warnings unrealistic in the contemporary situation, but such statements reflect the importance of the region.

Russia's geopolitical interests should not be ignored when the West makes crucial decisions, not only about NATO enlargement but also about the longer term. What are these interests? This study seeks to identify them and to provide a clear understanding of their possible impact on the Baltic security environment. The main questions addressed in this paper are: What does the area of the Baltic countries mean geopolitically to Russia at present? Are traditional perceptions of military security preponderant? What is the significance of economics? What means might Russia use in pursuing its geopolitical interests in the region?

Several studies and articles written in the 1990s touch on Russia's interests in the Baltic region. In many of them, unfortunately, very little attention is paid to the contemporary Russian geopolitical situation as a whole and the emphasis is often laid on military-strategic issues. Many commentators have seen the present situation solely in the light of Russian and Baltic history and have

assessed future developments as if they were merely a linear continuation of the past. In this paper I try to delineate the Russian geopolitical situation, assess the consequences of recent geopolitical changes as well as Russia's strategic alternatives, and deal with the Baltic situation in this framework.

In this paper, *Geopolitics* means politics, considered in a geographical framework. Geopolitics is also the study of political phenomena in their spatial relationship and in their relationship with the land as well as of those cultural factors which constitute the subject matter of human geography.³ In the practice of politics, geopolitics is an angle of vision that takes into account the relationship between geography and politics in diverse areas, such as foreign policy, trade policy, economy, military/defense/security policy, etc. *Geopolitical interests* are political interests in which the relationship between geography and political issues is a decisive factor. Geopolitical interests can be identified in diverse areas of politics: for example, in foreign policy, trade policy, economic policy, military/defense/security policy, etc. This paper analyzes not only the basic geopolitical interests, but also factors that significantly affect geopolitical interests and/or can be used as means of pursuing geopolitical interests. I would like to point out that I view geopolitical interests as subordinate to national interests. The latter is an overarching concept, of which geopolitical interests are an important part. I do not perceive geopolitics as the whole of foreign policy orientation, but instead as one aspect of it.

In the first sections of the paper I deal with Russian and Soviet geopolitics in general, analyze Russia's current situation and offer some observations on the historical context of the Baltic region in Russian geopolitics. I discuss Russia's contemporary and future geopolitical interests in the area of the Baltic states from the military perspective and from the perspective of economics, foreign policy and politico-military questions. I also suggest a brief geostrategic analysis of the Baltic states' area and deal with the question of the Russian *diaspora* in the Baltic countries. Sections dealing with Russian/Soviet geopolitics are fairly extensive, because a clear understanding of this dimension of Russian/Soviet history is a prerequisite for understanding the contemporary situation and the future.

At the beginning of my research I asked myself whether the classical geopolitical theories⁴ are adequate to interpret contem-

porary international developments. My observations support the ideas of some contemporary scholars on the need to add new ingredients to the classical geopolitical theories. So when discussing contemporary Russian geopolitics, I suggest some new ingredients for classical geopolitical analysis, leading to what I would call "the new geopolitics."⁵ Finally, I do not argue that Russia's foreign and security policy must follow the lines sketched in this paper. But I do argue that the matters I discuss are essential elements of Russia's international behavior and have to be taken into account when estimating its national interests.

1 GEOPOLITICS IN THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND THE SOVIET UNION

From a geopolitical perspective, three periods can be distinguished in the evolution of the Russian/Soviet state. Before 1917 there was a 500-year period of continental expansion. It is estimated, for example, that between the mid-sixteenth century and the late seventeenth century Russia conquered territory the size of the modern Netherlands every year for 150 years running.⁶

The Soviet era clearly marks a second period of evolution, though the basic geopolitical trends did not significantly differ from those of the Russian Empire. The geopolitical code of the Soviet Union was a mixture of communist ideology and Russian expansionism. The dissolution of the Soviet Union marked the end of the second and the beginning of the third evolutionary period, which has seen the most dramatic geopolitical changes in Russian/Soviet history. But what were the main reasons for the historical expansion? Do these reasons persist into the present? What is Russia geopolitically today, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union? What is its place in the changed geopolitical situation? Seeking to answer these questions, one can identify several foreign policy positions within today's Russia. Among them some Western commentators see a possibility of an emerging neo-imperial policy.⁷ Is that possibility real? I address these questions in the following two sections.

The Geopolitics of Russia before 1917

In the seventh and eighth centuries the Slavonic tribes inhabited territories now known as Belarus and Ukraine. Their neighbors to the north were the Baltic peoples, while the lands to the northeast were chiefly inhabited by Finnic tribes. In the eastern and southern steppe lands lived nomadic peoples, mostly Bulgars, Khazars and Magyars. The main power center of that time was the Byzantine Empire, with its capital in Constantinople.

The Vikings controlled the Baltic Sea and developed a trade route from the Gulf of Finland to the Black Sea. In the mid-ninth

century, probably the Vikings established Kievan Rus, a loose federation comprising the east Slav tribes. Kiev conquered the entire Volga river network and ruled from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Its western neighbors from the Gulf of Finland down to the Black Sea were Ests, Letts, Lithuanians, Prussians, Polish, Hungarians and Bulgarians. In the eleventh century Kievan Rus was the largest federation in Europe. In the mid-eleventh century, Kiev's ruler Yaroslav I divided the realm between his five sons, and in less than a hundred years the power of Kiev began to weaken. Taking advantage of Russian divisiveness, the Tatars conquered Rus by the mid-thirteenth century and dominated it for 250 years.

The principality of Novgorod escaped invasion because its prince, Alexander Nevski, submitted voluntarily to Tatar rule. The policy of Alexander Nevski created preconditions for his son, Daniel to found the Muscovite dynasty, which reigned from 1274 to 1598. The rise and expansion of Muscovy was the nucleus and rallying point of the new Russian state and its expansion until the twentieth century. During the sixteenth century, Russian expansion was directed primarily to the east. The way to the west was blocked by Lithuania and Sweden, denying access to the Baltic Sea. Kazan on the Volga, a Tatar stronghold was captured in 1552, which opened the way south to Astrakhan and the Central Urals and further to Siberia. Within a century after the fall of Kazan, Russians had broken through to the Pacific Ocean, 5000 kilometers to the east. In the seventeenth century, the focus of expansion was in the east and south.

In the eighteenth century, Peter I (the Great) reversed Russia's eastern orientation, toward Europe. In Peter's era (1682-1725), Russia broke out into the Baltic Sea, annexed Estonia, Livonia, and areas of southeastern Finland, and later managed to get a foothold on the Black Sea for more than a decade. In the far East, Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands were taken. Catherine II (the Great) continued the Russian expansion toward Europe. During her reign (1762-96), Lithuania, non-Slav Courland and Belorussia, as well as parts of Poland were annexed. For the first time in its history, Russia now shared common borders with Prussia and Austria, Russia's western border following the Niemen, Western Bug and Dniester rivers. Catherine also succeeded where Peter the Great had failed: in making Russia a Black Sea power (through access to the northern shores in 1774 and the annexation of Crimea in 1783).

During the nineteenth century, the main direction of Russian expansion was southward, bringing the Caucasus and Central Asia under Russian domination. In Europe the Napoleonic wars brought Finland, most of ethnic Poland and Bessarabia into the fold by 1815. Russia's western expansion was, however, coming to an end. The humiliating defeat in the Crimean war of 1853-56, on Russia's own territory, was the final milestone in Russia's expansion in Europe. By the end of the nineteenth century, during its 500-year period of expansion, Russia had come up against the borders of the continent in the north and east; in the south it confronted rim of high mountains and the sphere of influence of the British Indian Empire and shared the Black Sea with the Ottomans. Yet at the turn of the century Russia turned to the Far East, challenging Japan for influence on the Korean peninsula. The war against Japan (1904-05) ended with Russia's defeat and loss of prestige in the world arena.

At the beginning of World War I, Russia's goals included East Prussia, the Polish provinces of Germany and Austria, Galicia, Bukovina, Bohemia, Slovakia, part of Hungary and the Turkish Straits. However, at the end of the war, the Brest-Litovsk peace-treaty of 1918, negotiated by the Bolsheviks under pressure from all sides, stripped Russia of its western territories, including Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Polish core areas. Finland had severed its connections with Russia at the end of 1917. A dissolution seemed to be unavoidable in 1918-19, when Georgia and Armenia broke away and many others, including Tatars, various Cossack groups and Central Asian regions, tried to assert independence. But Russia soon regained its influence with the latter group.

What were the reasons for Russia's expansionism and what were the methods applied? Undoubtedly, among the primary reasons was the fact that the old Russia (and Muscovy as its nucleus) did not have natural or otherwise fixed boundaries. But that would explain only the expansion in the first centuries and is not a plausible reason for expansion in regions where Russia met resistance. The Tatar rule partially explains the initial extension of influence. Against that background, the consolidation of Russian power was conducted using the same methods as in some European nation-states. The rise of Muscovy and the growth of its domain over all of Russia were political developments. The Muscovite rulers used their Tatar overlords for improving their positions against all ri-

vals. As Muscovy strengthened, the liberation of other areas from Tatar domination gradually turned into conquest.⁸

The thinly populated Eurasian plain simply encouraged expansion. The last Siberian khan was defeated in 1598, and little resistance was met on the way to the Pacific.⁹ For centuries, there was no competition in the drive eastward. Between Eastern Europe and the Pacific there was a vast no-man's-land, and to establish control over it was only a question of time.¹⁰ This vast and dispersed frontier, together with cultural differences within the empire made Russian frontiers relatively permeable. Throughout most of Russian history, the frontiers have been shifting and ill-defined. There were many kinds of frontiers: the fur frontier in Siberia, the blockhouse and picket-line frontier of the southern steppe, the fishing and hunting frontier of the lower Volga, the gold frontier of the Altai, and the formal-treaty frontiers of Sweden and Poland in the west.¹¹

Strategic motives were secondary at the beginning, but they became more and more significant as time passed. During the first centuries of expansion there was occasionally a tendency to add strategic territory. The treeless steppes had to be guarded against nomads, and vague frontiers were an excuse to push the line of defense farther away. Later, space became a more significant factor in security. As later times were to prove, space saved Russia from the Poles in the seventeenth century, the Swedes in the eighteenth century, the French in the nineteenth century, and the Germans in the twentieth century. According to Wesson, religion also provided a weapon or excuse for the Russian expansion. "Heathen" Tatars and then "infidel" Turks were to be expelled: "the enemy was always non-Orthodox, and there were often fellow Orthodox on the other side of the border to protect".¹² The idea of bringing all Orthodox and Slavs together into one state served as an ideological legitimation of expansion.

Economic purposes, primarily the quest for furs, and the insecurity of the European district against Tatars were the main reasons for Russian expansion into Siberia. The insecurity of the Ukrainian frontier against Crimean Tatars was the initial rationale for expanding into the Black Sea region, which implied fighting the Turks. Commercial and strategic challenges demanded expansion in the Baltic region against Sweden and England. In Poland, the need for protection against attacks from the west was the

Russia's main geopolitical interest, and by possessing Warsaw, Russia for its part could threaten Berlin, Vienna and the northern regions.¹³

John P. LeDonne has developed a geopolitical model that explains the methods and goals of Russian foreign policy between 1700 and 1917. Modifying the theories of Halford Mackinder, Alfred Mahan, Geoffrey Parker and Owen Lattimore, he suggests a geopolitical interpretation based on relations between the Heartland and the core areas. The Heartland consisted of a plain (cut only by the Ural Mountains) extending from the Baltic Sea in the west to the Enisei river in the east and from the Barents Sea in the north to the mountains of the Caucasus as well as the Plateau of Persia in the south. Four maritime basins were the main elements of the Heartland. One was the Arctic drainage watered by the Ob, the Enisei, the Lena and their tributaries, while the second was the continental drainage area consisting of the basin of the Caspian and Aral seas. The Black Sea was the third, including the Don, the Dnieper, the Danube and the Turkish Straits, and the Baltic Sea was the fourth drained by the Oder, the Wisla, and the Neva as well as the streams of Finland and Sweden.¹⁴

Factors defining core areas were social and political organization as well as the drive of an area for hegemony. LeDonne's core areas were Ile de France, Castile, Brandenburg, Austria, Muscovy, Turkish Straits, Sweden, Poland and Persia within the Heartland, as well as Britain, China and Japan in the Coastlands.¹⁵ The goal of Russian foreign policy was to reach the Heartland's periphery and in the long run, to project power from the Heartland's periphery into the Coastland. LeDonne crystallizes the process of Russian expansion as follows: "The story of Russian expansion takes place against the background of slow but inexorable change in the balance of power within the Heartland. It is the story of a struggle between a rising Russia and declining core areas for the control of frontiers separating them; of a persistent attempt to destabilize, partition, and even annex those declining core areas in order eventually to occupy the entire Heartland. And it is the story of the determination of the Germanic and maritime powers to prevent that expansion from reaching the Heartland's periphery."¹⁶ LeDonne's analysis suggests that the internal dynamics of the Russian core was the main source of expansionism: *i.e.* Russia's desire to claim the powers of the surrounding Teutonic Order, Byzantine

Empire and Chingissid dynasty; the formation of a strong ruling class and the consolidation of serfdom; a political-religious ideology; a search for contacts with the European Coastland in order to gain tools for Russia's modernization, and the drive for strategic superiority in the west and south.¹⁷

Geography determined the routes and partially the objectives of Russia's expansion. Plains and rivers were channels for extension, and mountain ridges were obstacles strengthening containment by opposing forces. Efforts to gain access to warm-water ports became more and more a pressing need to meet strategic trade interests. "Russians tried to close the narrow seas along the Heartland's periphery - the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, and the Sea of Ohotsk - and create a ring fence to support a fortress-fleet strategy¹⁸ capable of protecting their shores not only against a naval attack but also against a political presence by maritime powers that would inevitably carry subversive ideas".¹⁹ In terms of geography, reaching the Heartland's periphery could be a source of both strength and weakness. Since the periphery allows access to the Heartland at several points, Russian/Soviet geography can be a strength or a weakness, depending on politico-military conditions.²⁰

Expansion created resistance among the Coastland powers. Prussia (Germany), Britain and France were the main opposing forces on the western frontiers. Britain and the Ottoman Empire imposed containment in the south, while China (ever since the late seventeenth century) and Japan were the main eastern containing powers. During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Russia was able to establish its superiority on the western frontiers, and only the combined efforts of two core areas (Prussia with British back-up) were sufficient to contain its expansion by the 1760s. But Russia still advanced, and later through the Napoleonic wars it managed to reach its main geopolitical goal in the western frontiers: to establish Russian influence in the Heartland's periphery from Scandinavia (where the Kjolen mountains were the next obstacle) to the Dinaric Alps in the Balkans.²¹

On the southern and eastern frontiers, expansion allowed Russia at the close of the eighteenth century to project power into the Coastlands (in the Mediterranean, Caucasus, Pacific regions) for the first time in its history. In the 1860s Russia entered the zone between the inner and outer periphery on its southeastern frontiers as well as in the Far East, and reached the Heartland's periph-

ery there in 1907.²² The resistance of the Coastland powers turned stronger, particularly in the 1850s, when a sea-power coalition was for the first time engaged in war against Russia,²³ as well as in the 1870s, when the combined German and Austrian efforts, together with those of Britain and Japan along the Heartland's periphery, constituted a global containment policy. Despite repercussions in the first years of the twentieth century, Russia still managed to improve positions on its southern and eastern frontiers, through the partitions of Manchuria and Persia with Japan and Britain in 1907.²⁴ In World War I, Russia was to consolidate its position on the Heartland's periphery. The collapse of the Russian core area in the Bolshevik Revolution eventually brought these plans to an end, which meant the victory of the containment policy of the opposing powers.

For two hundred years before World War I, Russia had focused its expansion on the Heartland's periphery, trying to reach a domain that LeDonne calls the ideal line of an optimum conquest. How large should this domain be? Does the Russian failure in World War I give any ground for asking, where the line of an optimum of conquest should run? Undoubtedly Russia's plans marked were overly ambitious. The decline and fall of empires generally depends on a discrepancy between their geopolitical goals and their political resources. LeDonne points out the initial geopolitical rationale: "A line of an optimum of conquest had to run within the Heartland along a political isobar equalizing the pressure of Russian energies with the resistance of core areas guarding the landward approaches to the periphery, supported by the Coastland powers guarding those on the seaward. Such an isobar had been created in the eastern Baltic after 1815 between Russian pressures and Anglo-Swedish resistance and, by the beginning of this century, between German pressures and Russian resistance."²⁵

The Geopolitics of the Soviet Union

In the international relations of the Soviet Union, an interaction between ideology and classical geopolitics was predominant. The intensity and models of interaction have varied, depending on international situations and the capabilities of the Soviet Union. Although in the 1920s geopolitics was declared to be a bourgeois pseudo-science, the foreign policy of the Soviet leaders was in practice

based on clear geopolitical calculations, albeit disguised often in declarations about class interests and ideology.²⁶ The Soviet Union applied a wide array of classical geopolitical postulates, from the concept of control over space to the idea of a state as a geographical organism striving for a maximum increase of its power.

Konstantin Pleshakov has identified three models of interaction between geopolitics and ideology in general. The first model is called reciprocal generating (*vzaimogenerirovanie*). In this model the geopolitical factors and ideological motives continuously strengthen each other, and neither of them can exist without the other. Reciprocal reduction (*vzaimogashenie*) is a second model, in which the ideological and geopolitical standpoints are inseparable but eliminate each other's expansionary components. This model results in a tendency to maintain the status quo. A third model is the dominance of geopolitics over ideology (*dominirovanie geopolitiki nad ideologiei*). It may appear when there is no direct influence by ideology in international relations.²⁷

Since the sixteenth century, the territorial expansion of Russia was doctrinally confirmed through an alliance between the Russian state and the Orthodox church. But the state doctrine began to approach ideology only during the second half of the nineteenth century. At the turn of the century, four tendencies were competing for the upper hand: Slavophilism, liberalism, nationalism, and a revolutionary ideology with a strong component of Marxism.²⁸

During the Bolshevik Revolution, there were high expectations in Russia of a rapid worldwide revolution of the proletariat. Until around 1920, Lenin tried to place ideology above geopolitics,²⁹ believing that geopolitics would not be needed in a worldwide classless and borderless society. The Brest-Litovsk peace was to serve only as a breathing spell before the upcoming new wave of revolution. But when expectations of a rapid worldwide revolution proved unfounded, Soviet Russia soon began to resume classical geopolitics, concluding the Rapallo Treaty with Germany in 1922. The goal of eventual worldwide revolution generated Soviet endeavors to enhance state control over space, and the need for control generated ideology. From the early 1920s until the late 1980s, reciprocal generating was the relation between ideology and geopolitics in the Soviet Union. The geopolitical success of the Soviet Union was to promote the ideological progress of the worldwide revolution, and the expansion of communist ideology into new

areas would strengthen the position of the Soviet Union.³⁰

In their first years in power, the Bolsheviks recovered one after another of the areas that had separated from the former tsarist empire in 1918-1919, including Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Mongolia. Only Finland, the Baltic states and Poland managed to maintain their independence. The geopolitical phase that followed the early 1920s in the Soviet Union could be called a phase of consolidation. In the late 1920s the Soviet Union turned inward and until the late 1930s did not significantly expand its direct control over space. But Moscow tried to extend indirect geopolitical control abroad. After the failure of revolution in Western countries, Communist parties in them were directed not to make revolution but to weaken the state. Seeking and creating ideological partners abroad, Moscow interfered in the internal politics of other countries. Stalin was not interested in the victory of Communism in other countries unless he could control it. In both China and Spain, the Soviet Union tried to make a geopolitical breakthrough. In Spain it failed due to international geopolitical rivalry, but in China the Soviet Union managed to establish geopolitical control points in the northern "liberated" regions.³¹

The rise of Germany caused a change in the geopolitical outlook of the Soviet Union in 1934. The expansion of Russia and the mission of international communism had been bound together through *Komintern* already in the 1920s. In the 1930s, the Russification of minority areas, set back in the 1920s, was resumed. Stalin reverted to nationalism, bringing back much of the old Russia. In the mid-1930s the USSR entered international power politics more actively than ever before, seeking security and advantages in the traditional balance-of-power mode, by combination with one side or the other.³² The pact with Germany in August 1939 rendered a Soviet geopolitical breakthrough possible in Eastern Europe, and the USSR could regain most of the territories the Russian Empire had lost at World War I on its western frontiers - the Baltic states, part of Poland, Bessarabia and some territories in Finland.³³

Ideology played a secondary role in the geopolitical breakthrough in Eastern Europe. In the reciprocal relation between the Soviet ideology and geopolitics, the latter dominated. So the extension of control over space was not based on ideological expansion. The assumption of ideological control over the Baltic states, Belorussia and Western Ukraine was begun only after the annexa-

tion of these territories.³⁴ The Soviet Union behaved like any state with its own interests. Non-ideological motives were reflected also in official declarations. Molotov defended the Soviet-German pact on grounds of national interest, without any linkage to the proletariat. The annexation of parts of Poland was explained on traditional ethnic grounds and the Baltic states were forced to admit Soviet forces for strategic reasons and because they had earlier been a part of the Empire.³⁵

The Second World War weakened the role of ideology in the Soviet geo-ideological paradigm. In its territorial expansion, the USSR achieved after World War II approximately what Russia had been striving for in World War I. Throughout the Second World War, the Soviet Union had taken maximum advantage of its alliances, first with Germany and later with the United States and the United Kingdom against Germany. As in 1939-1941, Soviet military conquests in Eastern Europe were reinforced by an ideological transformation of the subordinate societies. Once again, it appears that Stalin's geopolitics was based not on faith in the international proletariat, but on expanding the domain controlled by the Soviet Union.³⁶

In the aftermath of World War II, the relation between ideology and geopolitics took the form of reciprocal generating in a bipolar world politics setting.³⁷ The geopolitical relation between the Soviet Union and the United States was a stalemate in which the Soviet Union, as a continental power, was not able to undermine the American dominance of the seas and the United States, as a maritime power, could not reduce the total geopolitical field³⁸ of the Soviet Union. The continental power was invulnerable to the maritime power and *vice-versa*. A conflict would have been possible only in the border fields of these powers.³⁹

In the early 1950s, two major developments affected the Soviet geopolitics. First, both the Soviet Union and the United States had become capable of waging nuclear war; and second, with Stalin's death in 1953, totalitarianism evolved into authoritarianism in the Soviet regime.⁴⁰ Nuclear warfare capabilities radically changed the possibilities of controlling space by military means and undermined the security of the territorial state. The evolution of nuclear missiles shattered the impenetrability of geographical boundaries and made the entire Soviet Union vulnerable to attacks. "Natural boundaries", buffer zones and geographical space as a

strategic asset lost much of their politico-military value, even though later developments proved that territorial control through nuclear weapons would not be concretely realized.⁴¹

Under Khrushchev the foreign relations of the Soviet Union were reshaped. Among Khrushchev's first premises was the conception of "Peaceful Coexistence," according to which the world should be converted to socialism without war, through evolution or parliamentary processes. Another premise was the inadmissibility of nuclear war. The Soviet Union took many conciliatory steps, including the settlement with Austria and Yugoslavia, and the renunciation of the Porkkala base in Finland. But expansive steps were taken, too. Wesson argues that the strategy applied by the Soviet Union was the old Russian one of expanding in Asia (or the less developed nations in general) to draw strength to fight the West. Concurrently with "Peaceful Coexistence," the Soviet Union began in 1955, coinciding with the withdrawal of the Western powers from their former colonial empires, to offer economic and political cooperation to the less advanced nations of Asia and Africa. It was hoped in the USSR that those countries would first become neutral in the East-West conflict and then shift into the group of socialist countries led by the Soviet Union. That strategy had little success, since the potential new partners were wary of Soviet direction. The hoped-for fusion of Eastern Europe did not occur either. Economic growth was disappointing, and there were centrifugal moves that led to a hardening of the Soviet line.⁴²

Ensuring the Soviet Union's military security and consolidating Soviet power in Eastern Europe seem to have been the primary geopolitical objectives during the Khrushchev era. The signing of a German peace treaty consolidating the division of Germany was a first priority, together with preventing Germany from acquiring nuclear weapons. According to Adam Ulam's analysis, the Cuban missile crisis was a Soviet attempt to extort concessions from the West, including acquiescence in the aforementioned Soviet aims.⁴³ Konstantin Pleshakov's analysis suggests that the role of ideology in the Soviet geo-ideological paradigm was declining throughout all the Khrushchev era. In 1953-1958 the decline of ideology was a tendency; in 1958-1962 it was an experimental policy; and after 1962 it was a permanent foreign policy line through the late 1980s. The role of geopolitics was constantly growing⁴⁴ (though Pleshakov can be criticized for oversimplifying the trend, since

Brezhnev emphasized ideology in foreign policy after the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968).

Under Brezhnev the policy of the Soviet Union became more conservative. Where Khrushchev had counted on economic ties to effect the fusion of Eastern Europe, Brezhnev focused on military unity through the Warsaw Treaty Organization. In Europe the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine was adopted, meaning limited sovereignty within the socialist commonwealth. Toward the Third World in the Brezhnev era, military assistance was offered rather than, as formerly, economic ties. Khrushchev had drastically reduced Soviet military power, but under Brezhnev the armed forces were steadily built up. The Soviet Union continued to create geopolitical control points in Eurasia, extending its influence to Vietnam and Laos, which were located within the Chinese total geopolitical field. The USSR supported North Vietnam's effort to expand its total geopolitical field as a counterbalance to China. In Africa efforts were made to extend the Soviet sphere of influence, especially in Angola and Mozambique (in 1975), in Ethiopia (in 1978), and in several other countries, including South Yemen and Benin, which generally followed the Soviet lead though they may not have been fully Marxist-Leninist in their governing structures.⁴⁵

Geopolitical relations between the USSR and the USA were dominated by military issues. The 1970s was a decade of *détente*, which was launched at the Moscow summit in 1972 when the United States accepted the Soviet Union as an equal superpower. However, the intentions and expectations of the superpowers diverged, and *détente* vanished in the end of 1979 at the latest, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.⁴⁶ The invasion led to counteractions taken by the United States, China and many Western countries. The Soviet Union came under strong geopolitical pressure, e.g. from the United States regarding the deployment of intermediaterange nuclear weapons in Europe, but also in the field of arms control as well as through enlarged US security cooperation with Japan and China. Developments in Poland in 1979-1981 foreshadowed internal weakening of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and its disintegration ten years later.

Later in the 1980s the triangle of the United States, China and the Soviet Union also began to shift when China initiated a gradual settlement of relations with the Soviet Union, without the participation of the United States. After 1978 the geopolitical triangle

had been directed toward the Soviet Union, and China wished to balance it. The Soviet Union, for its part, wanted to undermine American-Chinese geopolitical co-operation, perceiving it as a source of pressure against the Soviet Union. China's terms were clear: the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the Soviet-Chinese border, as well as the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. From the Soviet perspective, to admit those terms while under pressure in the West was considered impossible, but it was deemed doable together with similar changes in the global geopolitical system⁴⁷ This connection bound the European, Asian and Central Asian dimensions of Soviet geopolitics together.

Up to and through the 1980s, Russia as the core of the Soviet Union had created four geopolitical circles around itself. The fourth (outermost) circle involved comparatively new acquisitions, mainly developing countries that had been brought into the Soviet orbit, socialist countries geographically far away, namely China, Cuba, and Yugoslavia, and the easternmost countries of the West co-operating with the Soviet Union, including Finland. This circle was heterogenous, unstable, and did not make up a connected zone. The third circle comprised mainly the socialist countries of Eastern, Central and Southeastern Europe, and Asia. This was a stable and geopolitically important zone. The second circle consisted of the Soviet Republics, the territories of which earlier belonged to the tsarist empire. The first (innermost) zone encompassed autonomous entities of different levels, from republics to areas (*okrug*) within Russia proper. This circle involved several solid blocks of areas with concentrations of strategic natural resources.⁴⁸ However, in the 1980s it became clear that the Soviet Union was experiencing growing difficulties in maintaining its military, political, technological, and economic security in countering a tendency toward disintegration within its sphere of influence.

The third circle disintegrated from 1989 on. The dissolution of its main bonds, the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, along with the unification of Germany, changes in economic relations and the withdrawal of Soviet troops, eventually broke this circle. The fourth (outermost) circle also disintegrated very soon after some of its elements had taken their distance from the USSR and others lost Soviet support. The second circle was dissolved in 1991, but its uncontrolled disinte-

gration had begun already in 1989, when the Soviet Republics started gaining sovereignty/independence. The first (innermost) circle, the autonomies, have improved their status in the administrative hierarchy and some have claimed independence. Their confrontation with the Russian center resembles the earlier confrontation between the Soviet Republics and the Soviet Union. The first circle contains more than half the territory of the Russian Federation but only 18 percent of the population, of which 60 percent are not ethnic aboriginal.⁴⁹ The way these claims for independence are settled, may set the direction of future developments within the first circle.

2 THE GEOPOLITICS OF RUSSIA AFTER THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION

In the twentieth century, ideology was twice placed above geopolitics in Russia (Soviet Russia). The first time was in 1917-1920. The second was in 1991-1993, when the integration of Russia into the West was the main goal of Russian foreign policy.⁵⁰ However, by the end of 1993 it was widely perceived in Russia that more had been conceded to the West than had been gained in return and also that the attempt to radically marketize the Russian economy was linked to this foreign policy.⁵¹ It was then concluded that "the state of affairs left Russia no apparent choice but to reconstitute its great power status as well as its statehood".⁵²

In addition to the officially abandoned pro-West position, at least three other foreign policy positions can be identified in Russia. A group that could be called moderate conservatives, representing mainly institutional forces like the military high command, industrial managers and the main sectors of federal bureaucracy, thinks that Russia should avoid undue dependence on the West and develop its sphere of influence, especially in the "near abroad". A group of moderate liberals puts emphasis on pragmatism and is seeking a foreign policy based on a realistic assessment of Russia's national interests. A third orientation, pursued by the radical left and right, advocates a rebuilding of the superpower status of the country, by military means if necessary.⁵³ In the debate on foreign policy positions, geopolitical considerations are widespread in Russia.⁵⁴ Some even consider that the previous ideological conflicts have been replaced by a struggle for spheres of geopolitical influence.⁵⁵

One reason for the rise of geopolitics in Russia would seem to be the availability of space for new ideas after the communist ideological monopoly. The need to consolidate the new state, define its spheres of interest, and adjust Russian foreign policy to the changed situation are certainly other important causes.⁵⁶ A common theme among Russian geopoliticians is the call for a reform of classical geopolitics, while maintaining its core. This theoretical reform is justified with changes in the physical environment and

by new emphases in the behavior of states, as well as by the increased significance in world politics of factors that do not have a direct connection with the physical environment.

Contemporary Theoretical Aspects of Geopolitics in Russia

Konstantin Sorokin's analysis identifies three historical phases in geopolitics. The first phase was the evolution of classical geopolitics up to World War II. The post-war era was a second phase, during which no significant evolution in Western geopolitics took place because of the relatively stable world order and positive developments in East-West relations. Nevertheless, some new ingredients were suggested. In 1977 Colin Gray proposed understanding geopolitics as "the relation of international political power to the geographical setting," exploring the relation of the physical environment, as perceived, molded, and utilized by men, to international politics⁵⁷. This reflected a less deterministic and more realistic approach but did not lead to a further reform of geopolitics. Sorokin goes so far as to see the failure of the West in foreseeing the collapse of the USSR as a crisis of Western geopolitics in the late 1980s. In the third phase, Russian geopoliticians call for geopolitics tailored to Russian needs and serving Russian security interests. The ideas of reform presented by Pleshakov, Razuvaev and Sorokin seem to coincide widely with ideas put forward by some western scholars,⁵⁸ though they all may not be previously unheard of. Many new proposals are in fact old, but their forms and emphases have varied in different eras.⁵⁹

Sorokin calls for an identification of new factors in geopolitical analysis and in the evaluation of states' and groupings' geopolitical authority, as well as geopolitical factors that are losing or changing their previous significance. A new fundamental geopolitics could analyze developments not only at the global but also at regional, sub-regional and inter-state levels, embracing the total play of interests of a state and covering combinations of divergent, parallel and intersecting processes.⁶⁰

Emphasizing new factors in a geopolitical analysis does not mean neglecting geography or the core of classical geopolitics. The purpose is to supplement geographical factors with the other geopolitical ingredients of today's world and to re-evaluate the relative importance of these factors. One of the preponderant geopo-

litical factors today is economics. It's significance is growing both at inter- and intra-state levels. Any analysis of the contemporary international situation must include economic factors. The relations between the economy and the environment are changing. If formerly the physical environment profoundly affected the economy, today the economy also profoundly affects the environment. Nowadays the links between the economy, state sovereignty and external economic influences are stronger than formerly, and globalization enhances the geographical scale of interaction. The growing dynamism of worldwide economic processes carries the risk of geopolitical instability. Discussing the growing importance of economics, Pleshakov suggests replacing the classical postulate of conflict between the continental Center and the maritime Periphery with a revisionist idea of the economic and political interdependence of these elements.⁶¹

The information revolution is a significant new geopolitical factor. Historically it can be compared with the invention of printing, steam power and electrification. A country's information capabilities may promote or hinder its integration into global markets and institutions.⁶² Information capabilities can also confer strategic advantages. The geopolitical significance of information in Russia's case follows from the country's vast territory and the need for international communications as a prerequisite of the country's economic growth. But so far Russia remains far behind the developed countries in these respects.

Sorokin has identified other new geopolitical factors: the level of evolution in natural sciences, especially in regard to new technologies affecting economy and military developments; a policy making stratum capable of identifying optimal strategies of national development and rational geopolitical behavior; the general level of culture and civilization; the usability and capabilities of the armed forces; the influence of world religions; and the effectiveness and internal stability of the political regime, respect for the law, and the legitimacy and competence of the leadership.⁶³

A number of changes have taken place in the military aspects of geopolitics. The development of military technologies in the areas of destruction and detection, command and control, manoeuvrability, transport of troops, weapons of mass destruction, conventional forces, and long-range weapon systems, have undermined the traditional geopolitical postulate of spatial invulnera-

bility. Regions once considered invulnerable have become vulnerable. These changes have reduced the geopolitical significance of geographical factors like space and distance, forests, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans as determinants of economic activity, protection against attacks, and routes of expansion. For example, the Arctic region can be used for hostile penetration into Russia as a result of evolution in aerospace, missile, and air technologies. Railroads and sea connections have lost a part of their traditional geopolitical importance due to the evolution of air and road transportation capabilities and the use of pipelines in strategic oil and gas delivery, etc.⁶⁴

Some argue that the geopolitical significance of military force may increase in the future as a result of growing political, ethno-religious, ecological and other tensions between global and regional powers and their allies. Numerous peace-support operations as well as continuous threats of military force (Iraq, Northern Korea, former Yugoslavia) suggest this possibility. Thus the size and particularly the quality of armed forces could once again become a prior concern of states. An increasing use of multinational military forces as geopolitical arbitrators in regional and intra-state conflicts should also be noted.⁶⁵

Population factors are constantly affecting growth rates, food supply, migrations, expansion, and the environment. In Russia, for example, population growth is declining, especially in the vital regions east of the Urals. On the other hand, the importance of small countries which possess considerable scientific, fiscal, or technological advantages, is growing.⁶⁶

The forms of control over geographical space have changed over the decades. Physical forms of control are more sophisticated and new means of non-physical control have been introduced. Missile, communications, and surveillance technologies have improved: for example, all the globe is now controllable from space. Pleshakov has identified the following dimensions of geopolitical control: political, economic, military, civilizational, ideological, communications-related, demographic, information-related and physical control. Traditional geopolitical concepts of control remain valid, however. For example, nuclear missiles have remained political weapons and never became a means of direct physical control over geographical space.⁶⁷

Geopolitical expansion is adopting new forms as well. Tradi-

tionally expansion meant territorial gains or the establishment of politico-military spheres of influence. Recently, however, many conflicts have emerged from territorial disputes but have remained at low levels of intensity because the oppressing parties have not been willing to solve them by military means, given the unpredictability of the defender's and the world community's reactions, economic as well as military. In the future the likelihood of high-intensity territorial expansion may grow because of competition for natural resources and geopolitical expansion may include information-related, civilizational, religious, ethno-religious, political (including pressure, sanctions, isolation, etc.) and economic dimensions.⁶⁸

Russian geopoliticians question the concept of confrontation between the Heartland and the rest of the world, because it reflects bipolarity and a static setting while the contemporary world is polycentric, multistructured and changing. Sorokin suggests that there will be no exact zones of confrontation between geopolitical poles, though most areas will have their centers of gravity. Geopolitical poles may converge and collaborate, though there will still be grounds for conflict. He also notes that a multistructured geopolitical setting implies more risks of misjudgments than the earlier, more static situation. It is worth noting that Russian geopoliticians' polycentric picture of world shares common features with LeDonne's geopolitical model of the Heartland and core areas.⁶⁹

The purpose of this section is not to provide a comprehensive analysis but rather an overview of contemporary geopolitical discussion in Russia. It seems that Russian scholars tend to blur the distinction between geopolitical views and general views of foreign policy. So to some degree the relation of geopolitical theories to Russia's foreign policy remains ambiguous. In my opinion, geopolitics can hardly be a substitute for a foreign policy line, but it can produce ingredients for the application of diverse foreign-policy positions.⁷⁰ Accordingly, an analysis of Russia's geopolitical situation cannot be tightly bound to any particular foreign policy course. The reform of geopolitics suggested by Russian scholars seems to maintain the core of classical geopolitics. Some judgments are clearly exaggerated, *e.g.* the abandonment of geographical determinism. In my opinion, geographical determinism, to a degree, remains valid even today. Geography may not determine what kind of policy should be pursued, but it provides some basic constraints

and possibilities. For example, geography determines the vitality of the eastern, western and southern political directions for Russia while the northern regions are less emphasized because of their geographical location at the Arctic Ocean.

The Contemporary Geopolitical Situation of Russia

Russia's contemporary geopolitical situation is unstable. The country is still recovering from the consequences of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Developments in the democratization of society and in political structures are positive, but Russia's international position is ambiguous and the basic lines of foreign policy are uncertain, which makes it difficult to predict Russia's international behavior and its geopolitical code. In 1997, the national security concept was approved and the foundation of the military doctrine and a military reform were defined. In what follows, despite the difficulties in determining the status of basic variables, I will try to delineate Russia's contemporary geopolitical situation, assess its geopolitical interests and speculate about future developments.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia's share of the former superpower was three quarters of the territory, half the population, 60 percent of national wealth and gross national product (including two-thirds of industry and 45 percent of agricultural production), 70 percent of exports, and 85 percent of the armed forces. The share of Ukraine was 2.7 percent of the territory and 15-22 percent of GNP, while that of Kazakhstan was 12 percent of the territory and 3-7 percent of GNP. Russia is the largest country in the world in territory and the sixth largest in population.⁷¹ In some respects, contemporary Russia is physically a reduced copy of the Soviet Union. It is not self-evident that Russia could be called a global power. For the Russians, nevertheless, great-power status (*velikaia derzhava*) has always been very important.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia lost three of the four geopolitical circles it had created around the Russian core area over the centuries. Its total geopolitical field⁷² no longer extended beyond the borders of the Russian Federation. It does not have total political or military control over the former Soviet Republics, nor does it control the Russian *diaspora*. On the contrary, some former Soviet Republics have been able to exercise partial economic control over Russian space on the basis of economic in-

terdependencies inherited from the Soviet economic system.

Along its perimeter from the northeastern frontiers of Estonia to Donbass, to Crimea and the northern areas of Kazakhstan, Russia is surrounded by geopolitical cross fields⁷³ which contain high conflict potential. Russia has been able to maintain partial economic, demographic, civilizational and communications control in the former Soviet Republics. Russia is the main supplier of oil and gas in the territory of the former Soviet Union, and there are twenty-five million ethnic Russians living in the former Soviet Republics.⁷⁴

A number of questions have arisen about Russia's borders. In the north Russia has controversies with Norway over delimitation of the Arctic waters and the rich natural resources of the sea bottom. In the Baltic Sea region Russia has not signed border agreements with Latvia and Estonia. Turmoil simmers on the frontiers in North and South Caucasus, and in the Far East the question of the Kurile Islands shadows Russo-Japanese relations. Although the border with Kazakhstan is stable, the volatile situation in Central Asia imposes security threats and makes Russian trade communications there subject to disturbances. Borders have a new role within the territory of the former Soviet Union. If earlier they were mainly administrative, they are now frontiers between new states. But the locations of ethnic populations and the use of land do not always coincide with the new borders. Hence, from a Russian perspective, transparency of borders within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) would be of utmost importance. It would diminish problems, prevent conflicts, promote cohesion and allow a wider Russian influence in the former Soviet republics. The fact that Russia has assumed the responsibility for guarding the outer borders of all CIS states (except Azerbaidjan) reflects the significance of these interests. The disputable border issues absorb political energy and render economic activities difficult, but in some cases the situation may provide Russia with opportunities to pursue security interests by balancing between neighboring states. Russia's activities in conjunction with the crises in Abhazii and Nagorno-Karabakh are a clear example of this. South Caucasus and Central Asian border areas contain the most serious risks from Russia's national security perspective.

Communication channels have profoundly changed. Russia's access to oceans is more limited than that of the Soviet Union. There

are three main seaports in the northern waters: Murmansk, Archangel and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii, and one or two large ports in each of the other directions: Vladivostok and Nahodka in the Far East, Novorossiisk on the Black Sea, St Petersburg and the Kaliningrad exclave on the Baltic Sea. Since most of the previous Soviet Black Sea and Baltic Sea ports were lost, contemporary port capacity is insufficient for Russia's international contacts. Novorossiisk, Murmansk and Kaliningrad are the only ports ice-free all year that are available for European connections.⁷⁵ In the future, due to its limited access to the Baltic Sea and Black Sea, Russia's policies toward these regions will obviously be active. This imbalance of needs and possibilities may result in constant tensions between Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic states.

In terms of land communications, Russia is even more isolated than by sea. The so-called "Carpathian bulge," where the borders and communications of several countries come together, is now beyond Russia, although a junction at Briansk might replace it.⁷⁶ A poor infrastructure renders domestic communications difficult. Due to the bad state of roads, for example, the average speed of trucks in Russia is only one-third of that in developed countries, and 75 percent of road construction allowances are used for repairing roads.⁷⁷ The greatest change, nevertheless, is that the majority of Russia's land communications with Western Europe now transit several countries, which makes them more expensive than formerly and subject to disturbances. The risk of an energy crisis or a breakdown of communications in Belarus together with the vulnerability of trade connections via the Baltic Sea would nearly isolate Russia from its western contacts. Russia has direct transportation communications by land with European countries beyond the CIS only in two areas: with Poland through the Kaliningrad enclave and with Finland and Norway through northwestern Russia.⁷⁸ The importance of Northern Europe as an international communication channel for Russia has grown and may grow further if Russia begins to exploit the huge energy resources of the Arctic Ocean. Russia's communications beyond the CIS are highly dependent on geography. In the future, the commercial significance of sea communications will likely grow at the expense of land communications. In the long run, however, this may change, if westernizing economies of East Central European countries makes Russia's access to Western markets physically easier.

In telecommunications, computerization and information systems Russia remains far behind the developed countries. Russia inherited from the Soviet Union eleven hundred international telephone lines with one switching center, while a hundred thousand lines for international communications would be required by the year 2000. It is estimated that an investment of sixty billion US dollars in the Russian telecommunications system would be necessary to raise it to the international level. In its level of telecommunications, Russia is rated forty-first in the world, falling at least 15-20 years behind the Western countries. In computerization Russia falls behind not only the developed countries but also the newly industrialized countries, being rated thirty-fourth in the world in the number of computers per person. The lack of a national computer network is a grave defect, even though there are developed information networks in some areas.⁷⁹ Since the major backwardness of telecommunications and nationwide computer systems is in infrastructure, it is unlikely that significant improvements will occur in the near future.

Russia's geopolitical power is diminishing in a number of areas. Industrial and agricultural production is falling, infrastructure deteriorates, taxes are not collected, salaries are not paid, and the population is becoming destitute. By the end of 1995, the gross domestic product had fallen 34 percent from the level of 1991. In 1996 industrial input was 40 percent of the country's economic activity, while it was 75 percent in the 1980s.⁸⁰ In industry more than 40 percent and in transport 60 percent of enterprises are unprofitable. In 1996 only 16 percent of companies and organizations were without serious tax trespasses and 34 percent did not pay taxes at all. From 1991 to 1995 grain production dropped 45 percent. Russia is fortieth in the world in per capita food consumption.⁸¹ About 23 percent of the population live below the poverty line⁸² (the officially designated subsistence line is equivalent to 75 USD per month). When interpreting statistics, it should be noted that in the Soviet era statistical figures painted a more positive picture than the reality, while in post-Soviet times a great deal of economic activity takes place beyond statistics. Hence, mere statistical figures give an excessively gloomy picture of the magnitude of the change. The economic crisis may perhaps be considered as a short-term difficulty, but there are other factors that may be more destructive in the long run, namely demographic developments. A

population deficit is threatening Russia. The number and quality of population is decreasing. The mean age is distressingly low, the population is deteriorating physically, psychically and mentally, and the ethno-national structure is changing. The average life span of men is 58 years (in some regions less than 50 years), while the longevity for women is 72 years, giving an average of 65 years. The number of births per thousand dropped to nine in 1996, from seventeen in 1985 and thirteen and a half in 1990. The number of deaths has risen from eleven to fifteen per thousand, which is close to some African countries. This development would result in a decrease of Russia's population from 147 million now to 123 million over the next thirty-three years.⁸³ This may cause serious difficulties in utilizing the country's natural resources. It may cause weaknesses in information, communications and the armed forces. Russia's human resources may prove insufficient to reinvigorate industry and agriculture, and the quality of intellectual work may deteriorate. Those developments may encourage foreign actors to encroach on Russian geographical space and resources, while ethnic Russians concerned about degeneration might radicalize. Konstantin Sorokin suggests that emphasis should be placed on developing the remaining internal factors of geopolitical power: natural resources, military power including nuclear weapons, and strong areas of industry like the production of military equipment.⁸⁴ When stressing the importance of natural resources, Russian geopoliticians seem to forget that in the modern world, a combination of education and natural resources, processed products, innovation and cooperation in the long run make for a strong geopolitical position and wealth rather than natural resources as such.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a relatively weak geopolitical actor. The organization exists largely on paper and its ability to act is very limited. The treaty on collective defense signed by six CIS countries has not been implemented. Nor has it been possible to create any kind of real defense within the commonwealth.⁸⁵ Trends among the CIS-states are centrifugal, and increased overall cohesion - necessary for the establishment of common strategies - is not foreseeable. Bilateral economic ties are important, although an attempt to create an economic union within the CIS failed.⁸⁶ Seven years ago Russia's imports from the former Soviet Republics covered 23 percent of Russia's machine-building needs, more than a third of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy

needs, and about 25 percent of the demands of chemical and light industries.⁸⁷ As the main supplier of oil and gas, Russia plays a significant politico-economic role among the CIS countries. Geopolitically, Belarus and Kazakhstan are Russia's most substantial CIS partners at present. Through the former, Russia can maintain some geopolitical influence in the Baltic region and maintain communications with Europe. Together with Kazakhstan, Russia could pursue security interests in the unstable Central Asian region. The axis Minsk - Moscow - Alma-Ata is important also for political stability in the territory of the former Soviet Union.⁸⁸ Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan are collaborating successfully and the links between them are likely to strengthen in the future. Kyrgyzstan is entering the triangle in some areas⁸⁹ Armenia is a focus of Russia's influence in Caucasia. One could ask whether Russia's aim is to build around itself a security system based on bilateral arrangements fulfilling the same kind of role as the Warsaw Pact for the Soviet Union.

The state of Russia's armed forces has gravely deteriorated. Combat readiness has dropped continuously since 1990. Numerous weapons systems have decayed. According to expert evaluations, only one-third of the ground forces' divisions are combat ready. About 50 percent of all Russian warships are inoperable, and the remainder is manned at about 65 percent to 70 percent level.⁹⁰ Approximately 50 percent of military aircraft are operational. Because of the shortage of kerosene, pilots fly 30 to 50 hours a year, though they should fly 180 to 240 hours to keep up necessary qualifications. The capability of Russia's nuclear forces is estimated to be about 40 percent of that of the United States. According to Defense Minister Igor Sergeev, only 80-90 percent of the necessary armament and military equipment is available. Approximately 30 percent of those are of advanced models, while the percentage of advanced models should be at least 60.⁹¹ Almost half of the former Soviet defense installations necessary for warfare are now located beyond Russia's borders. The future of Russia's military industry is uncertain. In 1986 the Soviet Union accounted for 43 percent of global arms sales. In 1996 Russia's share was 17 percent. Despite a recent rise in arms exports,⁹² the lack of domestic acquisitions and the limited capabilities of industry to develop high technologies without government support, along with shrinking defense budgets and tougher global compe-

tion, may jeopardize the survival of design bureaus and production lines as well as the long-term capacity to provide Russian armed forces with modern equipment.

When assessing the international significance of these trends, it should be noted that most great powers have sharply reduced their military commitments in the 1990s. But the Russian case is different. It is a question of an unpremeditated, uncontrolled deterioration of the defense system and a profound drop in quality, which may soon become irreparable. It is reasonable to ask whether the armed forces could defend Russia against external threats. But there is no significant external military threat against Russia at the moment. According to Defense Minister Igor Sergeev, at least by the year 2005 the probability of a large scale aggression against Russia is low. Instead, the probability of local wars touching Russia's interests is high.⁹³

The most recent concerns in Russia pertain to the survival of the armed forces, control of nuclear forces and the internal role of the army. Is there a guarantee that the nuclear arsenal will be under authorized control? Is the command structure of the armed forces reliable or will it break down? Could the armed forces cease to function as an unified organization? These are the most acute unanswered questions. Dramatically deteriorating material conditions among the troops have given rise to a risk of illegal actions by local commanders in order to sustain the soldiers' livelihood. Although the Russians may have exaggerated this gloomy picture of their armed forces in order to improve their position in negotiations, it is clear that the Russian armed forces are in crisis. However, it is not likely that the army would provoke a coup or a civil war. The army is not unified enough to do that, and the military leadership would hardly run the risk of giving orders that might not be obeyed. That risk was proved real as early as the August coup in 1991.

The above described developments together with the changes of the security environment have led to a profound reevaluation of Russia's defense system. According to Defense Minister Igor Sergeev, the main tasks of the armed forces in the future will be as follows: to provide a guaranteed nuclear containment (*iadernoe sderzhivanie*), to prevent any attempts to pressure Russia with power, to secure information security and conduct information countermeasures (*informatsionnoe protivoborstvo*), to cooperate with other

power structures to fight against terrorism, to fulfil Russia's international obligations.⁹⁴

An urgent, profound military reform is necessary, including drastic reduction in the armed forces. The dilemma is that Russia cannot afford to maintain its current armed forces but does not have the money to carry out a speedy reform. Theoretically, the optimal procedure is that a plan for a military reform is worked out in connection with the development of a national security concept and a new military doctrine. In 1997, the Security Council approved the new National Security Concept. However, the plan for the reform of the armed forces seems to outpace the doctrinal work and the doctrinal work will lag behind the other two areas, in which case economics may dictate the core of the reformation of the armed forces. By now, the deterioration of the armed forces has lasted almost for a decade. Assuming that building up the profoundly deteriorated military capabilities would take at least as long it did for them to decline, Russia cannot restore its military power before the year 2010. This is the best-case scenario.⁹⁵ According to Defense Minister Sergeev, one of the main tasks of the military reform is to create a new model for cooperation between economy, politics, society and the military organization of the state. A central part of the military reform is to reform the armed forces, to build up highly equipped, battle ready, compact and mobile armed forces that have sufficient potential for containment (*potentsial sderzhivaniia*) as well as professional, psychological and moral efficiency at a modern level. During the first phase, by the year 2000, serious qualitative changes will take place, including organizing formations and units of constant readiness in strategic directions. Army and Navy groupings in the north-west of the country, in Kaliningrad area and Leningrad Military District will be reduced by 40 percent. Here, formations above division and brigade level will not be deployed. During the reform, the Navy will be reduced, including a reduction of vessels by 20 percent. During the first phase of the reform the total strength of the armed forces will be reduced to one million two hundred thousand servicemen. During the second phase, in 2001-2005, a three-service structure of the armed forces will be established.⁹⁶

It is difficult to assess the real impact of the above-mentioned reductions, because the force levels, from which the percentages are counted, are not clearly defined. According to some estimates,

even 1.2 million men will be far more than Russia can afford in the future, especially, if it strives to create a well-equipped army and keep to the 3.5 percent level of defence spending ruled by president Yeltsin.⁹⁷ So the eventual strength of the armed forces could well be below the level of 1 million men. It is planned that from the beginning of 1999 there will be ten formations of constant readiness in the Army, including three all-arms formations, three airborne formations and four all-arms brigades. Formations of constant readiness are in full strength and capable of taking part in operations.⁹⁸ It is worth noting that those are peace-time forces.

Russia is under strong external and internal geopolitical pressures. To the west of Russia there is the Western European geopolitical core area, which includes a strengthening NATO, Germany, and European Union, penetrating into the Heartland's periphery by extending political, economic and military power closer to the Russian core area. Such a development is perceived in Russia as an indirect threat, implying that Russia could fall behind the leading powers and become subject to manipulation and intimidation. The West could dominate Russia economically and militarily, exclude it from Europe, deny its access to Eastern Europe, and limit Russia's freedom of action.⁹⁹ At present the threat is political and economic rather than military.

The relation between Russia and the Western European core area has changed. If in the early 1990s Russia's objective was to be a partner of the West in building European security, there has been subsequently a growing uncertainty whether Russia's voice will be heard. In Russia this has created feelings of exclusion, isolation and disintegration. Russia has always wanted to be a European state, albeit in its own way and without dependence on Europe. The conclusion of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation significantly improves the situation by creating a mechanism for consultation and negotiations. The value and usability of this mechanism will presumably be seen in the next 2-4 years.

Russia's most acute security threats are in the south, where geopolitical cross-pressures are focused on the Caucasian and Central Asian zones from the Russian and the Turkish-Iranian geopolitical core areas. The situation in Afghanistan concerns Russia and may be one reason for Russia's approach to Iran. The decision of Azerbaijan and Georgia in the early 1997 to form a strategic part-

nership may reduce Moscow's power in the Caucasus. This may signal a strengthening of Islamic influence in the Heartland's southern periphery. It also indicates a willingness among CIS states to collaborate on a bilateral basis, which may increase centrifugal trends in the Commonwealth. Despite the traditional policy of balancing power and the deployment of Russian military forces in Georgia and Armenia, it is unclear how Russia can maintain its hold on the region. Presumably the decline of Russia's hold is only temporary. It can be restored through Christian Armenia and Georgia, for the experience of history shows that they need Russia's support to survive in the troubled Caucasian environment.

Russia's far-eastern zone contains less acute security problems but is challenging in the long run. Three powers collaborate on Russian eastern frontiers, namely China, Japan and the United States. American interests in the area are growing. China is strengthening economically and militarily and will likely become a global power in the future. And Japan is not particularly eager to collaborate with Russia. Russia's long-term challenge is, how to maintain influence in the region.

An analysis of the Russian geopolitical situation leads to three conclusions. First, the unstable geopolitical situation as well as economic and military weakness are the main factors reducing Russia's geopolitical weight. Russia today is largely compelled to react rather than initiate, and its freedom of action and choice is dramatically diminishing. Second, it follows that internal strengthening should be the first among Russia's geopolitical objectives. In its current weakened circumstances, Russia's only major instrument is political power inherited from the Soviet Union, but even that will decline if there is no stronger economic, military and other back-up from the Russian core area. Third, it seems that Russia's only way of getting out of the crisis and protecting national interests in the long run is to create external conditions that provide a breathing spell for domestic reform. But how long will that take? Ten years ago a similar aim was set for the Soviet Union under Gorbachov. The current situation is profoundly different. Undoubtedly, the necessary time span for restoring Russia's status as a great power must now be counted in decades.

Despite the gloomy picture given above, Russia has disposable geopolitical strengths: a vast geographical territory, rich natural resources, and an advantageous location connecting Asia and

Europe. Russia holds 25 percent of the world's energy resources and is self-sufficient in raw materials. For the time being Russia has strategic nuclear parity with the United States and will maintain its strategic forces.¹⁰⁰ These are important corner stones, but a restoration of geopolitical power is possible only if the Russian political system can find solutions and carry them out.

Russia's Geopolitical Strategy Alternatives

Russia's basic geopolitical views can be clarified by comparing the contemporary situation with the situation after the Second World War, when two views of world order were clashing: the "universalist" view and the "sphere-of-influence" view. The universalist view assumed that national security could be guaranteed by an international organization, while the sphere-of-influence view assumed that it would be guaranteed by the balance of power. American thinking was considered to be universalist, while Soviet thinking represented the sphere-of-influence view.¹⁰¹ Today it seems that the Western positions favoring NATO's enlargement derive from the universalist view, while Russia's opposition reflects sphere-of-influence thinking. According to Evgenii Bazhanov's analysis (in 1996), an urge to restore its sphere of influence is one of the main goals shaping Russia's foreign policy. It should also be noted that since the early 1990s, Moscow has considered countries of the "near abroad" a zone of Russia's vital interests.¹⁰² So far these positions remain unchanged. Additionally, numerous Russian statements conclude that the West is seeking to create a structure of international relations which will ensure western dominance in European security. In the foreseeable future, the goal of influence in the "near abroad" will presumably be an essential part of Russia's code of geopolitical behavior.

In theory Russia has three strategic geopolitical alternatives: expansionary, yielding and position (status quo) strategies. Russia does not have sufficient economic or military power for an expansive strategy. This makes it implausible that an aggressive policy would be adopted by nationalist forces if they gain power in Russia. Attempted territorial expansion would drive Russia into an isolated stalemate which would likely have only one way out: a withdrawal resulting eventually in zero advantages. The lessons learned in Afghanistan are fresh in Russia's memory. In Afghani-

stan the Soviet Union for the first time discovered that military power cannot always be translated into political power as it was in the 1950s and 1960s in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.¹⁰³ Forms of expansion other than territorial seem just as inapplicable. The states of the "near abroad" as well as the neighbors of the former Soviet Union are centrifugally oriented in relation to Russia and are so anti-Russian that cultural, civilizational, religious and ethno-religious expansion in those regions is, simply put, a mission impossible. Belarus and Kazakhstan may be the sole exceptions.

The second basic alternative, a yielding strategy also seems inappropriate for several reasons. First, the current geopolitical situation is seen as an outcome of a yielding strategy applied in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The foreign policy of those years is widely criticized for giving up too much, too quickly, and without relevant compensation, including concessions in nuclear and conventional weapons and the Soviet military presence in Europe. According to critics, another kind of policy based on a step-by-step approach would have brought Russia into a more favorable geopolitical situation. Second, the entire Russian political field seems to be committed to preserving the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. Foreign policy actions of the current administration contain direct or indirect references to the necessity of restoring Russia's big power status,¹⁰⁴ which seems to be the position of the opposition as well. A yielding strategy simply does not fit this political setting. Third, territorial concessions would risk the break-up of the Russian Federation. At the moment this risk does not seem high, because outright separatist ideas are not widespread, but some republics, especially those with rich natural resources, may strive for at least partial sovereignty, despite the fact that it could be limited by economic and/or territorial dependence on Russia proper.¹⁰⁵ Moscow must take this risk into account, although it has an array of means available to put pressure on separatist areas, e.g. by limiting energy supplies, closing air space or land communications, etc. The fourth reason for not adopting a yielding strategy is that nothing at present is forcing Russia to do so. At the moment Russia can be compelled to make concessions on economic, political and politico-military issues like NATO enlargement and Chechnia, but that does not mark an adoption of a submissive strategy. On the contrary, such concessions make Russia more resistant to further retreats.

Among Russia's three geopolitical strategy alternatives, the position (status quo) strategy is the only option left. How should it be applied? Undoubtedly, an essential part of the position strategy would be to keep the countries of the "near abroad" within Russia's sphere of interest and to restrict the damage caused by NATO enlargement. At the same time, Russia should be active in its relations with other geopolitical core areas, i.e. the countries of the "far abroad," to prevent itself from becoming isolated. Geopolitical weakness is the main limitation on Russia's choices. Hence, Konstantin Sorokin suggests that Russia should play a balancing role between, and in relation to, other geopolitical power centers (Europe, United States, China, etc.). Being an arm of a balance, Russia could increase its geopolitical gravity. That would serve the interests of a temporarily weak Russia and maintain a multipolar geopolitical world order, precluding the superiority of any other power center. In order to preserve equilibrium, Russia could, for example, adjust its economic and politico-military positions in favor of one or another subject, use energy (oil, gas) deliveries for influence and make the most of contradictions between world powers, combining with one or another party depending on the situation.¹⁰⁶ In short, toward the other geopolitical power centers the position strategy would be a strategy of delaying actions by applying the traditional methods of balancing power, which Russia has used throughout history. However, Russia's success will be limited by the fact that power is necessary even for playing a balancer. Hence, being pressured in the West, Russia could become more active in the southern and eastern directions. Russia's approach to Iran can be viewed in this light. Moving closer to China is a logical element of Russia's balancing policy, knowing that the United States will presumably need good relations with Russia in the future in order to counter the growing power of China. An alliance between Russia and China is, however, highly unlikely, because China would presumably accept only one role in such an alliance, namely the role of the leader. It also seems that China's policy is oriented toward a broad international cooperation rather than creating alliances.

Geopolitical realities put restrictions on Russia's policies toward the "near abroad." Ideas of reunifying the former Soviet Republics or rebuilding the Russian Empire are unrealistic. To build the Russian/Soviet imperium required hundreds of years; now,

even though rebuilding might be desired, Russia does not possess the means even to begin. The use of force is clearly excluded in the foreseeable future, and the countries of the "near abroad" do not want to join Russia voluntarily, except for Belarus. The orientations of the neighbors go to the opposite direction. Russia has irrevocably lost the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, and there is no possibility that Russia could make itself attractive to its closest neighbors in terms of reunification. Quite the opposite, the experience of the Soviet era makes the neighbors avoid close political ties with Russia. Nor are there economic incentives for reunification, because Russia's economy is falling behind most of the former Soviet Republics. According to the Russian Institute of Economic Analysis, the countries of the "near abroad" can be divided into four groups as regards the success of economic reform. The first group includes all three Baltic states. Moldova, Kyrgystan, Armenia and Georgia can be assigned to the second group. Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan make up the third group, and Belarus, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan belong to the fourth. In the middle of 1992, Russia was the leader among the reforming countries, but it soon fell behind the Baltic states, then it lagged behind the second group and now Russia is falling closer to the countries of the fourth group, which have the slowest pace of economic reform or have in practice abandoned it.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Russia is losing economic ground in the CIS countries to the West.¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless, collaboration with Russia is vital to several countries of the "near abroad," especially in economics and some areas of security (e.g. border guarding). But the newly independent states seem to avoid forming alliances that could give Russia dominance over their affairs. For example, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan have taken a decisive stand against all plans on creating a defense alliance within the CIS.¹⁰⁹

Since attempts to integrate the CIS have met firm resistance and in some cases led to unambiguously negative reactions, Russia is compelled to build relations with the "near abroad" bilaterally instead of through multilateral, unified strategies.¹¹⁰ Hence, the leading goal of Russia's geopolitical relations with the "near abroad" will likely be to influence these countries individually, focusing on areas and functions that are important to Russia. Undoubtedly, the existence of Russian interests and the availability of geopolitical instruments in each case are preconditions for con-

ducting these policies. However, for pursuing geopolitical goals in the “near abroad,” neither Russia’s physical presence nor total geopolitical control over those countries are necessary.

3 GEOPOLITICAL TRENDS IN THE BALTIC REGION

The Geopolitical Position of the Baltic Sea - the Historical Context

Throughout modern history since the thirteenth century, the Baltic Sea has been an area of conflict between East and West. The conflicts have stemmed from opposing economic and military interests not only among the littoral states but also among external powers. Geopolitically, Baltic history during the last five hundred years is dominated by a rivalry between two major geopolitical trends. First, the Baltic powers have attempted to close the Danish Straits and make the Baltic sea into a *mare clausum*, a closed sea, to increase their influence in the area. Second, Western European naval powers have attempted to keep the Danish Straits open in order to make the Baltic into a *mare liberum*, a free sea, to increase influence. The aim has been to ensure one's own freedom of movement in and out of the Baltic Sea and deny the opponent's.¹¹¹

From the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, Sweden, Denmark and the Hanseatic League dominated traffic within the Baltic Sea as well as into and out of it. The Hanseatic towns sought to make the Baltic Sea into a *mare clausum*. In the latter part of the fifteenth century, Russia challenged the Hanseatic League, Russia's interests coinciding with those of Holland to make the Baltic Sea a *mare liberum*, a free trade area. Holland influenced the situation in the Baltic Sea through the seventeenth century. With the decline of Holland's power and the rise of British seapower, Britain and Russia became the main competitors for the control of access to the Baltic Sea. A *mare liberum* was Britain's interest. Russia, however, established hegemony in the Baltic in the eighteenth century and through the first half of the nineteenth. In the mid-nineteenth century British interests lessened as a result of industrialization and a shift of attention to Africa and Asia. Now Germany emerged as the leading power in the area up to the end of World War I and sought to make the Baltic a *mare clausum*. In the interwar period, Germany and the Soviet Union, being both *mare clausum* powers, were competing in the region, and as the revived British interests waned in the mid-1930s,¹¹² Germany and Russia dominated the

Baltic Sea until the end of World War II. Through the post-World War II era up to the 1990s, the Soviet Union largely dominated the Baltic Sea. Yet the post-war period brought a new geopolitical actor into the Baltic arena, namely the United States, which through NATO had strategic interests in the region. It challenged the Soviet *mare clausum* regime and took over the role of Germany as a containing power on the Soviet/Russian influence. The Baltic region became a part of the Northern European power balance, being the far east of the NATO-Warsaw Pact frontier. With the development of military air power and missile technologies the Baltic Sea became linked to the strategic entity consisting of the Kola Peninsula and northern Norway.¹¹³

Post-Cold War developments in the Baltic region have brought constant change. It seems that the political environment will remain in a state of flux, and a renewed *status quo* is not foreseen. After the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, the political situation has evolved from fragmentation to cooperation and integration. The role of the European Union is strengthening in the Baltic region, promoting integration and reforms in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Regional cooperation is gaining strength. The Council of the Baltic Sea States, founded in 1992, encompasses all the regional countries. The Nordic countries contribute to the Baltic states' political, economic and security policy reforms. With the break up of the Cold-War politico-military confrontation, economic interests are gaining importance in the Baltic Sea region. On the southern and eastern shores there are new developing market economies, the foreign economic relations of which are growing. The Baltic Sea itself is becoming more important as a transportation route. It is foreseen that the volume of sea transportation will grow significantly during the next ten to fifteen years.¹¹⁴ In terms of security, NATO enlargement is the major challenge to political and military stability in the region.

The following conclusions emerge from this historical survey. First, the major geopolitical transitions in the Baltic basin have been closely linked to rise and/or fall of great powers. Second, until the twentieth century the geopolitical interests of the littoral and external powers in the Baltic were mainly economic. In the twentieth century until the end of the Cold War, military considerations dominated the Baltic geopolitical setting.¹¹⁵ In the 1990s, economic activities are gaining more importance, supported by consensus

among the nations on an economic *mare liberum* status of the Baltic. Third, maritime power has played an important role throughout history, but the control of the Baltic Sea has been mainly based on the control of its shores. And finally, the *mare clausum* - *mare liberum* paradigm has been transformed over the centuries. The significance of the Danish straits as the focal point of a closed/free sea has declined, while the economies of the littoral states have become more important as regards freedom of trade. In military terms the Danish straits maintain their geostrategic importance, although in the contemporary situation, none of the states tend to challenge the current status of the straits as a military *mare liberum* in NATO's regime.

The Historical Context of the Baltic States' Common Geopolitical Position

The history of the Baltic Sea actually covers a lot of the history of the Baltic peoples. In the eleventh century, the chronicler Bishop Adam of Bremen first used the name *Mare Balteum* in 1075. Herodotus, as early as the fifth century BC, referred to the Balts as "Neyrii." These were later considered as the ancestors of the Baltic Prussians, Lithuanians and Latvians, who since 2000 BC occupied the northern shores of the Baltic Sea north of the Vistula, in the basins of the Nemunas and the lower Daugava rivers. The Baltic peoples are utterly different from the Russians. They arrived originally from elsewhere: the Finnic Estonians probably from Ural-Altai region and the Latvian-Lithuanians apparently from south-western Europe. The Baltic languages are not a part of the Slavic group, and the Balts belong to Western European civilization and culture. The area covered by the three states presents a coastal plain that rises from the Baltic shores toward a region of rolling wooded hills.¹¹⁶ It is worth noting that the historic ethnographic border between the Baltic peoples and Russia has run roughly along the same lines for more than thousand years, at least since the era of Kievan Rus in the ninth century. And even earlier, in 200 BC-AD 750, the first Slav expansion to the northwest came to a halt in the same areas, as did the Tatar invasions in the thirteenth century.¹¹⁷ Undoubtedly, the reason lies in geography: the broad belt of marshes, swampy rivers, lakes, and peat-moss forests, extending from Lake Peipus down to the upper Pripet Marshes,¹¹⁸ has been a significant phys-

ical impediment.

The Teutonic Knights, backed by the Danes held sway over Latvia and Estonia beginning in the late twelfth century. The Swedish period of the Baltic states began at the end of the sixteenth century and lasted for a century and a half, until Russia conquered the lands.¹¹⁹ Throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Baltic provinces were a battleground for Poland, Sweden and Russia. In World War I the Baltic area was a battleground between Russia and Germany, as it was in World War II after the twenty-two years of the Baltic states' independence in 1918-1940.

Already before the modern age, the geopolitical significance of the Baltic area was commercial, stemming from its location on the important waterway that connected European centres through a river network with Greece and Byzantium. Commercial reasons made the Baltic region initially important for Russia. Ivan IV (the Terrible, tsar in 1533-1584) fought for many years in vain to open an outlet to the Baltic Sea to establish a trade route. At that time the Baltic area was a maritime zone, while Russia was a landlocked hinterland, possessing only one seaport in Europe, namely Archangel¹²⁰ (founded in 1584) on the White Sea, difficult to navigate and too far in the north. Peter I (the Great) eventually succeeded in opening a window to the West through the Gulf of Finland and by absorbing the Baltic coast down to Riga in 1721. In previous centuries the conquest of the Baltic provinces had been a key to dominating the Baltic Sea.¹²¹ Under Russia's sway the Baltic area assumed the role of a gateway between Russia and Europe (Germany in particular), which was one of Peter I's aims, both in trade and in culture. Fiscal considerations were predominant in Peter I's foreign policy.¹²² Consequently, in Russia's expansion into the Baltic area, "commercial strategy" was predominant, followed by military strategy. Until the twentieth century, economic considerations were also foremost among the Western powers' interests in the Baltic area, because the area provided a gateway to the Russian market, a bridge between Europe and Russia. The Baltic area had a role in supporting seafaring, providing maintenance for sail-powered wooden ships, but the role vanished with the replacement of sail power by steam power in the late nineteenth century.¹²³

When assessing the geopolitical significance of the Baltic region to Russia after Peter I's reign, Russia's other outlets to seas and oceans should be considered. Russia was able to establish Black

Sea ports only in the 1770s. Yet the sea remained closed to Russia because the Ottomans controlled both shores of the straits, and sending warships out required their agreement.¹²⁴ In 1829 Russia extended its control of the Black Sea coast to Poti in the east:¹²⁵ but as a result of the Crimean War (1853-1856), its right to keep its fleet on the Black Sea was taken away.¹²⁶ Russia's Far Eastern seaports became strategically important only after 1891, when the Trans-Siberian railway was opened. In Europe, the Murmansk port was founded only in 1916. Thus the Baltic Sea was Russia's only stable outlet to warm seas for almost two hundred years. St Petersburg was defended by a fortress-fleet strategy in the Gulf of Finland,¹²⁷ and the conquest of Finland in 1809 guaranteed St Petersburg's security from the northwest. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Baltic states' area was perhaps more important to Russia than at any time.

It is often erroneously said that the fundamental Baltic problem is the struggle for dominance between Russia and Germany. In fact, that became true only in this century, for the Baltic provinces were never faced with a definite Russo-German alternative until 1914. After World War I, each Baltic state signed peace treaties with Germany and Soviet Russia in 1920, and gradually a *modus vivendi* with the USSR was worked out.¹²⁸ The Baltic states became an important channel of commerce.¹²⁹ But the true geopolitical position of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania was that of a buffer zone, although they were not created as buffer states in the Versailles Treaty. During the interwar decades the rivalry between Germany and the Soviet Union was temporarily dormant. The Soviet Union was still anxious to obtain ice-free ports in the Baltic.¹³⁰ The more conspicuous the German threat, the greater was the Soviet Union's military interest in the Baltic region. The Baltic states' constructive foreign policy was aimed at improving their security and balancing relations between Russia and Germany,¹³¹ but it did not succeed. Buffer zone countries are safe as long as the geopolitical centers around them are mutually balanced. In the 1930s, in their neutrality policy the Baltic states followed the Swedish pattern, but as Alfred Bilmanis puts it sarcastically, "the trouble was that the Baltic states were geographically on the wrong Baltic shore."¹³² After World War II, military and economic interests predominated in Russia's relations with the Baltic republics.

Assessments of the Future Geopolitical Trends in the Baltic Region

In the foregoing sections I have invoked the geopolitical model that John P. LeDonne developed to describe and explain the methods and goals of Russian foreign policy during the Russian Empire. This model can be applied in an interpretation of the geopolitical reasons for the dissolution of the Soviet Union. But can the model be applied to the contemporary situation? Not directly, because it is based on the assumption that Russia has the power of initiative, which is not the case now at least regarding Europe. But the model may be of some use nevertheless in speculating about future developments. In its framework NATO enlargement means a penetration of the Western European geopolitical core area close to the Russian geopolitical core area, backed with strong support from the American core area. Just as Russia's (and later the Soviet Union's) expansion to the west was contained through the centuries and as Russia's actual political statements indicate, it can be expected that the current Western expansion will meet resistance from the Russian core area. A key question is, where could or should the optimum line of enlargement¹³³ run in relation to Russia? It is not within the scope of this paper to answer precisely, but history shows that the closer the line gets to Russia, and the more the Western core area projects power into the the Russian core area, the stronger will be Russian resistance and containment and the higher the tension along the surface of contact.¹³⁴ How will Russia's policy and strategy interact with these geopolitical developments and how will they affect the situation in the Baltic region? How could cooperation between Russia and the West affect the developments? Could confrontation be mitigated by economic cooperation?

It is possible to advance six scenarios delineating the long-term developments in the European geopolitical picture from the perspective of East-West relations. I would like to point out that the scenarios are not meant to be prognoses. Neither do they reflect my assessments on probabilities of future developments. They are first of all meant to serve as a framework for assessing the width of the spectrum in international developments.

The first scenario could be called "*NATO's restrained enlargement*". In this scenario, the relations between Russia and the West will be dominated by NATO enlargement in the near future. How-

ever, in the long run NATO enlargement as a crucial factor for the relations will become a secondary issue. Countries bordering Russia¹³⁵ will not become NATO members. Russia will keep its current position strategy and cooperate with NATO. The East Central European countries will fall into two groups: NATO members and non-allied countries. Non-allied countries will closely cooperate with NATO. Russia attempts to influence the countries near abroad in order to make them act in a way that serves Russia's security interests. There will be no major tension between Russia and the West. Tensions may appear if strength relations change over the decades to come. The security of the countries bordering Russia will depend to a great extent on the way they arrange their relations with the European Union, NATO and Russia. The EU enlargement takes place in areas bordering Russia, and cooperation between the EU and Russia will partially stabilize the security political situation. In the Baltic Sea region, economic and political aspects will constitute the major aspects of the security political situation, while military issues will lie in the background. The Baltic Sea will remain a *mare liberum* controlled by NATO.

The second scenario could be called "*NATO enlarges and changes significantly*". In this scenario, the relations between Russia and the West will be dominated by NATO enlargement, but later its influence on the relations will diminish. NATO will enlarge widely and profoundly change as an organization. Its role as a politico-military defensive alliance will be gradually replaced by a new role of a collective security organisation. Article 5 tasks will in practice be moved to the background as a result of new tasks, the growing number of members and the lack of military threats. Countries bordering Russia will become NATO members. Peacekeeping and crisis management will become major functions. At the same time, NATO members' geographical area of activity enlarges, extending beyond the Atlantic region to other parts of the world. Russia cooperates with NATO in this transformation, attempting to dilute the Alliance's military role. Collective security will be the outcome of this scenario, but military security guarantees to the member states may grow weaker as the nature of the Alliance changes. Regional groupings may emerge within the Alliance, leading perhaps to weaker cohesion. In the Baltic Sea region, some tension will prevail while Russia strives to increase its influence in NATO's activities and neutralize the Alliance. Over the long run,

with a possible dilution of NATO as a politico-military defensive alliance, the security of some European countries may become subject to disturbances and pressures.

The third scenario can be called "*The European Union will come ahead*". In this scenario, the relations between Russia and the West will be dominated by the EU's enlargement and its impact. The importance of international economic cooperation in Russia's international relations will grow, while military considerations will be moved to the background. From Russia's perspective, along with the enlargement of the EU, the advantages of economic cooperation with the EU will exceed the disadvantages Russia experiences as to NATO enlargement. NATO enlargement as a generator of tension will remain in the background. The bipolar setting between Russia and the West will be gradually replaced by a multipolar European setting. In the Baltic Sea region, economic considerations will take over, while military aspects in the security political setting will remain in the background.

The fourth scenario is called "*Russia's cohesion will weaken*". In this scenario, the evolution of the security political situation in Europe will be crucially influenced by Russia's internal developments. As a result of Russia's internal economic and political changes the power of the central administration in relation to the regions will weaken. The regions will become more independent, which can occur even without violence or power politics. Formally Russia will continue to exist as a state, but the regions will not be under the control of the center. Russia's international weight will diminish. The geopolitical Russia-West setting will gradually be replaced by a multipolar order. The European Union will enlarge to the east, which will also improve the economic situation of Russia's western regions. Countries bordering Russia may become NATO members.

Finally, I would like to advance two bipolarity-confrontation scenarios, though I do not consider them very probable. The fifth scenario could be called "*The rise of Russia*". In this scenario, relations between Russia and the West are dominated by NATO enlargement. Countries bordering Russia will become NATO members. Russia will maintain its current policy and the position strategy and will manage to maintain its political weight in the world arena. There will be constantly tension between Russia and the West. Over the coming decades, Russia manages to restore its eco-

conomic, political and military power. As Russia strengthens, it will put an increasing political and military pressure on the East Central European countries and the West. The political and economic price for military presence in the countries bordering Russia will become too high for the cohesion of the West. That will result in political fragmentation within the western sphere, weakening of NATO's cohesion after an extensive enlargement and accordingly weakening NATO's military commitments in the countries bordering Russia. The outcome is that democracy and free market economies are promoted in the countries bordering Russia, but eventually NATO membership will not significantly improve their security. According to this scenario, the economic element in the Baltic Sea region will grow but political and military tensions will partially undermine favourable economic developments. There will be constantly at least latent tension between Russia and NATO. The Baltic Sea remains at the beginning militarily a *mare liberum* controlled by NATO, but later the regime will be challenged at least in the eastern parts of the sea by the rising power of Russia.

The sixth scenario is called "*Tension at the beginning, followed by profound changes in Russia*". According to this scenario, NATO enlargement and the economic penetration of the West into Russia will dominate international developments. Countries bordering Russia will become NATO members. Russia keeps to its current policy and the position strategy, resisting and attempting to contain the Western enlargement. The Western influence in the Russian geopolitical core area is political, economic and military, and it soon becomes evident that Russia is neither cooperative nor powerful enough to resist. Russia is forced to change policy and resort to a yielding strategy, accepting the western expansion. The overall situation is tense at the beginning, but mainly politically, since Russia is not able to respond militarily. The position of the Russian core area will weaken, resulting perhaps in separatism and centrifugal trends within it. This may ultimately mean neutralization of the Russian geopolitical core area and increasing Western influence within it. (In such a development China would also have its word to say.) The Western influence will eventually speed up economic progress in Russia, but that would happen mainly under Western control. The international atmosphere will be strained at the beginning, but with the change of Russia's policy, *détente* will prevail. In the Baltic Sea region, economic activities are first influ-

enced by the politically and militarily tense situation, but soon economic considerations will come to the fore. The Baltic Sea will remain a *mare liberum* controlled by NATO.

These scenarios are simplified, because their purpose is to identify major alternatives. There may well be other combinations as well. First, it may be asked whether Russia could accept NATO's enlargement to the bordering countries and yet fully cooperate with NATO. Yes, it could, but I do not see that as a separate scenario because sooner or later such a situation would lead to developments along the lines of the fifth ("*The rise of Russia*") or sixth ("*Tension at the beginning, followed by profound changes in Russia*") scenario, i.e. either to the weakening of the Western influence or to Russia's weakening. However, cooperation in that case could be possible along the developments of the third scenario ("*The European Union will come ahead*"), if economic aspects take over military considerations. In Russia, NATO is perceived as a representative of American power, and Russia will not voluntarily accommodate to NATO's presence on its frontiers. The contrast is mainly military and political. The European Union is different in Russian thinking. It is a European and an economic community, albeit developing common foreign and security policy.

A second question is: could Russia join NATO or could the Russian geopolitical core area merge with the Western European core area? History gives a number of examples of geopolitical core areas that have been neutralized. The neutralization of the Russian core area is possible because of its political, economic and military weakness, but it is not probable. The area of Russia is vast, rich in natural resources, and has an advantageous geographical position covering both Europe and Asia. A merger of the Russian geopolitical core area with the Western one might happen in the way depicted in the third ("*The European Union will come ahead*"), fourth ("*Russia's cohesion will weaken*") or sixth ("*Tension at the beginning, followed by profound changes in Russia*") scenario. A merger with the West by maintaining the current Russian control over the Heartland is unlikely because of the wide economic gap between the East and the West, which is likely to remain also in the foreseeable future. Besides, the United States would hardly agree to such a marriage, because it would create too strong a core area in Eurasia, where it is a long-term American interest to prevent any Eurasian power center from gaining a dominant position. Russia's mem-

bership in NATO is most unlikely. The Russian Federation would join NATO only if provided with a position equal to that of the United States, which the United States will not accept because it would undermine the transatlantic link. In any case, Russia's membership might bring too many conflicts from inside Russia into NATO. The picture would change, of course, if NATO becomes a collective security organization at the expense of the Article 5 obligations, assuming, for example, the role of the military crisis management tool of the OSCE.

From the perspective of the Baltic states there are a lot of common features in the scenarios. First, in all the scenarios the Baltic Sea remains a *mare liberum* controlled by the West, and Russia is militarily pushed to the eastern rim of the region, limited in military freedom of action. Second, Russia's attempts to make the Baltic into a *mare clausum* are not envisaged in any scenario. Third, in all scenarios the imbalance of power in the Baltic Sea environment and attempts to restore equilibrium are primary geopolitical influences affecting the Baltic countries. Fourth, the military contact surface of the Western and Russian core areas lies at the Baltic states. Fifth, in all scenarios, at least latent geopolitical pressure from Russia is imposed on the Baltic countries. When Poland becomes a NATO member, Russia's interests will be focused on the East-Baltic littoral as the only open flank corridor between it and the West. If Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania join NATO, the pressure will be stronger. It could be mitigated in the second ("*NATO enlarges and changes significantly*"), third ("*The European Union will come ahead*") and fourth ("*Russia's cohesion will weaken*") scenario.

In all scenarios the position of the Baltic states is affected by a number of intertwined decisions made by international actors. NATO's dilemma is that if the enlargement does not reach Russia's borders, it will partition the East Central European countries, and if the enlargement reaches Russia's borders, there is a risk of partitioning Europe. The attitude of Finland and Sweden to NATO membership is important from the perspective of Russia's attitude to the Baltic states. When Finland and Sweden remain non-allied, there are less reasons for Russia to attempt to pressure on the Baltic states. In the current situation, from NATO's perspective the Baltic countries, Finland, and Sweden can be viewed as one strategic entity. Russia would presumably welcome non-allied countries around the Baltic states. This conclusion is supported by an analo-

gy from history: after 1815, when the Swedish geopolitical core area was neutralized and Swedish foreign policy became pro-Russian, the position of Finland was easier in relation to Russia. By the same token, after World War II Finland's position in relation to the Soviet Union was mitigated by the fact that there was neutral Sweden to the west of Finland.

4 RUSSIA'S MILITARY INTERESTS IN THE EAST-BALTIC LITTORAL

In the 1990s three major factors have affected the contemporary security situation in the Baltic area: (1) the collapse of the Warsaw Pact; (2) the dissolution of the Soviet Union; (3) the implementation of arms control treaties affecting conventional forces in Europe. In addition to the withdrawal of the troops from Central Europe, the Soviet Union/Russia lost its access to the sea via the Baltic republics. It also lost shipyards, garrisons, dry docks and storages on the southern and eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea. In the 1980s, the Soviet Union had in the Baltic republics two motorized-rifle divisions, one airborne, one coastal defense and two training divisions, as well as eleven air force, air defense and naval aviation regiments, totaling some 120.000 troops. There were Soviet naval bases in each Baltic republic, namely Paldisk, Tallinn, Riga, Liepaja and Klaipeda. The region was also an important air defense area, comprising an extensive early warning system, several airfields and a command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) system. After the withdrawal of all this, Russia's geostrategic situation resembles the situation of the Soviet Union before World War II, the single major difference being that Russia now possesses the Kaliningrad exclave. The Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) meant the destruction of nearly half the heavy weaponry of the former Soviet Armed Forces as well as limitations on the size of Russia's forces in certain areas.¹³⁶ The content of the future adaptation of the treaty is a question mark for the time being, but presumably Russia will seek to increase its freedom of action in the flank areas, which will touch upon the Baltic Sea region as well. But what are Russia's military-strategic and geostrategic interests in the changed situation? What are the geostrategic key areas in the Baltic region? I address these questions next.

Common and Land-Strategic Aspects

The main strategic emphasis of Russia's military interests in the Baltic states' area has changed over the centuries. In the era of Peter I, the emphasis was on sea strategy, because the region was

acquired for the establishment of sea communications. After Peter I's reign, the sea-strategic significance of the East-Baltic littoral apparently remained a major military motive for Russia's dominance over the region from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. In those years, as a result of Russia's expansion to central Poland (in 1795), the likelihood of a threat by land through the Baltic provinces was relatively low. With Germany's rise as the dominant power on the Baltic Sea in the mid-nineteenth century, the importance of the Baltic area grew from both land-strategic and sea-strategic perspectives. Russia's response included building a sea-fortress in 1912-1917 to defend St Petersburg in the Gulf of Finland, while Russian ground forces in the East-Baltic littoral were grouped for an attack to East Prussia. The coastal and naval defense requirements of St Petersburg tied Estonia and southern Finland together into one entity in Russian strategic views. Russia's seaward defense plan in the Gulf of Finland in 1914 comprised several lines of defense covering the Estonian, Finnish and Russian coasts and extending from the Hiiumaa (Estonia) - Hanko (Finland) line in the west to the Kronshtadt line in the east. The Soviet Union's military interests in the Gulf of Finland prior to World War II were focused on the same coastal and sea areas, the difference being that in the 1930s the Soviet Union no longer controlled the Estonian and Finnish coasts.¹³⁷

Both World War I and World War II, however, showed that the foremost military significance of the Baltic republics to Russia was land-strategic. The Germans occupied Lithuania and southern Latvia by land in 1915, but they were stopped south of the Daugava river for two years,¹³⁸ after which Estonia was occupied in 1917. In May 1915, Liepaja, Russia's most formidable naval base, was easily taken by the Germans.¹³⁹ In World War II Germany conquered Lithuania and Latvia up to Riga in eight days, conducting a typical ground forces' operation. The time gained by the Soviet troops in the Baltic area, although small in the beginning, was a major contribution to saving the city of Leningrad. So in both wars the Baltic states were, in effect, a defense outpost of St Petersburg.

In the post-World War II era, two major developments affected the geostrategic interests of the Soviet Union in the Baltic republics. First, the traditional role of the East Baltic littoral as a land and sea-strategic defensive zone of the Leningrad/St Petersburg region diminished when the Soviet Union extended its influence

into Central Europe. At the same time the East-Baltic littoral assumed a new role, a springboard for projecting Soviet military power into the Straits of Denmark area as part of wartime combined arms operations.¹⁴⁰ Second, the evolution of air force and missile technologies gave rise to a new dimension, the importance of the Baltic region as a deployment area for air surveillance and early warning assets. In the post-Cold War era, after the loss of these areas, Russia's position is more difficult than ever before, because threat perceptions now include an air component in addition to the traditional land and sea components.

Four key geostrategic areas directly affect the military security of the East Baltic region. These are: (1) Poland; (2) the passage of the Gulf of Finland together with the Aland Islands and Southern Finland; (3) the St Petersburg area; (4) the Straits of Denmark. The geostrategic significance of these areas is directly reflected in Russo-Baltic relations. The importance of the first and third key areas for Russia has remained almost unchanged throughout history, while the significance of the Straits of Denmark and the passage of the Gulf of Finland has varied depending on the extent of Russia's or the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. The history of the region shows that the more unstable are relations between Russia and the powers which control the territory of Poland, the passage of the Gulf of Finland, and the Straits of Denmark, the greater is Russia's security interest in the areas of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The significance of the Polish key area is mainly land-strategic. The passage of the Gulf of Finland and the Straits of Denmark are predominantly of sea-strategic importance, while the security of the St Petersburg area is linked mainly to air- and land-strategic aspects. In the following, I address the areas in more detail.

The geostrategic position of the Baltic states' area in terms of land warfare is determined by its location by the side of a major historical east-west/west-east channel of expansion. This is the northern European plain, which has been the main strategic attack line from west to east and east to west throughout history. The plain is also called the north European lowland or German-Polish lowland. It is wedge-shaped, widening to the east and extending from the Netherlands through northern Germany and Poland to Russia. The total east-west extent of the plain is over 800 miles, with a width at least 250 miles. Over the entire plain, the relief does not rise over 900 feet except in some areas of Pomerania and

East Prussia (Kaliningrad).¹⁴¹ Poland is located within the northern European plain, being geostrategically crucial to Russia. At the Yalta conference in 1945 Stalin characterized the significance of Poland by saying that Poland has always been a question of life and death for Russia. Throughout history Poland has been the corridor for attacks on Russia. A top postwar priority of any Russian regime must be to close that corridor.¹⁴² The importance of the region was demonstrated as early as the late eighteenth century, when Russia expanded into central Poland as far as the Warsaw area, which allowed it to threaten Berlin, Vienna and the northern regions. Later, when Germany controlled Warsaw, this situation was reversed. When operating along the northern European lowland, an attacker (or defender) must neutralize the threat against its northern flank, i.e. the threat from the Baltic states' area. At a minimum, the southern Baltic area up to the Daugava River should be taken under control. This connection links Poland and the Baltic countries into the same geostrategic entity and is an obvious reason why Lithuania has so often been a corridor for attacks.¹⁴³ From the Russian perspective, the East-Baltic littoral is not only an attacker's flank but also may open a separate attack line toward St Petersburg.

Each Baltic country has a slightly different geostrategic significance for Russia. Estonia has traditionally been linked to the passage of the Gulf of Finland and to the defense of the St Petersburg area. Latvia's position is central, wherefrom power can be directed both to north and south. This may be a reason for the Soviet Union's strong military presence and build-up of infrastructure in Latvia during the Cold War, and consequently for Latvia's extensive Russification. The southernmost Baltic areas are linked rather to the Central European strategic entity. This was reflected, for example, in the Soviet strategic command system in 1975, in which Estonia and Latvia belonged to the northwestern theater of strategic military actions (TSMA), which included the northwestern USSR and Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland as its main operation area. Lithuania and Kaliningrad belonged to the western TSMA that included the Straits of Denmark. So the Soviet ground forces in Kaliningrad and Lithuania were planned for operations in Central Europe.¹⁴⁴

In neither intentions nor capability is there any major military threat against Russia from Europe at present, nor is any threat like-

ly to emerge in the foreseeable future. However, in Russia's armed forces, as in any army, continuous threat analysis and wartime operations planning are a part of normal military activities as precautionary measures. Threat analyses are also indispensable for building up Russia's defence system, which was broken up in the Baltic region more thoroughly than anywhere else in the former Soviet domain. Presumably the main military danger, however unlikely, is the emerging NATO countries' ability to conduct a surprise aircraft-missile strike against the whole of Russia. Hypothetically NATO's aircraft would reach the lines of Smolensk-Briansk-Kursk and Petrozavodsk-Iaroslavl-Belgorod.¹⁴⁵ From the discussion above, it appears that one of the Russian military threat scenarios touching the Baltic states would be a strategic offensive through Poland to Russia, with a closely connected threat from the Baltic land area toward the St Petersburg-Pskov-Novgorod area.¹⁴⁶ Russia's main strategic interest in such a situation is to "close the Polish door" and repel the threat from the Baltic littoral against St Petersburg and its southern regions. Russian forces would operate in at least two major areas: (1) Kaliningrad - Belarus, and (2) the frontier area between Russia and the Baltic states. In the first area, Kaliningrad and West Belarus are gateposts of Russia's operations, especially important in case Russia's strategic operation concept is offensive defense.¹⁴⁷ Kaliningrad is geostrategically very important for Russia. The exclave is a significant bridgehead of surveillance, intelligence and threat projection in peacetime as well as in a strained international situation and during a threat of war. In war the strategic value of the Kaliningrad region will drop dramatically if it remains isolated. The wartime role and strategic tasks of the region will be reflected in peacetime troop levels and types. To a degree the current high levels are a result of the hasty withdrawal of Soviet/Russian troops¹⁴⁸ from the East Central European and Baltic republics. It remains to be seen whether the levels will be changed in future, depending on the results of military reform and particularly the doctrinal and structural changes within Russia's armed forces.¹⁴⁹

Military cooperation between Russia and Belarus is on the increase. The Treaty on the Union of Belarus and Russia signed in 1997 is militarily important for Russia, providing a formal basis for the further development of military cooperation between the two countries, although the treaty may be symbolic in other re-

spects. Stating that one of the aims of the Union is to ensure security and maintain a high level of defense capacity as well as to strengthen fraternal relations in the military sphere among others,¹⁵⁰ the Union Treaty clearly implies the possibility of extending Russia's defense systems into the territory of Belarus.¹⁵¹ Subsequently, wide military cooperation between Russia and Belarus has been established. According to Russia's defence minister Igor' Sergeev (October 1998), practical steps in common protection of air and cosmic space of the two states have become possible. A joint air defence system has been established and is functioning, including joint air defence alert. The Russo-Belarusian treaty on military cooperation as well as the agreement on common provision of regional security have been ratified by Russian parliament. In October 1998, a meeting of the common college of the Russian and Belorussian defence ministries took place in Moscow. The parties discussed questions related to defining goals and tasks of common defence as well as the composition of the groupings of troops and their command. Agreements were signed on the common use of military infrastructure of Belarus and Russia and on the exchange of information. According to defence minister Sergeev, the political decisions on the creation of common defence between the two states are being realized.¹⁵² These developments may create pressure all along Lithuania's eastern border and Latvia's southeastern border. The use of Belarussian territory helps Russia close "the Polish door" and extend surveillance and defense to the west, partially compensating for the earlier losses of Russia's positions in the Baltic littoral.

After the closure of Russia's early warning radar station in Skrunda, Latvia, the utilization of Belarussian territory has helped Russia compensate the weakening of its air and cosmic surveillance capacity in the west. As a result of the closure, the space between the British Islands and Greenland within a radius of two thousand five hundred kilometres from the Skrunda station will apparently remain "dark" in Russia's surveillance system. For the replacement of the Skrunda station, a new radar station is said to be under construction in Baranovichi, Belarus.¹⁵³ In the second operation area, on the eastern frontiers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Russia builds up its defense around the nucleus of the troops stationed in the southern parts of the Leningrad Military District, consisting in the early 1997 of one airborne divi-

sion (location: Pskov), one motorized rifle brigade (Vladimirskiy Lager), two designated permanent storage sites (Novgorod and St Petersburg south), further to the north from St Petersburg : one training center (Osinovaya Roshcha), one designated permanent storage site (Cherenaya Roshcha) and one motorized rifle brigade (Kamenka). Russia's conventional forces in Leningrad Military District have been significantly reduced. However, the remaining conventional forces are better equipped than most of Russian forces in other districts. That together with the presence of naval infantry and airborne forces indicate that warfighting capabilities have been given higher priority than in most of the other regions of Russia.¹⁵⁴

In case of war there will inevitably be pressure to extend Russia's defenses to the territory of the Baltic states. Russia's interest in the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) in 1996 seemed to be aimed at improving its military capability in respect of the Baltic states. Russia's objectives in the future adaptation of the CFE Treaty might include even higher ceilings for Russian troops in the Pskov district. Presumably preparations for the worst-case scenario - NATO membership for the Baltic states - have been initiated in Russia, at least in terms of contingency planning.

Sea-Strategic Aspects

Sea-strategically the Baltic Sea is an open flank leading into Russia's vital areas. When assessing the significance of Baltic Sea space to Russia, three things should be taken into account. First, since the era of sail-powered wooden ships, no major naval battles have taken place on the Baltic. Second, Russia's control over the Baltic Sea has been based mainly on control of its coastlands. The performance of the Soviet navy on the Baltic in World War II was worse than in World War I and can be disregarded. Much more relevant strategically were Stalin's political efforts to expand influence in the Baltic region after the war.¹⁵⁵ Third, since Russia's presence in the littorals has been a high priority along with an emphasis on land warfare, it seems that the Russians view strategic straits more as barriers, where operation areas can be closed off, rather than as Russia's vital communications links.¹⁵⁶ In the first instance this refers to the Straits of Denmark during the Cold War, but it may also concern

the passage of the Gulf of Finland at the present. Historically, the sea-strategic focus in the Gulf of Finland has been on closing the passage rather than on maritime operations in the Gulf itself. Russia has traditionally sought to close the passage to prevent hostile penetrations into the St Petersburg area. Finland and Germany, in turn, closed the passage in World War II in order to bottle up the Soviet navy in the Gulf of Finland.

In World War II the Soviet Union expanded in the Baltic Sea farther than ever before. It gained about 500 nautical miles of coastline under Soviet control and another 350 nautical miles under the control of Warsaw Pact countries.¹⁵⁷ In the West there were two main views of the Warsaw Pact maritime concept in the Baltic during the Cold War. The first assumed that the Soviets would seize the Straits of Denmark and open them, which would allow the Baltic Fleet to join the Northern Fleet. This option, however, was criticized for being too comprehensive a task for the Baltic Sea naval forces, because it would have included neutralizing NATO in the Baltic approaches area, in southern Norway and in the United Kingdom, fighting for air superiority over the central front, occupying Denmark and facing NATO forces deployed in the North Sea as well as encountering the NATO Strike Fleet Atlantic. The second and more realistic view was based on a barrier concept, according to which the main Soviet objective was not to break out but to close the Baltic Sea at the Straits of Denmark and to open the straits at a later phase of the war. This option would have been less costly and more in line with the ocean-fighting capability of the Baltic Fleet. It would have enabled the USSR to seize control of the Baltic Sea and perhaps eventually open a corridor to the North Sea.¹⁵⁸

In the late 1960s, the ratio between Warsaw Pact and NATO naval forces was 5:1.¹⁵⁹ The Baltic Fleet was being adapted to the Baltic environment by adjusting the equipment to the geography and the threat. The amphibious force and mine countermeasures force in the Baltic Fleet were the largest among the four Soviet fleets. The strong and modern amphibious capacity was considered in the West as suitable for assault especially against the Straits of Denmark and against Sweden.¹⁶⁰ The Soviet merchant fleet in the Baltic participated regularly in amphibious exercises and had the capability for transporting several motorized rifle divisions,¹⁶¹ presumably including those stationed in the Baltic republics. The Baltic republics' area and the Polish coast were to be the springboard

for projecting power to the western littoral of the Baltic Sea and the straits.

After the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, this naval capacity was dissolved and neutralized. The role of Russia's Baltic naval forces was reduced to that of a coastal fleet.¹⁶² At present Russia has only two bridgeheads in the eastern Baltic littoral, Kaliningrad and St Petersburg, while Baltiisk and Kronshadt are the naval bases of the Baltic Fleet. St Petersburg and Kaliningrad are also home to several shipyards.¹⁶³ The naval capabilities of the Baltic Fleet are degraded by the fact that St Petersburg is obstructed by ice for some time each winter; likewise Baltiisk, depending on the severity of winter.

It is apparent that Russia's future naval interests in the Baltic Sea stem from the vital importance of the St Petersburg region and the defense requirements of the southwestern Baltic littoral (Kaliningrad, Belarus) as well as from the special geographical location of Kaliningrad. Undoubtedly, the security of the St Petersburg area is a first priority. Here the main naval interest would be to prevent unfriendly penetrations into the Gulf of Finland and, as appropriate, to protect Russia's access from the gulf to the Baltic Sea proper. Focusing on a maritime area including the passage of the Gulf of Finland and the Aland Islands would be crucial for the implementation of the mission. If Estonia became NATO member, this operation area would be extended into the Gulf of Finland.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, it can be assumed that the main naval interest in the Kaliningrad area is to support ground forces' operations in the region as well as to protect naval operations in the northern Baltic Sea. Expectations on maintaining Kaliningrad's naval freedom of action in wartime cannot be high because of the risk that it will be isolated at an early stage of a crisis. To maintain sea communications with Kaliningrad as long as possible will be a key Russian naval interest along with interests focused on the port/base facilities of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It can be expected that the activities of the Baltic Fleet in combined arms operations will be closely tied to direct support of ground forces in the theater of military actions (*TVD*). This conclusion is supported by the coastal status of the Baltic Fleet and the fact that views of the navy's more independent operations ended in the Soviet Navy by the mid-1980s.¹⁶⁵

Air-Strategic Aspects

The Soviet Air Force's latest-generation combat aircraft and most developed airfields were located outside the western frontiers of the current Russian Federation. When the Soviet Union disintegrated, a considerable number of those assets were left to the newly independent states. Russia lost, for example, 37 percent of the Soviet Union's MiG-29's, 23 percent of Su-27's, 43 percent of Il-76 transport aircraft, and the majority of its Tu-160 and Tu-95 strategic bombers. Among the most modern bases, 44 were lost in Eastern Europe and 94 in the former Soviet republics. At present Russia possesses about 90 major airfields, of which only half are of high quality. All in all, roughly 60 percent of the Soviet Union's aircraft and 50 percent of the Soviet Air Forces' air bases remained on Russian soil. A considerable proportion of the air defense system was partitioned, too. Some 70 percent of the Air Defense Force's original assets remained within the borders of the Russian Federation.¹⁶⁶

Not only were the avionics systems partitioned; communications, command and control, intelligence, missile attack warning, air defense and logistical support systems were also disrupted. The loss of the Skrunda radar station in Latvia was a blow to the early warning system. There were no new backup systems in Russia to replace it when Latvia declared independence¹⁶⁷. The depot-level maintenance and repair capabilities declined considerably. About 40 percent of these facilities remained in the newly independent states. The Soviet Air Force's air-to-ground missiles had been inspected and maintained only in Estonia. The phase maintenance for more than 50 percent of Su-24's was done in Lithuania. The Su-25's were serviced solely at Lithuanian and Georgian depots.¹⁶⁸ As early as 1990, the Soviet Air Force had initiated a planned withdrawal of forward-based formations and units from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The pullback was begun from the Baltic states, Poland, and Transcaucasia in 1991 and from the German Democratic Republic in 1992. All the aircraft were withdrawn from the Baltic states. By 1994, 40 regiments had been pulled back from these forward-based locations. The withdrawal of these forces seems to have been partially uncontrolled, for the decline of operational capabilities was not simultaneously retrieved with corresponding arrangements in Russia. It became even more difficult to regain

these capabilities as the other former Soviet republics refused to accept a unified air defense of the CIS. Consequently, it will take time for Russia's air defense to regain an acceptable level.¹⁶⁹ The main push in Russia's current defense planning is toward power projection. Thus transport aviation is becoming a priority instead of high-technology air warfare. The major decline, however, is in air defense. From about 2300 interceptors, less than half remain at present.¹⁷⁰ A Russian Air Force analysis acknowledges that the likelihood of a large-scale war has dropped, while low- and medium-intensity wars are the main near-term danger. However, high-intensity conflicts should be taken into account when defining the optimal size of Russia's air force.¹⁷¹

The current deployment of air forces in Russia is a heritage from the Soviet era and does not correspond to the requirements of the future. First, about 70 percent of the Russian Air Force's aircraft are based in the European part of Russia, with 15 percent located in the northwest, 25 percent in the west, 30 percent in the southwest, and 30 percent east of the Urals. According to the Air Force's analysis, fewer aircraft will be needed in the northwest and Far East in the future, while more aircraft will be required in the southern regions facing the Caucasus, Turkey and Iran. Second, a number of aircraft are based too close to the borders. Two-thirds of the aircraft in the European part are located within only 200-300 kilometres of Russia's western borders. Bombers and transport aircraft are concentrated on too few bases. To meet the new basing requirements, the aforementioned Air Force analysis calls for the establishment of "aircraft basing regions", which would include bases established at the existing Frontal Aviation, Long-Range Aviation and Military Transport Aviation major airfields beyond 300 kilometres from Russia's borders. Each base would accommodate five or six permanently based fighter squadrons.¹⁷²

Russia's air-strategic interests in the eastern Baltic littoral stem from (1) the proximity of the region to the Polish-Belorussian-Russian channel of military actions and to the Kaliningrad area; (2) the location of the eastern Baltic littoral in relation the St Petersburg area; and (3) the importance of air force missions in combined arms operations in the region. The Russian Air Force analysis advances five scenarios as the core of air force planning from now until the early 21st century. The scenario dealing with the northwestern and western directions suggests that "NATO might try to employ force

to settle Russian internal conflicts, to deny Russia its legitimate interests, or even to seize parts of its territory in order to undercut strategic positions or for post-conflict bargaining." The scenario continues: "NATO would begin any such offensive with intense air and naval bombardment aimed at seizing the Kaliningrad region and then would press to Russia's western frontier through Belarus and Ukraine, employing both air attacks and deep ground-force penetrations into the Leningrad and Moscow Military Districts. This possibility requires a (Russian) air force capability to repel enemy air operations, prevent amphibious landings, and conduct offensive and defensive counterair operations over enemy territory."¹⁷³

The eastern Baltic littoral is air-strategically crucial for Russia not only in war but also in a strained international situation or during a threat of war. In peacetime the region is important from the perspective of surveillance and intelligence. In the event of war Russia's combined arms operations in the Kaliningrad-Belarus area would probably impinge on the air space of the Baltic states. The air and missile defense of St Petersburg area would also give rise to an interest in using their air space. Compared with sea- and land-strategic interests, the air-strategic importance of the region for Russia has grown greatly during the post-World War II period, the main reason being the evolution of aircraft, missile and surveillance technologies. The Baltic Sea and its littorals are a confined area. Hence the time and distance factors have become more important as the speed of weapons and weapons launchers has grown. The shorter the reaction time has become, the farther to the west Russia has sought to extend its warning and defense systems. This development links the air space of the East-Baltic littoral to the defense of the Russian core areas, a connection that will assume a growing importance in Russia's geopolitical thinking.

5 RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE AREA OF THE BALTIC STATES

According to Konstantin Sorokin's analysis, Russia's economic interests in the territories of the "near abroad" include: (1) the availability of energy sources and mineral raw materials, (2) the availability of transportation routes and communications capabilities, (3) access to seas and oceans, (4) agricultural resources, (5) existing and potential industry, (6) labor power, and (7) the possibility of using the territory as a storage of waste materials.¹⁷⁴ In addition, economic relations between the Baltic states and Russia may be used as instruments in pursuing geopolitical interests. Trade routes and seaports have drawn Russia's economic attention to the Baltic region throughout history. What is the present-day economic significance of the Baltic states to Russia? Are there economic interdependencies between Russia and the Baltic countries? These are the main questions of this section.

Natural Resources and Energy

The Baltic states are poor in natural resources, minerals and raw materials.¹⁷⁵ Estonia's most important mineral resources are oil shale, phosphate and limestone.¹⁷⁶ Forests cover about 40 percent of Estonia's territory,¹⁷⁷ but large, industrially significant forest areas are scarce.¹⁷⁸ Peat reserves in the Baltic are considerable. In Estonia they cover twenty percent of the territory.¹⁷⁹ The shale deposits lie in the northeastern part of Estonia and extend over the Narva River into the territory of the Russian Federation. Eighty percent of the quarried oil shale is used for generating electricity, and it represents 95 percent of electricity produced in Estonia. The production of electricity peaked in 1979 at 19.4 billion kilowatt-hours but fell subsequently in the 1980s. In 1996, Eesti Energia exported 1.1 billion kilowatt-hours (twelve percent of its output) of electricity, selling more than half of it to Latvia and the rest to Russia. The Russian market, however, is restricted because Estonia sells only the electricity generated from Russian oil shale. The exploitable oil shale resources have been estimated to suffice for thirty years.¹⁸⁰

In Latvia, woodlands cover almost 40 percent of the territory.

Latvia has very few other natural resources. The most important are dolomite and limestone, but dolomite resources are only 22 percent of those of Estonia.¹⁸¹ Land is considered to be Latvia's main natural resource,¹⁸² because it provides foodstuffs and timber for export and encompasses the ice-free seaports of Ventspils, Liepaja and Riga. Lithuania does not have abundant natural resources either. It has a few mineral deposits, but diggings or ore deposits have not been found.¹⁸³ Exploration drilling of oil was begun in the early 1950s in Latvia, Lithuania and the Kaliningrad region.¹⁸⁴ Oil has been found on the Baltic Sea outer continental shelves of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. However, oil production prospects are conceded to be vague, and the likelihood of the Baltic countries' becoming self-sufficient in petroleum seem faint. Lithuania, for example, plans to exploit 0.5 million tons of oil by the year 2000.¹⁸⁵

Estonia's self-sustainability in energy is relatively high. Approximately 60 percent of energy supply is based on national resources. The rest comes mainly from oil and gas imports from Russia. Latvia's energy self-sustainability is relatively low. The country imports all its natural gas and oil and half its electricity. Lithuania's problem is that raw materials for energy production are imported. The nuclear power station in Ignalina produces 80 percent of the country's electrical energy.¹⁸⁶ Scarce natural resources are supplemented by imports. In 1995, for example, the import of mineral products, products of the chemical or allied industries, and base metals and articles of base metal made up 26.6 percent of Estonia's total imports, 39.3 percent of Latvia's, and 42.2 percent of Lithuania's.¹⁸⁷ From the economy of the Soviet era, the Baltic states inherited a considerable dependence on raw materials supplied from the area of the current CIS.¹⁸⁸ Almost all hydrocarbon sources of energy are imported from Russia.¹⁸⁹

The scarce natural resources of the Baltic countries are of low geopolitical interest to Russia. Oil shale in northeastern Estonia and oil deposits on the Baltic Sea shelf are the most significant resources. Undoubtedly, Russia may be commercially interested in them, but in the long run, it is hardly in the interests of the Russian Federation as a state to actively participate in developing these resources. More significant is the dependence of the Baltic countries on raw materials and energy imports from the east. This provides Russia with an instrument for pursuing its interests in the region.

This potential "energy weapon" against the Baltic countries should not, however, be exaggerated.

Trade Relations

Imperfect and often contradictory statistics render an analysis of Baltic-Russian trade relations difficult. First, in Russian statistics since the late 1980s, the methodology of compiling and processing statistics has been changed so frequently that a reasonable comparison of data is almost impossible. This is especially the case with data on the commodity composition of trade and data on trading partners. A second problem is that Russian statistics do not reflect the actual size of foreign trade turnover. A number of "grey zone" transactions have taken place and no one has managed to estimate their real volume.¹⁹⁰ Third, in some statistics from the early 1990s, data on the Baltic republics and countries that were reluctant CIS members, is imperfect or missing. In addition to Russia, insufficient statistics constitute a problem in several other transition economies, including the Baltic states.¹⁹¹ Despite these difficulties, in what follows I try to delineate the geopolitical significance of the foreign trade between the Baltic states and Russia.

In the Soviet Union the Baltic republics were among the most developed areas. For example, between the late 1950s and the late 1960s Estonia's and Latvia's national income *per capita* rose more rapidly and was higher by far than that of any other Soviet republic. Traditionally, the emphasis in the Baltic countries had been on light industry, demanding skilled labor and few raw materials.¹⁹² After the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union in 1940, Moscow shifted the emphasis away from textiles, food, and light industry toward heavy industry. Baltic companies were integrated into the Soviet economy, which made them dependent on other republics for inputs and markets.¹⁹³ The Baltic republics exported food to the other parts of the Soviet Union, but they depended on the USSR for fuel, fertilizers, seed and fodder as well as labor power. In manufacturing they depended on the Soviet Union for machinery, spare parts, and inputs of ferrous and nonferrous metals.¹⁹⁴

Economic power in the Soviet Union was heavily concentrated in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). In 1988 it produced 61 percent of the USSR's Net Material Product

(NMP). The RSFSR, together with the Ukrainian SSR and the Belorussian SSR, produced 82 percent of the USSR's NMP, and their summed share in total Soviet exports in 1989-91 was approximately 93 percent.¹⁹⁵ The RSFSR produced 90 percent of Soviet crude oil exports, 57 percent of refined products, 88 percent of natural gas, 57 percent of coal, 86 percent of methanol, 91 percent of synthetic rubber, 94 percent of automobiles, 52 percent of tractors and 46 percent of iron ore. The few commodities in which the RSFSR did not dominate included electricity, ammonia and potassium fertilizers. Those were mainly produced by the Ukrainian and Belorussian SSR.¹⁹⁶

The other republics were more inwardly oriented. Their shares in the USSR's exports were significantly lower than in intra-union trade, which reflected the state monopoly of trade and the centrally controlled division of labor.¹⁹⁷ Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania formed a middle class among the twelve economically less powerful Soviet republics. In 1988, for example, the summed NMP produced by the Baltic republics was 3.1 percent of the USSR's total, and their share of the Soviet Union's foreign exports and imports was 2.5 percent and 3.0 percent respectively. In terms of NMP *per capita*, however, it is noteworthy that, in the 1970s and early 1980s the Baltic republics and the RSFSR had far higher indicators than the other Soviet republics.¹⁹⁸

As the political climate was liberalized in the Soviet Union, the Baltic republics began in 1987-88 to strive for economic independence.¹⁹⁹ After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, during the first years of independence, the Baltic states achieved a rapid reorientation of trade flows toward the Western market economies.²⁰⁰ Subsequently, there has been a significant trend toward a lower orientation to Russia and a larger orientation to the West in trade.

The exports of the Baltic republics/states to the other Soviet republics / previous Soviet republics (including the other Baltic republics) and the CIS countries is presented in Table 1.

COUNTRY	1990 (percent)	1996 (percent)	For the CIS alone (percent)
Estonia	98	40 (3rd quarter of 1996)	24 (3rd quarter of 1996)
Latvia	97	45	36
Lithuania	94	56 (first 3 quarters of 1996)	46 (first 3 quarters of 1996)

Table 1. The exports of the Baltic republics/states to other Soviet republics / previous Soviet republics and the CIS countries (percent of the total exports) ²⁰¹

The share of RFSFR in 1990 was 50 to 63 percent in the Baltic republics' exports and 52 to 61 percent in their imports.²⁰² Currently, these figures are significantly lower. Russia's share in the total imports and exports of the Baltic states is presented in Table 2.

COUNTRY	1993 Import (percent)	1996 Import (percent)	1993 Export (percent)	1996 Export (percent)
Estonia	22.6	16.5	17.2	13.4
Latvia	29.6	22.6	28.4	20.2
Lithuania	28.1	23.8	53.7	29.1

Table 2. The share of Russia in the total imports and exports of the Baltic states (percent of the total imports and exports of the countries)

Notwithstanding the decrease, Russia's proportion in the Baltic countries' foreign trade remains very high. Russia is clearly the number one trading partner of Latvia and Lithuania and the second after Finland in Estonia's foreign trade.²⁰³

The Baltic states' major advantage in production is tied to their low-income, highly-skilled labor force. This is reflected in the composition of labor and resource-intensive exports, with textiles and timber in the first positions. The importance of agriculture and food

production should also be noted, along with the sluggishness of the countries' industrial sectors. Restructuring away from heavy industry is greater in the Baltic states than elsewhere in the previous Soviet domain.²⁰⁴

In Russia's foreign trade, the geographical pattern has profoundly changed. In 1995 the intra-NIS (New Independent States of the former Soviet Union) trade represented 21 percent of Russia's exports and 26 percent of its imports, while these shares were 74 and 58 percent respectively in 1991.²⁰⁵ In recent years, the proportion of trade conducted with CIS (NIS) states has generally been around 25 percent.²⁰⁶ The commodity structure of Russia's foreign trade is heavily concentrated on a limited number of export commodities and has not changed as profoundly as the geographical pattern.²⁰⁷ On the export side of Russia's trade, energy products and raw materials continue to be the major part of total exports. In 1993, for example, their proportion was 80 percent of total exports. On the import side, machines, equipment and transport still represent a major share, totaling 30 percent of imports. Agricultural products have traditionally been the second largest import item equaling 27 percent of total imports in 1992, but their proportion dropped to 20 percent in 1993. The share of the Baltic countries in Russia's total trade is very modest. In 1992 their share in Russia's imports was 0.9 percent, and in 1993 0.4 percent. Their share in Russia's total foreign trade turnover was 1.3 percent in 1992 and 0.8 in 1993.²⁰⁸ In 1992 and 1993, half of Russia's trade was with the top 7 trade partners; 80 percent with the top 20 and almost 95 percent was concentrated in 40 countries. Lithuania was the only Baltic country on the list of Russia's 40 major trade partners, holding the thirty-seventh place with a 0.8 percent share in 1992 and 0.4 percent in 1993. In 1994/95, none of the Baltic countries were on the list of Russia's top 20 trade partners.²⁰⁹ The share of the Baltic states in the total exports and imports of Russia in 1995 is presented in Table 3.

COUNTRY	Share in Russia's total imports (percent)	Share in Russia's total exports (percent)
Estonia	0.59	0.5
Latvia	0.84	0.98
Lithuania	0.83	1.35

Table 3. The share of the Baltic states in the total exports and imports of Russia in 1995²¹⁰

An analysis of trade relations between the Baltic countries and Russia reveals an imbalance of interchange. The share of the Baltic countries in Russia's foreign trade is very small, whereas the share of Russia in the Baltic countries' foreign trade is very high. For example, in 1993 Russia's exports to the Baltic states were 3.5 times higher than Russia's imports from these countries, and in 1994 Russia's exports were 5 times higher than imports.²¹¹ Russia is a far more important trade partner to the Baltic countries than the Baltic countries are to Russia. In terms of commodities, the share of the three most largest items represents roughly 50 percent of each Baltic country's exports to Russia and/or the CIS countries. On the import side from Russia and/or the CIS countries, the three main groups of commodities account for approximately 70 to 75 percent of each Baltic state's imports. The Baltic countries' imports from Russia are dominated by mineral products, chemicals, and diverse raw materials,²¹² which are also major export items in Russia's total foreign trade. Foodstuffs, machinery and equipment, and vehicles are among the major commodities of the Baltic countries' exports to Russia. They also represent a major share of Russia's imports in its total foreign trade.²¹³ Against this background, it would seem that stable trade relations are possible between the Baltic countries and Russia.

The following observations can be made about the reasons for the trade structure described above. A first reason is the availability of technical infrastructure like gas and oil pipelines and relatively good and short railroad communications. Second, several production processes in the Baltic countries are compatible with these import materials, particularly in energy production and the

chemical industry. A third reason is the cooperative tradition in economy and trade deriving from the Soviet era. Russia and the CIS countries, in turn, are a natural market area for the Baltic states. Market channels have remained, the Balts know how to use them and their products correspond to Russian quality standards. A lack of market channels in the West and (often formally) tight standards make exporting to the West more difficult.²¹⁴ The development of relations between Russia and the West, particularly the European Union, is important for the future of the Baltic states' economies. Under favourable conditions the Baltic countries could become a gateway for Russia's trade with the West, offering transport services and perhaps processing and reselling raw materials of Russian origin.²¹⁵ Undoubtedly, positive prospects for Russian-Baltic relations would promote these developments.

Transportation

Because of Russia's vast continental territory, transportation is a crucial element in the country's economy. Russia's transport systems, however, fall far below world standards. In the development of railroad transportation, Russia is forty-fifth in the world. In motorcar transportation it is thirty-fourth, in air transportation forty-sixth, and in seaport economies fiftieth. Contrary to the common trend in the world economy to move away from railroad transportation toward a higher proportion of motorcar transportation, railroads are the main means of transportation in Russia, carrying seventy-four percent of cargo (in 1994), while motorcars represented 2.4 percent, sea transportation 18.4 percent and rivers 5.3 percent of cargo transport.²¹⁶

A dramatic decline of seaport capacity was one of the major geopolitical changes resulting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Having lost the Odessa port systems Russia no longer possess docks for general cargo or for container ships on the Black Sea. After the loss of four major import-export seaports on the Baltic Sea (Tallinn in Estonia, Riga and Ventspils in Latvia and Klaipeda in Lithuania), Russia was left without an oil port on the Baltic Sea. In terms of available dock length, Russia lost 75 percent of docks on the Baltic and Black seas.²¹⁷

The remaining capacity is insufficient. Russia possesses 43 commercial seaports with a total capacity of 165 million tons a

year. Of the 14 large ports (capacity more than 6 million tons a year) of the Soviet Union, 7 were left to Russia.²¹⁸ Russia's current port capacity is considered to be 37 percent lower than domestic needs²¹⁹ and 50 percent lower than the requirements of foreign trade. The capacity is limited not only by quantity but also by quality, for 60 percent of ports have such shallow waters that they cannot receive large ships. The changes resulted at first in lower freight volumes. The total cargo transported through Russian ports in 1993 (163 million tons) was two-thirds of the volume transported via the Soviet ports in 1990.²²⁰ Here it should be noted that foreign trade dropped dramatically at the same time but has grown since 1993, and future port capacities should be estimated against the background of growing foreign trade. Sixty-five percent of Russia's sea freight is transported through Russian ports.²²¹ The remainder is processed through the neighboring countries, Ukraine, Transcaucasian region, the Baltic states, and Finland. Russia pays between 1.6 and 2 billion US dollars per year for these services.²²²

On the Baltic Sea, approximately 40 percent of the Soviet port capacity was left to Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the main ports being St Petersburg, Kaliningrad, and Vyborg. In terms of dock length on the Baltic Sea, Russia possesses 5.9 kilometres of docks instead of the 20.1 kilometres possessed by the Soviet Union. Tallinn and Riga were equipped in the Soviet era with facilities designed for crop imports to all the USSR, while Ventspils and Klaipeda had major oil terminals. Ventspils in Latvia is the largest port on the Baltic Sea, through which petroleum, petroleum products, chemical cargo, potassium, and metal are exported. Ventspils and the other major Latvian port, Liepaja, never freeze. After Novorossiisk, Ventspils is the second most important port used by Russia for oil exports, its capacity being 46 million tons a year. Two pipelines come from Russia to Ventspils, one for oil and the other for mineral products. The pipelines are of Latvian-Russian ownership. Klaipeda in Lithuania is the second largest port on the Baltic coast and has ferry connections with Germany, Sweden, and Denmark.²²³ St Petersburg, in turn, is the largest Russian port in terms of cargo, among 11 ports handling goods.²²⁴ The capacities of the ports in the Baltic countries are higher than the countries' own needs, because they were originally planned to meet the transport requirements of a great power.

Major changes have taken place in the Russian routing of export-import transportation. The loss of seaports on the Baltic and Black seas forced Russia to turn flows of goods toward its own seaports and land communications. When Ukraine raised transit fees, Russia reoriented land freight flows into the only remaining free corridor, Belarus. After the economic rapprochement in 1994, Belarus became the lowest-priced and most reliable export-import land corridor between Russia and Europe.²²⁵ As a second consequence, sea routes linking the Baltic and Black seas with markets to the West, were revived.²²⁶ That increased pressure on the Baltic ports. In addition, the Baltic Sea is drawing cargo from other parts of Russia, including the Urals and western Siberian regions, where it is unprofitable to transport to the Far-Eastern ports of Vladivostok and Nahodka because of high railway tariffs.²²⁷ Beyond Russia, the European Union prefers sea and railroad to motorcar transportation for environmental reasons, and the Baltic Port Organization estimates that sea transportation on the Baltic Sea will grow within the next 15 years from 600 million tons per year to one billion tons.²²⁸ Future development of developing ship-to-rail connections for the purpose of saving time by linking the West to the Far East through Russian railroads and the Baltic, will put growing requirements on ports.²²⁹ It is worth noting that shipping movements in the Baltic ports have grown significantly, even in the early 1990s, when the Soviet/Russian foreign trade decreased. In Klaipeda the growth of shipping movements from 1990 to 1992 was nearly forty percent, in Riga about thirty percent, and in St Petersburg and Kaliningrad around twenty-five percent, while the growth in Ventspils was ten percent.²³⁰ The growth of processed goods (million tons per year) from 1993 to 1995 in transit cargo was fifty-seven percent in Riga and thirty-three percent in Ventspils. The total volume grew ten percent in St Petersburg and seventy-five percent in Kaliningrad, while the volume of Klaipeda dropped twenty percent. Altogether, 52.2 tons in 1991 and 64.1 tons in 1995 were processed in the ports of the Baltic states.²³¹ The geoeconomic significance of the Baltic seaports seems likely to increase.

Besides insufficient port capacities, Russian collaboration has also run into other difficulties. Russian oil exporters have been continuously dependent on the terminal located at the Latvian port of Ventspils, and problems have been encountered with Lithuania in attempts to maintain Russia's commercially profitable access to

Kaliningrad. For example, freight fees charged by Lithuanian railroads in July 1994 on transit freight through Lithuania to Kaliningrad made it more expensive for the Russians to export *via* Kaliningrad than via the Lithuanian port of Klaipeda. Russia accused Lithuania of discriminating against Kaliningrad in order to draw freight from the CIS countries to the Baltic ports. Russians refer to the Convention on Transit Trade of Land-Locked States, on the basis of which, according to its interpretation, Russia should have unrestricted access to Kaliningrad, and if any fees are set, they should only correspond to the costs.²³² In 1997, Lithuania's Deputy Foreign Minister Alginas Januska announced that Lithuania has created favourable transport conditions for the Kaliningrad region, and Russia's military traffic to the enclave operates unimpeded.²³³

The fees charged for shipping Russian cargo through Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are a major source of foreign-exchange receipts for these countries. In 1995 transportation and communications accounted for 9.1 percent of Estonia's GDP, 17.6 percent of Latvia's, and 7.6 percent of Lithuania's.²³⁴ In 1995 transit traffic accounted to 45 percent of transport in Estonia's railroads and 68 percent of the total transport of Tallinn's port. Transit transport represented 74 percent of the turnover of Latvia's railroad company in 1995. As in Latvia, transit transport in Lithuania is a national priority. Lithuania's advantage is its ability to serve the Belarusian and Ukrainian markets. Eighty percent of transport in the port of Klaipeda serves the purposes of transit.²³⁵

It is clear that Russia is looking for ways to increase seaport capacity on the Baltic Sea in order to compensate for the decline and to minimize payments to other countries for port services. To replace its lost port capacity on the Baltic and Black seas, new capacity of one hundred million tons a year is necessary for Russia. The National Ports Development Plan of 1992 suggests that new ports should be built in Ust'-Luga, Primorsk and Batareinaia on the Baltic Sea during 2000-2005. The objective of the plan is to increase Russia's total port capacity and to eliminate dependence on foreign services. The planned capacity of Ust'-Luga is 35 million tons a year, serving mainly dry cargo transport. The construction work was begun in 1997. A capacity of 8 million tons a year is to be built by 1999. The following stage would increase it to 17.5 million tons a year. An oil and gas terminal with a capacity of 45 million tons a year is planned for Primorsk. The port of Batareinaia should

concentrate in oil and oil products, reaching a capacity of 7.5 million tons a year by 1999 and later up to 15 million tons. The port of St Petersburg worked in 1996 at 70 percent capacity, processing 10.5 tons of goods. The capacity should be increased up to 20 million tons a year.²³⁶ In the light of these capacity figures, after the realization of its planned construction Russia might not need the ports in the Baltic states.

The World Bank considers the National Port Development Plan too optimistic in light of Russia's economic situation. Nor can the projects at Ust'-Luga and Primorsk be justified by calculations concerning their profitability. It would be more profitable to increase the capacity by modernizing and developing the existing Baltic ports, but Russia seems to have political and strategic reasons for wanting to build new ones. Financing is wide open, and the realization of the plan will not be possible without significant foreign loans.²³⁷ It seems that the plan will not be implemented by 2005 and it depends on Russia's economic development whether and to what extent the plan will be realized at all.

Russia has at least three options in developing port capacities on the Baltic Sea, and some combination of them might be the optimal way to proceed. The first option is collaboration with other countries by using their port facilities specially assignable to serve Russian shipping. A partner country does not necessarily have to border Russia. A second choice is to reach long-term agreements with the Baltic states and Ukraine on sea transportation. A third option is to modernize existing ports and/or to build new facilities. In the northern regions almost all cargo goes to Murmansk and Archangelsk. Other northern ports, Kandalaksha, Umba, Belomorsk, Onega, Mezer and Nar'ian-Mar are small and mainly specialize in timber freight. Moreover, most of them do not have a railway connection. A new port in Ust'-Luga is an appropriate but not an optimal solution because of shallow waters, alluvial sand and ecological consequences. The same drawbacks apply enlarging the port of St Petersburg.²³⁸ Anyway, Russia's first priority seems to be to build its own facilities and avoid dependence on the Baltic countries because of the orientation of their foreign policies. Depending on political developments, Kaliningrad might be one area that could be developed, Baltiisk being utilized as a core of expanded port system. Attempts to restore normal land connections to Kaliningrad are undoubtedly a high priority in Russia's policy

toward the Baltic and adjacent regions. In the future, Kaliningrad may have growing economic implications for the neighbouring countries. Besides being a strategically important gateway to Russia, it could become a key link to Lithuania and Poland. It has a well-established structure of roads, rail lines, ports, airports and other municipal services, and it could be a potential object of foreign investment.²³⁹ Presumably the Russian Federation is more interested in developing Kaliningrad than offering a gateway to the neighboring Baltic countries. In this light, Kaliningrad competes with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

All told, one of Russia's major challenges in the future is to develop its transportation system both because of its importance to the national economy and because of the current inefficiency and backwardness in many branches of transportation.²⁴⁰ Rapid improvements cannot be expected in motorcar transportation, because its major problem is poor infrastructure. Its units are small, and political geography restricts its role in Russia's foreign trade. Railroads will likely maintain their important role because of the country's vast distances and the relatively large existing railroad infrastructure. Sea transportation will be emphasized because of the growing requirements, the high share of non-CIS countries in Russia's foreign trade (75 percent), and the scarcity of land transportation lines. Considering cargo volumes, it seems that even if Russia's port capacities on the Baltic Sea grew in the future, it will need port services from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for a number of years.²⁴¹ Russia will likely proceed along three lines. First, it will continue to utilize the port services of the Baltic countries. This binds the interests of Russia and the Baltic countries together. But being uncertain about the Baltic countries' future policies, Russia will try to avoid any long-term dependence on them. Second, Russia will look for facilities in third countries. For example, the idea of an oil pipeline route from Russia to the Finnish port of Porvoo has been advanced, though final decisions on this project have not yet been made.²⁴² Third, Russia will develop its own facilities. But because of economic constraints, this will happen slowly. The capacity that would eliminate Russia's dependence on the Baltic countries' ports can hardly be reached sooner than 10 or 15 years. This will increase the strategic importance of the Kaliningrad area and will require balancing the interests of Russia and Lithuania. Lithuania's interests are linked to

the large share of Russia in its foreign trade. A common Baltic interest is to maintain transit cargo flows as a source of income.

6 RUSSIA'S GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS RELATED TO FOREIGN POLICY AND POLITICO-MILITARY AFFAIRS

The Policies of Russia

The contemporary political situation in the Baltic region is historically extraordinary for Russia. Until 1991 Russia had politically controlled the East-Baltic littoral for more than two hundred years, except for the twenty-two years of the Baltic states' independence in 1918-1940. The developments that led to the Baltic republics' renewed independence in 1991 were to a degree similar to those that resulted in their independence in 1918, coinciding with a great transition within the Russian/Soviet empire. In the aftermath of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution, several areas had separated from the empire, but in the early 1920s the Soviet Russia recovered many of them. Similarly, Russia's policy toward the Baltic countries in the 1990s reflects its desire to restore political control over the three states at least partially.

Russia's National Security Concept, Foreign Ministry's long-term plan for Russia's relations with the Baltic countries (1997), Russia's political initiatives put forward in 1997 as well as threat perceptions provide some ingredients for assessment of Russia's political interests in relation to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In May 1997 the Russian Federation's Security Council approved the National Security Concept.²⁴³ The main threats to national security at the moment and in the foreseeable future are of non-military nature. They are mainly internal and concentrated in internal policy, economy and information as well as in social, ecological and intellectual spheres. The absence of direct military threat allows the state to allocate resources for solving internal security problems. In the category of threats related to defence, the concept advances the following: (1) attempts to compete by force against Russia; (2) local wars and armed conflicts in the vicinity of Russia's borders; (3) the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, especially in the countries bordering Russia; (4) international terrorism; (5) the presence or creation of powerful groupings of military forces in regions near Russia; even in the absence of aggressive intentions toward Russia such group-

ings compose potential military threat; (6) NATO enlargement to the east and NATO's transformation into a dominating politico-military power in Europe; (7) technological gap between a number of countries and their growing capacity of creating weapons and military equipment of new generation, which may lead to new development of arms race; (8) reduced capability of the armed forces to guarantee the security of Russia; (9) penetration of Russia by foreign intelligence services.²⁴⁴ The contemporary threats to Russia from the Baltic direction, as from Europe generally, are political and politico-military. They are intertwined and stem from NATO's enlargement. The enlargement per se does not create a military threat to Russia in the foreseeable future.

In February 1997 the Russian Foreign Ministry presented a long-term plan for relations with the Baltic states. According to the plan, these relations are exceptionally important. Their importance stems from Baltic security concerns in conjunction with NATO enlargement, the situation of ethnic Russians in the region, and the geopolitical position of the Baltic countries as a link between Russia's and Western and Northern Europe's economies. Russia's constructive relations with the Baltic countries are the strategic aim of the plan, based on economic cooperation, respect for human rights and national minorities, and the "indivisibility" of the states' security. The plan calls for settling the fundamental problems both bilaterally and in the region in general. However, it links the unsettled border issues to the improvements of ethnic Russians' position. The plan also calls for universal security in the region, meaning that the security of any country should not be ensured in a way that causes risks to other countries. A primary idea in the plan is that the Baltic region's security should be based on the Baltic countries' neutrality and non-participation in military alliances. Entering into alliances is said to be outdated in a multipolar world and might create dividing lines.²⁴⁵

Subsequently, President Boris Yeltsin called for better relations with the Baltic states, assuring them that the threat of an attack from the east belongs to the past and suggesting that Russia would guarantee the Baltic states' security.²⁴⁶ However, some dualism and even ambiguity is observed in Russia's policy. Foreign Minister Evgenii Primakov's statements in early 1997 were harder, taking a decisive stance against the Baltic countries' NATO membership, and linking the progress in the border agreement with Estonia with

improvements in the position of ethnic Russians. Primakov also has said that even one Baltic country's NATO membership would shatter the whole relationship between Russia and NATO.²⁴⁷ In autumn 1997, Russia advanced proposals on bilateral and multi-lateral confidence and security building measures in the Baltic Sea region. Proposals were focused on the East-Baltic littoral, and they included ideas of creating zones of armament and military control in the region as well as deepening international military contacts, communications and cooperation between the nations of the region.

In the Baltic states, interest toward Russia's initiatives has been lukewarm. According to the Estonian Foreign Ministry, the long-term plan for relations contained no reason to change Estonia's policy. The Latvian Foreign Ministry's position was similar.²⁴⁸ Based on their history, it is clear that neutrality hardly attracts the Balts. For historical reasons they will not accept Russia's security guarantees either. According to Lithuania's president Algirdas Brazauskas, the Russian offer gave grounds for optimism, but Lithuania sees no better guarantees than membership in NATO.²⁴⁹ All in all, the Baltic states consider NATO membership as their only guarantee of political independence, while EU membership is seen as the foundation of economic progress.²⁵⁰ Russia's policy suggests that it has not fully accepted the idea of all countries' freedom to make their own decisions about security policy. Some of Foreign Minister Primakov's statements reflect the traditional Russian/Soviet idea of telling other countries what they are expected to do. The long-term plan for relations is built upon only one option, non-participation of the Baltic states in military alliances. It states that the Baltic countries' NATO membership would create a serious barrier between them and Russia.²⁵¹ Primakov's remarks about the effect of any Baltic country's NATO membership on the Russian-NATO relationship imply some notion of Russia's sphere of influence in the Baltic region. Russia's current policy seems to resemble Russia's orientation in 1993 when the countries of the "near abroad" were declared to be a zone of Russia's vital interests.²⁵² The ambiguity in the practice of Russia's policy toward the Baltic states tends to indicate that at least now Russia does not possess effective political means to pursue its interests in the East-Baltic littoral.

It can be concluded, on the basis of the practice of Russia's foreign policy and from threat perceptions, the plan of Russian-

Baltic relations and Russia's proposals in 1997 that Russia's concerns regarding foreign policy and politico-military issues in the region derive from: (1) NATO enlargement; (2) the Baltic states' geopolitical location in Russia's neighborhood; (3) the economic significance of the three states to Russia. The politico-economic interests between the Baltic countries and Russia are multilateral and mutual. Russia needs access to the Baltic seaports, while the economies of the Baltic states require trade with Russia and transit fees for Russian cargo. The development of Russia's own port capacity will diminish Russia's dependence on Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, but that is not likely to happen soon.

NATO Enlargement

NATO enlargement in Central Europe will presumably dominate Russia's political concerns in the Baltic states over the 5 to 10 years to come. Russia's long-term interests will be strongly affected by whether the Baltic countries become NATO members. Several positions can be observed in current approaches to NATO enlargement. The United States' view is that the enlargement contributes to overall European security and thereby Russia's national security. Russia sees it differently and believes that the enlargement undermines European and Russian security. Other countries emphasize that the enlargement should not create new dividing lines in Europe, which seems to imply that security will weaken if new dividing lines emerge or Russia becomes isolated. According to another view, the enlargement will in any case create dividing lines. How deep they will be depends on the arrangements of Russian-NATO relations. Still another view suggests that NATO enlargement does not cause problems to Russia at all: the enlargement is needless, because NATO in any case will be unable to respond to future threats, which will not be of military nature.

Among these positions Russia's view is crucial, because Russia's reactions to the enlargement will to a large extent determine how the enlargement affects European security. Some NATO countries seem to assume that a European cooperative security system would be possible even if NATO expanded to Russia's borders. Russia, in turn, apparently considers NATO enlargement disruptive of equilibrium. Geopolitically, the current phase marks a search for a balance between the Western and the Russian core ar-

eas. Parallel to NATO-Russia cooperation in the field of security, Russia's political interest is to influence NATO's decisions. Hence it follows that since Russia did not succeed in hampering NATO's enlargement, Russia will in the future strive to restrict NATO's activities in Russia's "near abroad" in order to restore an acceptable equilibrium. That will affect the Baltic states' situation, regardless of their future relation to NATO.

The NATO-Russia relationship is crucial for European security. There cannot be an overall security system without Russia's participation. Russia recognizes this and seeks to maximize its advantage in conjunction with NATO enlargement. Should Russia agree to the enlargement, it could not pursue security interests in the bordering countries as it is doing now. On the other hand Russia cannot afford a conflict with the West, because it needs to gain time for self-determination and because Western economic relations are of the utmost importance to Russia. In contrast with the Cold War era, Russia now apparently accepts the United States' presence in Europe because it stabilizes the post-Cold War geopolitical setting there. If Russia's national interests are taken into account in the way it desires, Russia will cooperate with the West. If not, Russia may still cooperate, but at the same time its objective will be to restrict the damage and make the enlargement disadvantageous for the West.²⁵³ However, for the time being Russia cannot be very effective in that because of its current weakness.

On the basis of recent Russian statements on NATO enlargement, it is possible to conclude that Russia feels its interests threatened in at least five ways. First, NATO enlargement is viewed as an increase of American influence in Europe and in Russia's close vicinity. Second, Russia might become politically isolated from a united Europe. Third, the enlargement might reduce Russia's means of protecting its national interests. Fourth, although the enlargement per se does not pose a military threat to Russia, it might provide NATO with advantage in the future. Fifth, it is difficult psychologically for Russia to accept NATO as a neighbor because their interests were opposed for about 45 years and only the Soviet Union's defeat rendered NATO's approach to Russia's borders possible. And moreover, Russians perceive that now as Russia is opening up to the West, the West gets together in an organization which the Russians viewed as an enemy until recently. It seems that Russia's opposition to NATO enlargement is twofold. First,

Russia does not agree in the enlargement in general because it does not agree in a NATO-centric military security system in Europe. Second, for military and political reasons the NATO membership of Russia's close neighbors would not be acceptable. So far Russia does not oppose its neighbors' membership in the European Union (EU), though this may not be the final stance.

In the circumstances of the highly-tuned military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War, the strategic warning time²⁵⁴ was a key determinant of the alliances' military and politico-military preparedness for war. If the warning time of a major conflict was 48 hours within NATO during the Cold War, in the post-Cold War setting it is counted in months or even in years. Military factors were crucial in fulfilling the requirements of the warning time during the Cold War, whereas politico-military aspects are foremost in the post-Cold War era, when the danger of a large high-intensity war has dropped dramatically. The length of the warning time is generally determined on the basis of a party's perceptions concerning its own capabilities and the opposing party's aims, readiness and capabilities. The strategic warning time is becoming particularly important for Russia, now that it is geopolitically weakened and its armed forces have considerably deteriorated. Russia's demands for special arrangements in Russian-NATO relations and for restrictions on NATO's activities in the new member states are clearly aimed at gaining a maximum politico-military advantage, hence maximum strategic warning time in the future.

Russia's first and foremost politico-military interest in the Baltic region is to prevent Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania from joining NATO. If Russia fails in that, what could it do? A clue is provided by Russia's activities in opposing the NATO membership of the first group of East Central European countries. Russia's strategy would presumably be to restrict the damage by influencing the process of the Baltic states' membership preparations. Russia's logical aim would be to minimize the military threat potential and NATO's activities in the new member states and, consequently, gain a longer strategic warning time. Should it achieve this aim, the result would be restricted preparations for NATO's common defence in the Baltic region.

In addition to the arrangements stated in the Founding Act,²⁵⁵ an essential part of Russia's objectives would be to agree with

NATO and the Baltic states on restrictions, for example, in the following areas. First, no permanent NATO bases or units would be admitted in the Baltic countries' territories. Second, limits should be put on the troop levels of the Baltic states' armed forces as well as on the Alliance's exercises in these countries. Third, Russia could claim land communications to the Kaliningrad region. Fourth, Russia could demand that the Baltic states' membership in NATO should be frozen for a decade or two. To pursue these aims Russia could attempt to use means like the adaptation of the CFE Treaty or its voice in the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. Russia could also impose political pressure on the Baltic states themselves, referring, for example, to the open border issues and the situation of ethnic Russians in the region.

Russia could gain a number of advantages as a result of such restrictions. First, they would provide a significant increase of strategic warning time. Second, they would keep the military capabilities in the Baltic states down and the Alliance's surprise potential. Third, Russia might have opportunities to monitor military developments in the neighbouring countries, at least through the verification mechanism of the adapted CFE Treaty. Fourth, Russia's nuclear deterrence would remain relatively strong, because no limitations would presumably be accepted to nuclear deployment within Russian territory. The Founding Act in this respect deals only with NATO's nuclear assets, not Russia's. Fifth, crisis escalation would become easier for Russia to control and NATO's behaviour easier to predict, because the peacetime restrictions would imply a definite escalation mechanism in a strained situation. In the escalation phases Russia could use NATO's activities as a politico-military justification for its own activities and perhaps seize the initiative.

The aforementioned arrangements would reduce the danger of a surprise attack and build confidence between Russia and NATO, but they are not unambiguous from the perspective of the new members. They should not be compared with the restrictions put on NATO's activities in Denmark and Norway, because those were suggested by these countries themselves. The arrangements that Russia would seek affect the security of the Baltic states, imposing risks that benefit Russia. First, limitations on NATO's troop levels and activities in the Baltic states may weaken the Alliance's ability to fulfill Article 5 commitments in the event of war. Such

developments might undermine NATO's cohesion and lead perhaps to some political fragmentation in the long run. That would coincide with Russia's geopolitical interests.

What are Russia's political interests in relation to non-allied Baltic countries? The primary political goal, as deduced from the Russian Foreign Ministry's plan for relations, is undoubtedly to neutralize potential threats from the Baltic direction. The Russian idea of "a zone of indivisible security of countries" would then result in a security zone, wherein the three non-allied Baltic countries together with the Kaliningrad area and Belarus would cover more than half of Russia's western frontier between the Gulf of Finland and the Black Sea. In the southern Baltic littoral Russia has already underscored the borders of its sphere of influence by concluding the Union Treaty and cooperating with Belarus. Russia's attempts to keep the Alliance from its frontiers in the Baltic Sea region implies that Russia tries to reserve for the Baltic countries a role in its security system. That is reminiscent of Russia's traditional way of promoting its security, through neighboring countries. Thus from Russia's perspective, non-allied Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania should pursue policies that stabilize the situation in the Baltic region and coincide with Russian policy. Having achieved this goal, Russia would exercise continuous political influence in the region.

A major common advantage of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation of 27 May 1997 is that it provides a mechanism to prevent an automatic growth of military tension and an automatic renewal of the arms race over the long run. From Russia's perspective, perhaps the most significant goal is that the Act partially reduces the risk of Russia not being heard on European security affairs. Several observations can be made about NATO enlargement in conjunction with the Act. First, the Act defines mechanisms of consultation and joint decisions. Second, NATO member states reiterate that they have no intention or plan to deploy nuclear weapons on the territories of new members. Third, the Alliance's collective defence will be based on creating capabilities rather than permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. Fourth, the parties are prepared to consult on the evolution of their conventional force posture. Militarily, from Russia's point of view these points form a control and escalation mechanism for strained international situa-

tions and contribute to strategic warning time for Russia.

The value of the Founding Act remains to be seen during the years to come. A major risk stems from the fact that the Act was not reached as a result of agreement, but rather as a result of Russia's weakness. Russia had farther-reaching objectives than it could reach at the negotiations. It had to yield because of its weak position, and stubbornness would have led to Russia's self-isolation in the long run. This imbalance may contain the seeds of future tension and lead to Russia's efforts to restore the equilibrium. The Founding Act did not resolve the opposition of interests over NATO enlargement. In the Act Russia formally accepts the enlargement, but that does not mean that Russia agrees with it. And despite the encouraging signs of preventing Russia's isolation in Europe, the possibility should be noted that Russia, if pressured in Europe, might become more active in the south and east (Caucasia, Central Asia, China).

What is the value of the Founding Act from the perspective of the East Central European countries? From the Baltic states' viewpoint several items of the Act are important, including the following: (1) NATO and Russia "will cooperate to prevent (passage omitted) confrontation or the isolation of any state"; (2) NATO and Russia will "refrain from the threat or use of force against each other as well as any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence"; (3) NATO and Russia "respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security, the inviolability of borders". Although the Act states that the parties do not consider each other as adversaries, Russia's clearly expressed opposition to NATO enlargement implies that Russia still sees dangers and risks in it. The enlargement is also mentioned as a threat in Russia's National Security Concept. The Act's reference to Europe without spheres of influence limiting the sovereignty of any state perhaps implies that such spheres should not be created in the European security architecture. That does not impede Russia from pursuing its interests in relation to the neighbouring countries. According to president Yeltsin (26 May 1997), in a dialogue with the Baltic states it will be possible to convince them that NATO membership will not improve their security. Yeltsin's and his administration's statements on the need to review the Founding Act if former Soviet Republics join NATO goes

in the same direction, albeit focused perhaps more on the domestic audience. That said, it seems that the rivalry for influence in East Central Europe will continue.

The Founding Act is an important document for Russia. This is reflected in the Russian statements stressing the binding quality of the Act, comparing it with the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. Despite Russia's weak position at the negotiations, the document, at least theoretically, provides Russia with possibilities for influence. First, in relation to the United States Russia's position is stronger in setting the agenda for regular sessions of the Permanent Joint Council. Russia has constantly a representative in the troika-chairmanship, while the United States is one of the rotating NATO members in the chairmanship. Second, the position of the Joint Council provides Russia, at least theoretically, with the opportunity to balance interests in other forums, like the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the OSCE. The provision of the Act stating that Russia's and NATO's actions must be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the OSCE's governing principles implies the possibility of moving common issues to the UN and OSCE, where Russia's position is relatively stronger than in the Joint Council. And finally, it may be asked, to what extent the consensus-based decision-making principle of the Joint Council is equivalent to the right of veto.²⁵⁶ It should be noted that the Founding Act specifies areas for consultation and cooperation and states that the Act does not infringe upon or restrict the rights of NATO or Russia to independent decision-making and action. On the other hand, it states that the Joint Council provides mechanism for joint decisions "with respect to security issues of common concern." Undoubtedly Russia's interest is to interpret these provisions as widely as possible. It remains to be seen how useful these possibilities of influence will turn out to be. Now, when more than one year has passed after the cooperation on the basis of the Founding Act was launched, the experience gained is not very encouraging. According to some sources, cooperation within the framework of the Permanent Joint Council is suffering from mutual distrust, clashing perceptions and bureaucratic inertia. Suspicions and recriminations have emerged on both sides. It is said that at NATO headquarters the mood is gloomy about hopes for new security partnership between NATO and Russia. A substantive dialogue is even alleged to have proved impossible, i.a. because of the restricted space for manoeuvrabil-

ity posed by Moscow on the Russian diplomats. The Russian side claims that when they ask about NATO's plans for military infrastructure and troop stationing in the three new member states, the questions are rejected with excuses that NATO cannot discuss these matters over the heads of Poland, the Czech republic and Hungary. Russian military seem to be more keen in cooperation with NATO than in the civilian side.²⁵⁷

The Charter of Partnership Among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania signed in January 1998 gratifies for its part the Baltic countries' needs for a more stable security political position. The significance of the Charter is of politico-military nature rather than military. It notes the shared goal of Baltic integration into European and transatlantic institutions, such as the European Union, the OSCE, the World Trade organization and NATO. The United States welcomes Baltic aspirations and supports their efforts to join NATO, but this does not commit the United States to Baltic membership. The Charter does not offer any security guarantees. It is not an alternative to NATO membership, nor is it an effort to regionalize the security of the Baltic states. The Charter implies that the Baltic countries must themselves develop their military defence to meet the responsibilities and obligations of membership in the Alliance. The United States will cooperate with the Baltic states in building up their defence. Emphasizing the significance of stability in Europe, the Charter is also a signal toward Russia and has indirect impact on relations between Russia and the Baltic states.

Russia's Instruments for the Realization of its Political Interests

Cooperation based on the Founding Act may provide Russia with opportunities to attempt to influence the security of the Baltic Sea area. Another area of influence is Russia's direct activities in relation to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Which instruments does Russia possess for the realization of its political interests toward the Baltic states? With regard to the "near abroad" in general, Konstantin Sorokin's analysis advances the following means: (1) economic instruments, such as cooperation and penetration; (2) politico-economic instruments, such as the utilization of the neighbouring countries' dependence on energy supplies, technological dependence and dependence on transport; (3) political instruments,

such as diplomatic actions along the lines of the "new thinking" or balancing diplomacy, and the utilization of the Russian diaspora or the national diaspora in Russia; (4) military assistance in training local armies, delivery of weapons, peace enforcement, establishment of military bases and the use of military power. According to Sorokin's analysis, the more unstable and socially or politically unsettled is the country-object, the less appropriate are economic and political methods and the more appropriate are military and politico-military methods. Hence in relation to the Baltic states, economic and political methods would be most appropriate. Sorokin considers the contemporary Russian political establishment too weak and controversial to protect by itself Russia's economic interests in the "near abroad." Therefore, assistance by Russian commercial banks would be required. The former Soviet republics would be relatively vulnerable to their economic penetration. Private investments would be more effective than governmental, and for political reasons private investments are the only option in cases like the Baltic states.²⁵⁸ Economic penetration should be supported by the Russian government. The "energy weapon" is one politico-economic instrument, but its use is questionable because of uncertainty about its effect. The Baltic countries could eliminate disturbances in oil delivery with purchases from third countries. The price factor is not an effective lever because the Baltic states have paid world market prices for Russian oil since the early 1990s. With regard to gas supply it can be asked, what would be the aim of using a blockade against the Baltic states? That would severely undermine Russia's credibility as a gas supplier to the West for a long time. Russia can hardly afford such setbacks now, when it needs Western currency and is enhancing gas supply abroad. Second, Gasprom, which controls 80 percent of Russia's gas market, is a private company and may not be easily persuaded to cut down its foreign deliveries. This reflects the changed situation in the post-Soviet era. Economic means of influence are perhaps effective politically as a potential threat, but their implementation is restricted by mutual economic interests. For example, a dramatic drop of food imports from the Baltic countries would presumably result at least regionally in disturbances of food supplies, which is complicated enough in Russia at present. The use of the "energy weapon" is an extreme step, in which Russia would run a risk of serious international repercussions.

Balancing diplomacy in Soviet times meant playing with "imperialistic controversies". Today, and particularly during the Baltic states' hypothetical NATO membership, Russia could utilize its geopolitical influence in the "near abroad" and attempt to play them against each other. A second way is the "package method," which means bringing in other problems in which Russia's position is strong, for example, linking energy deliveries and politically open questions. Russia is applying this method at the moment, linking the issue of the border agreement with Estonia to the position of ethnic Russians. A third method is a "mined gift," meaning that Russia could voluntarily abandon issues that it cannot handle or that are disadvantageous, and pass the problems to a "new host". Military power is the ultimate political instrument. According to Sorokin, in the current circumstances it is inapplicable in the Northern Hemisphere. The objective of Russia's actions would be to gain international acknowledgment and legalization for Russia's interests, for example, in areas like national security and agreements on the use of sea ports, terminals and pipelines. At least an informal international consensus on the legalization would be important for Russia. Subsequent violations of these internationally acknowledged interests would then offer some justification for Russian actions.²⁵⁹

Based on the analysis above, it could be asked whether the interests of the Baltic states and Russia in the field of security policy are solely confrontational. Are there no perspectives for mitigation? The answer is in the affirmative in the event that mutual economic interests develop favourably and geoeconomic motives in the relations become stronger than traditional geopolitical considerations. In the short term, for example, that could result in a way of thinking that Russia can provide for its economic interests related to the seaports of the East-Baltic littoral without exercising control over the area. In the long term, mutually favourable, wide economic interaction could be established as a result of the EU's approach to Russia's frontiers. It is noteworthy that so far Russia has not made statements opposing the enlargement of the European Union. Forty percent of Russia's total foreign trade is conducted with the European Union. Dmitri Trenin has delineated possible minimum benefits that Russia could gain from the Baltic states' membership in the EU, as follows: (1) opportunities for profitable capital investment; (2) the establishment of a privileged relation-

ship with the European Union; (3) the promotion of integration of the Russian speaking population; (4) the stimulation of cooperation at the regional level.²⁶⁰ These developments require a new approach to ensuring security, reducing risks of military threats by creating mutual economic bonds, which would also serve regional stability. A vision of favourable geoeconomic developments in the Baltic Sea region could be a triangle of economic growth, including the Baltic countries, Finland and the area of St Petersburg.

7 THE RUSSIAN MINORITIES IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

Geopolitically, the presence of a diaspora in another country can be an important factor of influence. In recent years Russia has made attempts to influence the relations between the indigenous and the Russian-speaking parts of the population in the Baltic region. The legal, political and cultural rights of ethnic Russians in the Baltic countries have assumed particular importance in Moscow's political language. They have also been a special concern to Western governments and European organizations. Citizenship policies in Estonia and Latvia especially have drawn criticism. These policies, together with a Russian citizenship policy and its geopolitical aspects, are important to regional stability. What are these policies? What is the significance of the Russian minority to the Baltic countries? Is the Russian-speaking diaspora geopolitically important to Russia? These are the main questions of this section.

Citizenship Policies and their Consequences

After the incorporation of the Baltic countries into the Soviet Union in 1940, the economies and policies of these countries were revised to follow a Soviet model; rapid large-scale industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, centralized control, and diminished self-sufficiency. Ethnic Russians were moved into the Baltic republics to reinforce labor for rapid industrialization, to run firms, the bureaucracy, and the army, and to occupy leading posts in the Communist Party. The proportion of indigenous nationalities in the total population dropped significantly, especially in Estonia and Latvia.²⁶¹ The Russian settlement was socially concentrated. Titular nationalities predominate in rural areas, while they are a minority in and around the capitals as well as in industrially developed urban areas. In Latvia, Russian settlements were widespread, but in Estonia the migrants are concentrated in Russian-speaking enclaves. Apart from the capitals there are high concentrations of Russian settlers in northeastern Estonia and in the Daugavpils area in south-eastern Latvia.²⁶² In 1995 there were 1.492 million people in Estonia. Of them 64.2 percent (958 thousand people) were Esto-

nians, while 28.7 percent (428 thousand people) were Russians and 7.1 percent others. The population of Latvia in 1995 was 2.530 million, including 54.8 percent Latvians (1.39 million people), 32.8 percent Russians (830 thousand people) and 14.4 percent others. The figures for Lithuania are 3.718 million population, including 81.3 percent (3.02 million people) Lithuanian, 8.4 percent (310 thousand people) Russian, 7.0 percent (259 thousand people) Polish, and 3.3 percent others. The number of Russian-speakers is somewhat larger. In the 1989 census, 35 percent of the population in Estonia, 42 percent in Latvia and 12 percent in Lithuania listed Russian as their native language. A common trend in all Baltic states is that the proportion of titular nationalities is growing.²⁶³

Although the Baltic states are often erroneously viewed as one entity, they are very dissimilar and pursue quite different policies. But three countries define citizenship the same way, linking it to citizenship in 1940. People who were citizens in 1940, as well as their descendants, retained their citizenship after renewed independence in the 1990s. Differences are met within the countries' approaches to naturalizing non-citizens who were resident when the Baltic states renewed their independence in 1991.

Lithuania adopted its citizenship law in 1989, before independence. Lithuania's policy on naturalizing non-citizens is the most inclusive among the three countries. The law grants automatic citizenship to all permanent residents who were born in the republic or who had at least one parent or grandparent born there. Those who did not meet the other criteria but were residing in the republic when the law was adopted could become citizens by submitting a formal request, signing a loyalty declaration, and renouncing other citizenship. Others could become citizens only through naturalization. Naturalization was possible by demonstrating a knowledge of the Lithuanian language, maintaining permanent residence for ten years, possessing a permanent source of income, showing a knowledge of the Lithuanian constitution and promising to obey it, and signing a loyalty statement. In 1996, 95 percent of residents were citizens, either through birth or naturalization. They can fully participate in the country's political life.²⁶⁴

Estonia and Latvia did not adopt their citizenship laws before independence. Unlike Lithuania's, the naturalization processes in both countries have been exclusionary. Estonia adopted its law in 1992, but naturalization was not possible before 30 March 1993.

Until that time, those who could not show roots in Estonia back to 16 June 1940 or earlier were aliens. The provisions for automatic citizenship were tougher than in Lithuania, which meant that about three quarters of non-Estonians were unable to receive automatic citizenship, and of the 150 000 non-Estonians eligible for it, only 12 000 gained citizenship by June 1993. Most non-Estonians were able to apply for naturalization in 1993, and by 1995 more than 50 000 non-citizens had been naturalized. The key question is the language requirement. Those wishing to become citizens must show conversational ability in the Estonian language, requiring a command of around 1500 words. Fulfilling high-school language requirements also fulfills the citizenship language requirement, which makes citizenship more easily attainable to young people, but most Russian adults are unwilling to make the effort. In Estonia the political rights of non-citizens are restricted. Permanent residents are allowed to vote in local elections, but non-citizens cannot vote in national elections, hold national or political office, or join political parties.²⁶⁵

Latvia adopted its official citizenship law in 1994. On the basis of the law, Latvia's approach to naturalization is the most exclusionary among the three countries. Soviet-era immigrants can apply for naturalization only after the year 2000, though their descendants can apply for it earlier. According to the 1994 law, permanent residents who arrived in Latvia when they were more than 30 years old are not eligible for citizenship before the year 2003.²⁶⁶ Applicants must know some Latvian and swear loyalty to Latvia. By the fall of 1995, only a few hundred non-citizens had been naturalized. At present, of the nearly one million non-Latvians living in the country, 360 000 had become citizens on the basis of their ancestors' citizenship before 1940. Naturalization is allowed only for those who are registered as residents. Up to 150 000 people residing in Latvia were denied official residency status. In Latvia, the rights of non-citizens are more limited than in Estonia. Non-citizens cannot vote even in local elections. Nor are they allowed to own land and other natural resources or purchase housing from the state.²⁶⁷

When assessing the position of Russian minorities from a geopolitical perspective, the interaction of Russian, Estonian and Latvian citizenship policies is a key factor. A basic element of Russia's policy was the law on the basis of which residents of the

Baltic states who had not been guaranteed citizenship there could receive Russian citizenship, applying for it before 6 February 1995. As a result, by 1995 over 60 000 people in Estonia and an estimated 20 000 people in Latvia had gained Russian citizenship.²⁶⁸ Thus the exclusionary citizenship policies of Estonia and Latvia together with the inclusive citizenship policy of the Russian Federation made many Russians in the Baltic countries choose Russian citizenship. This has created a base of Russian citizens in Estonia and Latvia, and with it the potential for Russian interference in the affairs of these countries, because Russia can interpret measures of the Baltic governments toward the Russian minority as an attack against Russian citizens.²⁶⁹ In 1996 and 1995, Estonia and Latvia respectively established so-called "alien passports" of five years duration for non-citizens.

In 1992 Russia began openly to criticize the Baltic states for violations of human rights in their citizenship policies, subsequently increasing claims of discrimination. However, investigations carried out by the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and others have not verified these charges.²⁷⁰ President Yeltsin, for example, in 1994 presented claims of rights violations and demanded automatic citizenship for the Russians. In January 1997, Russian foreign minister Primakov stated that Russia refused to sign the border treaty with Estonia because of the unequal treatment of Russians in Estonia and referred to the possibility of economic sanctions against the Baltic countries. In 1995 Russian foreign minister hinted at the possibility of using force to protect Russians in the former Soviet republics.²⁷¹ But Russia has not actually done much to support the Russians in Estonia and Latvia.²⁷² Nor does it seem to be interested in receiving and resettling Russian migrants and refugees, as shown by the fact that funds allocated for this purpose have been reduced. In 1993-1994, the diaspora question was an important part of Russia's external policy, but its importance has declined and it is no longer a primary issue in Russia's relations with the Baltic states.²⁷³ At the moment it seems that Russia's citizenship policy is aimed at keeping Russians in the former Soviet republics in their current regions of residence.²⁷⁴

When the citizenship laws were adopted in Estonia and Latvia, they were clearly designed to protect the political dominance of the titular nationalities during the first years of renewed independence. This is apparently a relevant motive in the citizenship poli-

cies even today. Thus the exclusiveness of the laws was linked to the proportion of non-indigenous nationalities in the population and to the level of integration of the Baltic republics into the Soviet Union, both of which were far higher in Estonia and Latvia than in Lithuania. Obviously a fear of losing national existence was one reason for the exclusionary policy. It would be wrong to say that the citizenship policies of Estonia and Latvia based on the citizenship laws of 1992 and 1994 have been essentially incongruent with European norms. To certain extent, the Baltic citizenship policies can be compared with the "guest worker" policies of some Western countries, and the policies of naturalization are not more exclusionary than those of Germany or Switzerland.²⁷⁵ But in the Baltic area conditions are special, because the requirements were unilaterally imposed on the sizable population that was permanently living in the countries. Since not all permanent residents have the right to participate in national elections, the titular nationalities are electorally over-represented. As survey results indicate, such differences have created perceptions of discrimination among the Russians. In an opinion poll²⁷⁶ conducted in 1993, more than 80 percent of the Russians in Estonia and Latvia felt that the requirements of citizenship were unjust. The corresponding share in Lithuania was 20 percent. However, it should be noted that it was a question of feeling during a time of striking historical contrasts. But the situation is a nuisance to the Balts themselves, because it decreases the minorities' loyalty to the states, leaving some to call on the Russian Federation to protect their rights. Besides the Russians, the European organizations have criticized Estonia's and Latvia's citizenship policies. The CSCE/OSCE, in particular, brought major changes in their policies, and the activities of the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE's missions in Estonia and Latvia are an important factor stabilizing the situation. The role of the Council of Europe is also significant, for some improvements in the Baltic legislation process were pre-conditions placed by the Council on Estonia and Latvia for their membership.

Recently, some progress in Estonia's and Latvia's citizenship policies has taken place. In June 1998, the Latvian parliament approved a liberalizing law that allows any number of non-citizens to apply for citizenship instead of setting an annual quota. The law also qualified for citizenship children born to non-citizens after 1991.

A referendum that was organized in Latvia in October 1998 endorsed the changes. In the future the applicants for citizenship must still demonstrate their commitment to Latvia, but the change of law is an important symbol of Latvia's desire to join the West as a liberal democracy.²⁷⁷

In November 1998, a similar change of law is being considered by Estonian parliament. The bill qualifies for citizenship children born after February 1992, without an obligation to show the knowledge of the language, when the parents apply for citizenship to the children. Now there are approximately six thousand five hundred such children. According to the Estonian media, it is highly probable that Estonian cabinet will give the necessary support to the government for the amendment of the law.²⁷⁸

The Position of the Russian Minority

The Russian population has an important role in Estonia's and Latvia's economies. In Estonia the Russians dominate the industrial labor force, in which their share was 57 percent in 1987. In the Soviet era, Russians had the largest share in the all-union enterprises: approximately 80 percent of labor were Russians.²⁷⁹ Russians also dominate some other key sectors such as transport. In Latvia, the Russian labor force is concentrated in key sectors like energy, transport and heavy industry. In 1987 their share of the industrial labor force was 62 percent. In transport the share of Latvians was 20-25 percent. In Lithuania, the segmentation of labor force is not as clear as in Estonia and Latvia. Here, too, Russians dominated all-union enterprises, but in industry, for example, the share of Lithuanians was 71 percent in 1987.²⁸⁰

The main concerns of the Russian population seem to be social rights like access to housing, work and social benefits. These are often thought to be even more important than political rights.²⁸¹ Economically the Russian population's position is relatively good, although there are some differences between and within the countries. In 1995 GDP per capita in Latvia was 70 percent and in Lithuania 55 percent of Estonia's level. Thus Estonians appear to be roughly twice as well off as Lithuanians and one-third better of than Latvians. In all three states, only a few are destitute. The highest rate of freedom from destitution is 96 percent among Estonians, while the lowest is 83 percent among Russians in Latvia and Lithuania. Ac-

According to the second New Baltic Barometer survey conducted in April 1995, the economic conditions of Russian and Baltic nationals are on the average 84 percent similar in Estonia, 92 percent similar in Latvia, and 93 percent similar in Lithuania. A comparison of the position of Russians in the three countries reveals that citizenship does not result in a significant difference in economic conditions between Russians in the Baltic countries.²⁸² The Russian population in Estonia and Latvia is generally unwilling to resettle in the Russian Federation, because the standard of living in the Baltic is higher than in Russia.²⁸³

When assessing the geopolitical significance of the Russian-speaking minority to Russia, at least three factors should be taken into account. First, Russians in Estonia and Latvia are not homogeneous. Nor are their interests identical. Common factors are language, Russian identification and the fact of living outside the Russian Federation.²⁸⁴ A survey of Russians in Estonia revealed that the ethnic factor does not play as important a role among them as the international controversy would suggest. Russians living in the CIS states generally do not identify with Russians living in the Russian Federation,²⁸⁵ and in Estonia and Latvia they are facing difficulties in defining their identity. Although relations between nationalities within the countries remain tense, they have improved since 1991, and now some sense of identity with the new states can be discovered.²⁸⁶ On the basis of the 1993 and 1995 elections in Estonia it seems that the population is becoming more concerned about economic than ethnic issues, and the ethnic polarization is beginning to break down.²⁸⁷ Second, as to their approach to citizenship, Russians in Estonia can be categorized roughly into three groups, one-third wanting to stay in Estonia and learn the language, one-third willing to leave and one-third preferring to stay but unhappy about it. To a degree this was reflected in the March 1991 referendum, in which one third of non-Estonians supported Estonia's independence. However, relatively few have left and few have become citizens. In 1991-1994, 42 000 Russians left Estonia, and an estimated 60 000 left Latvia for Russia.²⁸⁸ The figures might have been higher if Russia had been willing to receive a larger-scale resettlement.²⁸⁹ In Estonia and Latvia, only 20 percent of the non-indigenous population had become citizens by July 1995.²⁹⁰ In 1997, roughly 270 000 Russian-speakers in Estonia were without any citizenship.²⁹¹ According to the Russian Federation's em-

bassy, 116.000 Russian citizens were living in Estonia in September 1996. According to Saulius Girnius, about 120 000 ethnic Russians in Estonia have become citizens of Russia, and 63 percent of residents in the country are citizens. In Latvia, of 33 000 eligible, 525 people had become citizens in 1996.²⁹² It is said that in 1998 three fifths of ethnic Russians in Latvia do not have Latvian citizenship.²⁹³ The third significant factor is that political mass actions do not seem likely. When asked in an opinion poll, the majority of Russians in the three Baltic states answered that they would not demonstrate in the streets over the citizenship issue. It is noteworthy that national strikes, large-scale demonstrations, petition marches, invasions of official assemblies, planned insurrections and ethnic riots have not taken place.²⁹⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Geopolitics in the International Relations of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union

It would be oversimplifying to say that expansionism was the main geopolitical code of Russia/Soviet Union. I would rather conclude that Russia/Soviet Union has expanded when the geopolitical situation on the frontiers has allowed. Expansion has not been inevitable, for throughout history Russia has halted expansion in situations where there has been uncertainty about the commitments it would entail. The Soviet expansion in Africa and Southeast Asia might be seen as an imperialist action, but I would argue that it was rather an aspect of Soviet rivalry with the United States and a question of exploiting an apparent opportunity. It was halted when no favorable opportunities were available and when the Soviet Union became reluctant to take on more economic burdens in the Third World.

The internal dynamics of the Russian core area along with economic gain and territorial security, were the main generators of expansion. Politically Russia/Soviet Union sought security by balancing power between its major rivals and trying to make neighboring countries' behavior serve the purposes of Russian security. For this the establishment of Russian/Soviet physical presence throughout the total field of its geopolitical control was not necessary. It is highly unlikely, for example, that the Soviet Union would ever have wanted to fight for Western Europe.²⁹⁵ It would have been enough for Soviet purposes if American power and influence had been undermined and Western European countries had acted in accordance with the Soviet security interests. The Russians have never in modern times attacked a major power.²⁹⁶ Militarily, Russia has always expanded into weak areas.

Geopolitically, Russia/Soviet Union has always been a continental power. It used typically continental means in exercising control over its geopolitical space. The maritime element was important for foreign trade, but even access to warm seas was gained with continental methods of expansion. The only time a maritime control over space was attempted was the Russian-Japanese war (in 1904-1905), which ended unsuccessfully. Seas were not routes

of expansion for Russia/Soviet Union, but they were strategically important because they would allow hostile penetration of the core areas. For political and military reasons Russia tried to close the coastal seas (the Black Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Sea of Ohotsk) by seizing control over straits leading into these seas. But this never succeeded.

The geopolitical behavior of the Soviet Union was a mixture of Russian expansion and Communist ideology. The role of ideology was considerable in the first years of the revolution but declined from the early 1930s on, while the role of classical geopolitics in Soviet foreign relations was constantly growing. Control over space was a basic component in achieving geopolitical goals. Although developments in weapons technology have reduced the value of space and buffer zones as factors of military security, the Soviet Union has applied other forms of geopolitical control, including economic, political, ideological and demographic control, etc. The size of the total field of geopolitical control has varied, depending on the capabilities of the Soviet Union to initiate in international relations. After World War II, the Soviet Union regained what the Russian Empire had lost in World War I and expanded into areas which the empire had sought. By the 1980s, a complex of four geopolitical circles had been created around the Russian core area, extending from the closest autonomies to the developing countries in other continents.

Finally, what were the geopolitical reasons for the dissolution of the Soviet Union? One explanation can be found by applying the geopolitical model that John P. LeDonne developed to explain the foreign policy of the Russian Empire. After World War II, the Soviet Union extended its total geopolitical field of control beyond the line of an optimum conquest, moving too close to other geopolitical core areas. This generated tension and the situation ended up with a politico-military confrontation between the Russian and other core areas. The price of maintaining the line of conquest under circumstances of confrontation turned out to be so high that in the long run the Soviet Union could not afford it economically, politically and militarily and was forced to withdraw. This led to the disintegration of the whole geopolitical sphere, because it had been built up on the traditional Russian principle of centralization of power, and there were simultaneously disturbances in the power center, the Russian core area. To a degree this resembles the course

of events in Russia and Eastern Europe during World War I (*i.e.* overexpansion).

The Geopolitics of Russia after the Disintegration of the Soviet Union

Currently, Russian scholars are calling for a reform of classical geopolitical theories. The purpose of the reform would be to supplement geographical factors with the other geopolitical considerations in today's world and to re-evaluate their relative importance. Reforms point to changes in the physical environment and new emphases in the behavior of states as well as the increased significance in world politics of such factors as the global economy and the information revolution. The military aspects of geopolitics have changed. The traditional postulate of spatial invulnerability has been undermined by advances in the technologies of destruction and detection, command and control, maneuverability, troops transport, long-range weapon systems, etc. Scientific and technical progress have reduced the geopolitical significance of landscape factors like geographical distance, forests, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans. Railroads have lost a part of their importance due to improved air and road transportation capabilities. New missile, communications and surveillance technologies have improved the range and penetration of control. All the globe is now observable from space.

Geopolitical expansion is taking new forms. Traditionally expansion meant territorial gain. Geopolitical expansion in the future will have other dimensions as well: information-related, cultural and civilizational, religious, ethno-religious, political (through pressure, sanctions, isolation) and economic. Russian geopoliticians also deem obsolete the traditional concept of confrontation between the Heartland and the rest of the world. It reflects bipolarity and a static setting, while the current and future geopolitical world picture is polycentric, multi-structured and changing. These ideas are similar to those presented recently by some Western scholars, leading to what could be called the "new geopolitics." Some Russian scholars go so far as to suggest that geopolitics should be adopted as a foreign policy orientation in Russia, though that may be overestimating the role of geopolitics in the spectrum of national interests.

Russia's contemporary geopolitical situation is unstable. The

country is still recovering from the consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. There are open border questions around the periphery of the country and within it. Communication channels have profoundly changed. Contemporary seaport capacity is insufficient and is concentrated in a few geographical corridors. In land communications Russia is even more isolated than by sea. In telecommunications, computerization, and information systems Russia has lagged 15-20 years behind the West. Russia's geopolitical power is diminishing in a number of areas. The economy is declining, industrial and agriculture production are falling, infrastructure deteriorates and the population is becoming destitute. The state of the armed forces has gravely deteriorated. A population deficit threatens Russia.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a relatively weak actor. Geopolitically Belarus and Kazakhstan are Russia's most substantial CIS partners. As the main supplier of oil and gas, Russia has maintained some geopolitical control over the former Soviet republics. But Russia is under strong external and internal geopolitical pressures. To the west of Russia the Central European geopolitical core area is penetrating closer to the Russian core areas. To the east, the influence of three power centers, China, Japan and the United States, is growing. The most acute security threats are in the south, where geopolitical cross-pressures are focused on the Caucasian and Central Asian zones from the Russian and the Turkish-Iranian core areas. In the world arena Russia is mainly compelled to react rather than initiate, and its freedom of action is dramatically diminishing. Internal strengthening should be the priority in Russia's policy. That requires stabilizing external relations, which would give the country a chance to breathe and put its domestic base into order.

Russia's geopolitical strategy alternatives are scarce. Russia does not have the capacity for an expansive strategy, because it lacks economic and military power, as even the most nationalist policy orientations in Russia are forced to acknowledge. A yielding strategy is considered inappropriate, too. A position strategy (*status quo* strategy) seems to be the only option left. As Russia's recent policy indicates, the position strategy would be active in relation to the "near abroad" and balance-of-power in foreign relations, emphasizing the significance of a multipolar world order. Gaining time in foreign policy and preventing Russia from being

isolated would allow the restoration of Russia's internal stability and power. Since attempts to integrate the CIS have met steady resistance, Russia will have to build its relations with the CIS states on bilateral basis.

Geopolitical Trends in the Baltic Region

Since the thirteenth century the Baltic Sea has been an area of conflict between East and West. These conflicts have stemmed from opposing economic and military interests. In the Baltic basin, the major geopolitical transitions have been closely linked to the rise or fall of great powers. Until the twentieth century, the geopolitical interests of the littoral and external powers in the Baltic were mainly economic. In the twentieth century until the end of the Cold War, military considerations dominated the Baltic geopolitical setting, while in the 1990s economic activities are gaining more importance. The history of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania shows that even before the Modern Age the significance of the area was first of all commercial, stemming from its location on an important waterway that connected European centers through a river network with Byzantium. Commercial reasons initially made the Baltic region important to Russia: economic considerations dominated Peter I's foreign policy, and military-strategic policy followed commercial strategy. It should also be noted that for two centuries after the era of Peter I, the Baltic Sea was Russia's only stable outlet to ice-free seas.

In the post-Cold War era, the political situation has evolved through fragmentation to cooperation and integration. The significance of the Baltic Sea from the perspective of sea transport is expected to grow during the coming 10-15 years. The role of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as an economic gateway between Russia and the West may grow under favorable political conditions. In the field of security, NATO enlargement is the major challenge to stability in the region.

Future developments in the Baltic Sea region were discussed in this paper using six scenarios. In the scenarios, the imbalance of power and Russia's attempts to restore equilibrium are dominating geopolitical phenomena affecting the Baltic countries at least in the near future. Russia and the Baltic states have conflicting security interests, and the rivalry for influence in the region will pre-

sumably continue. Another possible course of development is a growing significance of economic interaction and geoeconomic aspects in security policy. That could mitigate conflicting interests.

Russia's Military Interests in the East-Baltic Littoral

Threat perceptions, the evolution of military technology and the extension of the Russian/Soviet sphere of influence have affected Russia's military interests in the area of the Baltic states over the centuries. In terms of land strategy, the area has been important for Russia throughout history, whereas the significance of the air- and sea-strategic aspects has varied. From Russia's perspective the air space of the region is growing in importance at the expense of the area's sea-strategic significance. This is explained by the rapid evolution of air and missile technologies in the post-World War II era. Time and distance factors have become more important, which is critically reflected in the use of air power. This shift of emphasis may also be linked to the softening of the historical land power-sea power contrast as a result of the evolution of military air power and inter-continental ballistic missiles. Moreover, naval operations are undermined by the fact that the air space above the Baltic Sea can be dominated by land-based aviation.

Poland, the Straits of Denmark, the passage of the Gulf of Finland, and the St Petersburg area are the key geostrategic areas in the region and have been throughout history. The Kaliningrad region is militarily very important for Russia, as is the extension of Russia's defenses to the territory of Belarus. A major Russian problem is that possibilities for developing and utilizing the Kaliningrad area are limited. In Russian threat perception, the Baltic Sea and its eastern littoral are undoubtedly viewed over the long run as a potential enemy bridgehead, permeable to hostile penetration into the Russian core areas. To repel such penetration in war, Russia would wish to utilize Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's land and sea space and especially their air space. This would hold true whatever the relations between the Baltic states and NATO. The main hypothetical military threat that NATO enlargement would create is an increased surprise aircraft-missile strike potential. In an extreme case, Russia's fear of this might lead to military confrontation in the East Baltic littoral. Geopolitical and strategic pressure from Russia on southern Lithuania and northeastern Poland

would increase, because one of Russia's obvious aims in war would be to cut off the Baltic states' land communications with the West in this area and to open Russia's access from Belarus to Kalinin-grad. Sea-strategically, Estonia's NATO membership would mark an extension of the Helsinki-Tallinn-Aland Islands operation area into the Gulf of Finland. In air and missile defense, Russia would have to build a system that meets far higher requirements than a system bordering non-NATO Baltic states. That would mean higher costs for the defence of northwestern Russia. Even so, Russia is not creating its defense from scratch, and its concerns should not be exaggerated. It is important to note that after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, 70 percent of its air defense systems remained on Russian soil. NATO enlargement (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic) will cause other changes in the Baltic Sea, too. The influence of Germany will clearly grow in the region. Whether that will lead to a repetition of the historical rivalry between Germany and Russia on the Baltic Sea remains to be seen.

Has the East-Baltic littoral become militarily more important for Russia in the post-Cold War era? From Russia's perspective the area is a part of the zone of countries on its western borders extending from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. With the contraction of Russia's immediate area of influence, this zone has become more significant. Three further observations can be made. First, Russia's provisions for gaining a long strategic warning time in the region have significantly deteriorated. Second, the Baltic Sea is falling under NATO's continuous control. Third, the indirect importance of the Baltic Sea region as an outer defence zone of the Kola peninsula, Russia's most important military strategic area in Europe, has grown substantially. However, it should be noted that the main threats to Russia's national security in the foreseeable future are of non-military nature. According to Defence Minister Igor Sergeev, at least by the year 2005 the probability of a large scale aggression against Russia is low.

Russia's Economic Interests in the Area of the Baltic States

The availability of transportation routes and access to the sea are, from a geopolitical standpoint, Russia's first and foremost economic interests in the Baltic region. The scarce natural resources of the area are of little geopolitical interest. The Baltic states possess

agricultural potential, but not enough to be of more than limited regional importance to Russia. Trade relations with the Baltic states are significant, because they can be used as an instrument in pursuing Russia's geopolitical interests.

Economically, Russia's main geopolitical objectives in the Baltic region are to increase its seaport capacity and to gain the freest possible access to the Kaliningrad area. These objectives are intertwined. Kaliningrad has good technical potential as regards the extension of Russia's port capacity on the Baltic Sea, but its full exploitation is restricted by risks in access to the area. Two considerations have made the Kaliningrad area vitally important to Russia. As Russia's foreign trade grows, the importance of the Kaliningrad region will grow accordingly. Also Kaliningrad has the potential to become a gateway even to non-Russian regions and may compete with the Baltic countries in this respect.

In cargo transportation, along with its own ports, Russia will likely resort to the ports of the neighbouring countries, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The Baltic countries, in turn, need transit cargo traffic as a source of income, while Russia, for its part, needs long-term agreements with them on transit transportation and commercially stable transportation conditions. That binds the interests of Russia and the Baltic states together. Nevertheless, Russia will unambiguously avoid dependence on the Baltic states, regarding them as an unstable area because of uncertainty about their future policies. Over the long term this approach could profoundly change if geoeconomic motives strengthen in the Russo-Baltic policy at the expense of traditional geopolitical considerations. The rest of Europe is a third player, the transportation needs of which will likely increase transit shipping movements in the Baltic ports. The Baltic countries' EU membership could increase economic transactions between Russia and the EU *via* the Baltic Sea. Thus Russia's and the Baltic countries' interests in relation to the Baltic seaports are intertwined and mutual.

A study of Russian-Baltic trade relations reveals imbalance. Russia is a far more important trade partner to the Baltic states than they are to Russia. A main factor of imbalance is the dependence of the Baltic countries on energy and raw materials from Russia. The Baltic countries' major advantage in production is their low-income, highly-skilled labor force. However, the labor- and resource-intensive exports and a relatively narrow chain of process-

ing in production, as well as focusing on traditional commodities, make the Baltic states' economies vulnerable to external disturbances. Their fragile financial systems are also vulnerable to developments in the world economy and especially from Russia.²⁹⁷ Russia's high share of the Baltic countries' foreign trade together with the concentration of that trade within a few commodities is a risk factor as well. A sharp, substantial decrease in trade would likely result in a deep economic recession in these countries - a lever that Russia might use to influence in them in extreme situations. Russia can easily make the Baltic countries' trade situation difficult, for example, by changing tariff policy, as it has done by putting double tariffs on Estonia. The Baltic states can replace their major imports from Russia, particularly minerals and raw materials, with imports from third countries, but it is difficult to assess the financial costs of the necessary technical arrangements.

Russia's Geopolitical Interests related to Foreign Policy and Politico-military Affairs

Russia's political interests in relation to the Baltic states stem from the significance of the region in economic and security policy, particularly in conjunction with NATO enlargement. Russian thinking remains very traditional. It tends to view the Baltic countries as part of the Russian sphere of influence. Russia links their non-participation in military alliances with improvements in relations with Russia. Russia's short-term political interest is to prevent Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's NATO membership. Presumably its long-term interest is to establish balanced relations and cooperation with the Baltic states, meaning that the latter are expected to pursue policies that would serve Russia's security parallel to their own security.

If Russia cannot prevent Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania from joining NATO, and if Russia's interests are not taken into account in the way it wishes, its objective will be to restrict the Alliance's potential in the Baltic region and make the enlargement disadvantageous to the West. A situation that guarantees a maximal strategic warning time to Russia is undoubtedly a primary politico-military goal. Geopolitically, the Western and the Russian core areas are now seeking balance. The closer NATO gets to Russia's borders, the more will be at stake in Russian threat perceptions. The

arrangements that Russia would demand from NATO in the case of the Baltic states' membership would be farther-reaching and than those made in the case of Poland's, Hungary's and the Czech Republic's membership. And the farther-reaching are these arrangements, the higher is the risk that they will undermine the Alliance's freedom of action in the Baltic states or even endanger NATO's political cohesion. Such developments would coincide with Russia's geopolitical interests in the Baltic region. This all can be perceived as the result of friction between the two geopolitical core areas when they approach each other closely. The conclusion of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and Russia provides mechanisms to prevent the automatic growth of military tension. But reasons for tension remain, and the rivalry for influence in East Central Europe is likely to continue.

Russia does not possess effective instruments for pursuing its interests. Russia can make political "packages" in areas where its position is strong and leaving mutual problems unsettled, Russia could perhaps attempt to delay the Baltic states' integration into the West and create uncertainty. The applicability of politico-economic means is restricted by Russia's dependence on access to the Baltic sea ports. Exercising politico-economic pressure by cutting energy deliveries is a questionable tactic because of uncertainty about its effects on Russia itself. Penetration into the Baltic economies could be effective over the long run but is restricted by a lack of Russian capital for foreign investment in the immediate future. Certainly Russia will try to use its special relations with NATO and the adaptation of the CFE Treaty as channels of indirect influence on the Baltic situation. The conflict of security political interests between the Baltic states and Russia could be mitigated by growing economic interactions. A favourable development requires a shift from traditional geopolitical approach toward a geoeconomic agenda.

The Russian Minorities in the Baltic Countries

The situation of ethnic Russians in Estonia and Latvia has been driven into stalemate. Russians account for roughly one-third of Estonia's and Latvia's populations, and these countries cannot survive economically without their Russian populations. Howev-

er, it is questionable to what extent the Estonians and Latvians want the Russians eventually to be naturalized. The Russian minority, in turn, does not have many options. Some of them want to be naturalized, though the requirements are generally considered too high. Others want to leave (or at least say so) but have no place to go. Russia does not encourage resettlement and in any case has a lower standard of living. Still other Baltic Russians seem to be passive, which implies that they will eventually accommodate themselves. To the Russian Federation the situation of the ethnic Russians is a concern, but the country cannot do much to improve it. Since the Russian geopolitical core area is weak at present, it is questionable whether the Russian Federation is willing to help Russophone abroad. Nor are its interests in relation to Russians abroad clearly defined.

It seems that Estonia's and Latvia's desire to become integrated with the West is a strong motive to further the development of citizenship policies in the two countries. Dramatic changes are unlikely because ethnic tensions have been amazingly low, and it is a common interest of all parties to avoid confrontation. The will to protect the political dominance of the titular nationalities will presumably affect the future developments in citizenship policies. It remains to be seen whether the development of the Baltic economies gives rise to confrontation by setting back industrial branches occupied by Russians and favoring areas in which Balts predominate. So far it seems that living in the Baltic states as non-citizens is not too complicated, which may lower non-citizens' willingness to seek naturalization. On the other hand it is unlikely that the Baltic countries will adopt bilingualism in the foreseeable future.

Ethnic Russians in the Baltic states are not an instrument of Russian direct geopolitical control over the Baltic states for at least three reasons. First, Russia does not have control over the *diaspora*. Second, the Russian population in Estonia and Latvia is heterogeneous and passive in terms of political mass actions. Third, the political influence of ethnic Russians in the Baltic countries is low because of the restrictions put on non-citizens. The significance of the *diaspora* as Russia's geopolitical instrument is low and will decrease further as the gap in standards of living between Russia and the Baltic countries grows,²⁹⁸ which will strengthen the *diaspora's* ties to the new states and diminish their attraction to Russia. Fur-

thermore, even now there is no significant difference between the economic conditions of Russians and the titular nationals in the Baltic countries. In any case, the *diaspora's* ties to Russia will grow weaker as its age structure changes in the next 10-20 years, with the proportion of Baltic-born Russians in the diaspora growing significantly.

Even if Russia cannot influence the Baltic states through the Russian population there, the situation of the diaspora can serve as a justification for Russia's policies toward the Baltic countries on matters other than ethnic inclusion. A different issue is, how effective could Russian interference in the Baltic states be and how far Russia alone could go without jeopardizing its relationship with the democratic countries, an association of which is very important to Russia. The credibility of Russia's arguments for intervention will be lower the better off is the diaspora in the Baltic area and the higher the number of naturalized citizens in the future. Nevertheless, the position of ethnic Russians in the Baltic countries is one of the strongest instruments in Russia's hands at the moment and a means of indirect geopolitical control. The experience of other European ethnic regions shows that if a minority is not integrated, its problems will recur or will be exploited from outside. In this sense, Russia can exercise partial geopolitical control over the Baltic states through their Russian minorities.

Conclusion

Russia's interests in the Baltic states' area are primarily economic, political and politico-military. The military-strategic significance of the area is low at present, though it will grow if the Baltic countries join NATO. Even then, depending on Russia's economic situation, its immediate military reactions may not be strong. Russia's basic geopolitical interests are summarized in Table 4. The correlation of Russia's interests with the Baltic states' interests is assessed in the third column of the table. It is worth noting that in most areas Russia's and the Baltic states' interests are parallel. They are antagonistic in political, politico-military and military strategic issues.

Russia's interests in the Baltic states	Importance for Russia at present (trend)	Correlation with the Baltic states' interests ²⁹⁹	Notes
Territory as a source of energy and mineral raw materials	LOW (stable)	+	Scarce natural resources. Baltic production structure favors areas less dependent on heavy raw materials. Import of raw materials increases possibilities of Russia's influence.
Territory as a transit area of transport	HIGH (stable-declining)	+	Russia's access to Kaliningrad is a stable high interest. Use of Estonia's and Latvia's ports may decline with the improvement of Russia's own port capacity (5-15 years?)
Territory as a channel providing access to sea	HIGH (stable-declining)	+	Significance stems from use of seaports. See the column above. In crisis situations free access to the Baltic Sea through Helsinki-Tallinn passage is a high priority.
Territory as a military strategic bridgehead or a buffer zone	LOW-HIGH (increasing?)	-	At present the military strategic interest is low, because no military threat is foreseen. The Baltic states' NATO membership would change the situation. However, even then Russia's strong military reactions may not necessarily be immediate. The conflict of security interests could be softened, if geoeconomic motives grow at the expense of traditional geopolitical motives in Russia's policy.
Territory as a potential area of agriculture	LOW-MEDIUM (stable)	+	Low interest in the scale of whole Russia because of the Baltic agriculture's limited capacity. Medium significance in regional trade?
Territory as a location of significant industry	LOW (stable)	+	Both existing and potential industries are of low interest to Russia.
Territory as a source of potential labour force	LOW (stable)	+	Skilled labor force, but small in number on the Russian scale. Russia has no provisions for hiring labor force. Neither ethnic Russians nor the Balts are interested in moving.

Russia's interests in the Baltic states	Importance for Russia at present (trend)	Correlation with the Baltic states' interests ²⁹⁹	Notes
Foreign policy and politico-military interests focused on the region	HIGH (stable-increasing)	–	The current interests derive from NATO enlargement. Russia's main interests are: - to gain as long a strategic warning time as possible; - reduce NATO's surprise potential and level of preparations for common defense.
Territory as a place to store or process industrial waste	LOW		This is an estimate. No information is available as to why the Baltic countries would be a better place for waste than any other place.
Territory as an ecologically clean area for settling (migration of Russian population)	MEDIUM (increasing)	–	In the future, the Baltic countries may become a more and more attractive place for Russians to move in because of the higher standard of living. However, the Balts are not interested in Russian migration, and the Russians find the Baltic countries nationality policies exclusionary.

Table 4. Russia's geopolitical interests in the area of the Baltic states³⁰⁰

Russia does not possess effective instruments for pursuing its geopolitical interests directly in the East-Baltic littoral. The situation of the diaspora in the Baltic countries is one of the strongest instruments, but its value will decline. Politico-economic pressure is applicable, but its use is restricted by Russia's dependence on the Baltic countries' port facilities and transit routes. Cutting energy deliveries would be risky for Russia itself. Security-policy initiatives made by Russia are a political instrument. However, the applicability of this instrument is restricted by the Baltic states' strong commitment to a policy aiming at their NATO membership as the only guarantee of security. From Russia's perspective, an effective political means is to make "packages" of open problems in areas where Russia's position is strong. Economic penetration is an instrument of the future, but at present it is less effective because of Russia's scarce capital for foreign investments. Russia's hypothetical means of realization of its geopolitical interests in the area of the Baltic states are summarized in Table 5.

Means of realization	Effect / Usability at present (trend)	Notes
Economic penetration and influence on the financial systems of the Baltic states	HIGH / MEDIUM (increasing value)	So far limited because of Russia's scarce capital for foreign investments. More usable and effective in the future if investments can be directed to the Baltic states.
Economic cooperation as a means to pressure	MEDIUM/ LOW	In the Baltic states' economies and foreign trade, the tradition of cooperation with Russia, inherited from the Soviet era, is important. However, its use as a means by Russia to pressure the Baltic states is restricted by risks of negative consequences to Russia.
Economic cooperation as a means to improve relations	HIGH/HIGH	The enhancement of economic cooperation could create favourable conditions for positive developments in overall Russo-Baltic relations.
Politico-economic utilization of dependence on energy resources	HIGH / LOW (decreasing value)	The Baltic countries can compensate disturbances in oil supply with import from third countries. Dependence on gas is an instrument, but its use is limited by risks to Russia itself. A connection of the Baltic area with western gas networks will reduce the value of the energy instrument.
The use of technological dependence	MEDIUM / LOW (decreasing value)	Trend in the Baltic countries is toward Western technology, but plants are inherited from the Soviet era. The trend away from heavy industry reduces dependence.
The use of dependence on transportation	HIGH / LOW (increasing value)	Low usability because interests in keeping up transit cargo transportation are mutual. Usability will grow with the improvement of Russia's own port capacity (5-15 years?)
The politico-economic use of trade relations as a means to pressure	HIGH / LOW (decreasing value)	High effect because of Russia's high proportion in the foreign trade of the Baltic countries. Usability is restrained by Russia's dependence on access to the Baltic ports. The Baltic states' possible EU membership will reduce the value of this instrument.
The politico-military use of trade relations as a means to improve common Russo-Baltic relations	HIGH/HIGH	See the line: Economic cooperation as a means of improving relations.
Russian <i>diaspora</i> in the Baltic countries	HIGH / LOW (declining value)	The effect could be high due to the large proportion of ethnic Russians in Estonia's and Latvia's population. The usability is low, because the <i>diaspora</i> is not under Russia's control and is not politically active. Higher standard of living and the growing proportion of Baltic-born Russians will reduce the value of this instrument.

Means of realization	Effect / Usability at present (trend)	Notes
Political means like making security-policy initiatives, balancing power, preventing the Balts' unified approaches, unequal relations, favoring one Baltic country at the expense of the others, etc; political "packages".	MEDIUM-HIGH/ MEDIUM-HIGH	Effective in areas where Russia has strong positions. The applicability of security-policy initiatives may be restricted by the three Baltic states' strong commitment to a policy line aiming at NATO membership as the only guarantee of their security. Russia's possible pressure may be partially neutralized by Western good offices to the Baltic countries, <i>i.e.</i> in negotiations with Russia.
Military means like - weapon deliveries; - the use of military force.	LOW / LOW (declining value)	The use of military force is inapplicable in the foreseeable future. A Western orientation is prevailing in equipping the Baltic armed forces.

Table 5. The main hypothetical means to realize Russia's geopolitical interests in the Baltic states³⁰¹

Regardless of Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's relation to NATO, Russia will likely seek to influence the Baltic countries in order to promote its interests in the region. As long as Russia is dependent on access to the Baltic through Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's ports, the attempts to influence will be restrained. The situation may change with the improvements of Russia's own port capacity. Over the long run, the mere availability of instruments for the realization of geopolitical interests is, however, not enough. The maintenance of influence requires geopolitical control over the Baltic states. At the moment there are no provisions for total geopolitical control. Partial control can be imposed through the *diaspora* and by keeping mutual political questions (like the border issue) open. In the future, Russia's economic strengthening may create more freedom of action and possibilities for building economic control over the Baltic countries. Russian investments in these countries could be especially effective. But on the other hand, Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's possible EU membership, in turn, would provide more flexibility to their economies in relation to Russia. It should be noted that in the future the Russo-Baltic relations may profoundly change, if geoeconomic aspects strengthened in Russia's security policy combined with an emerging new thinking. According to this idea Russia could satisfy its economic interest toward the seaports in the East-Baltic littoral without controlling the area geopolitically. An assessment on Russia's hypothetical forms of geopolitical control is presented in Table 6.

Forms of Russia's geopolitical control over the area of the Baltic states	Possibilities to accomplish (trend)	Notes
Political control	MEDIUM (stable)	The instruments that are currently available are mainly temporary, while the possibilities of creating long-term control based on political infrastructure like political parties, treaties, etc are scarce.
Military control over geographical space	LOW (stable)	No possibilities in peace time. Partial control can be achieved in strained international situations by threatening with air-missile strikes or other use of military force. Tactical nuclear weapons may assume a strategic role, but their further development is not likely because of high costs, and Russia's first priority is to create effective conventional armed forces.
Economic control over geographical space	MEDIUM-HIGH (increasing)	At the moment Russia's indirect control is relatively large. However, the effect of control is restricted by risks of counter-actions by the Baltic states touching Russia's interests (access to ports). Mutual interests are geopolitically balanced. Russia can improve indirect economic control over the Baltic countries in the future by penetrating into their economies.
Civilizational and ideological control over geographical space	VERY LOW (stable)	It is impossible to establish civilizational control over the independent Baltic states because of their strong resistance deriving from the historical experience and the fact that the Baltic states and Russia belong to different civilizations. ³⁰² Only very strong ideologies can be used as means of control over space, and Russia does not possess any at the moment.
Communications and information control	LOW (stable)	There are no physical provisions for these and very low susceptibility in the Baltic countries.
Demographic control	LOW (decreasing)	Theoretically possible in the areas of concentrations of ethnic Russians like in northeastern Estonia and in southeastern Latvia. In practice the possibilities are low, because the diaspora is not under Russian control.
Land surface, sea, air and cosmic space control	HIGH (increasing?)	The Baltic countries are totally controllable in terms of surveillance and intelligence with Russia's military technical means. Control will be significantly improved if the Baltic countries join NATO.

Table 6. Russia's hypothetical forms of geopolitical control over the area of the Baltic states.³⁰³

Russia's geopolitical interests in the area of the Baltic states are concentrated on few issues. In most geopolitical areas of interest the Baltic states' territory is of low significance for Russia. Russia possesses only few means for the direct realization of its geopolitical interests in the Baltic states and almost no possibili-

ties for establishing long-term geopolitical control over them.

The aim of this paper is not to develop recommendations for the Baltic countries' and Russia's policies toward each other. But in light of this survey it seems that economic issues and communications (ports and transit cargo) could serve as a core of stable relations between the Baltic countries and Russia. The utilization of the historically advantageous geographical position of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as an economic bridge between Russia and the West could be a basis for mutually beneficial relations between the Baltic countries and Russia, leading perhaps to stable security relations. The relationship between the West (the United States, Western Europe, EU, NATO) and Russia is important for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In the long term, mutually beneficial economic relations could create bonds between Russia and the Baltic states as a result of the enlargement of the European Union together with enhancing economic interactions and a possible growth of geoeconomic motives in Russia's policy at the expense of traditional geopolitical considerations. The importance of economic interactions could perhaps diminish the role of military aspects in Russia's policy, eliminating conflicting military security interests between the Baltic states and Russia. In the short term, the importance of Western economic relations for Russia could be used by the West as a medium of good offices in neutralizing problems between Russia and the Baltic states. Currently, for example, the interests of the Baltic countries can be pursued by NATO when cooperating with Russia. But a triangle structure can hardly be the optimal arrangement of Baltic-Russian relations. Bilateral balanced relations between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation are of the utmost importance for stability in the Nordic-Baltic region.

NOTES

- 1 I use the terms *Baltic states* and *Baltic countries* to mean Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the term *Baltic area* to mean their territories. By the terms *Baltic region* and *Baltic Sea region* I mean the sea and its riparian states (or their parts in the littoral areas). I also use the expression *East-Baltic littoral*, meaning Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Kaliningrad area, northeastern parts of Poland and the adjacent areas of the Russian Federation.
- 2 See, for instance, "Military Threatens to Counter NATO Expansion." *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* Vol XLVII, NO. 40, November 1, 1995: 9-12.
- 3 My definition of geopolitics as a study is a modification of Ladis Kristof's definition. Note also Kristof's definition of geopolitics: Geopolitics is politics geographically interpreted or analyzed for its geographical content. See: Kristof, Ladis K.D. "The Origin and Evolution of Geopolitics." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, VOLUME IV, NUMBER 1, March 1960: 34.
- 4 Theories developed by Mahan, Mackinder, Haushofer, and others.
- 5 Here I have borrowed freely from Saul Cohen, David Kerr, Konstantin Pleshakov, Konstantin Sorokin and Osmo Tuomi.
- 6 Gray, Colin S. *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartland, Rimlands, and the Technological Revolution*, Crane, Russak & Company, Inc, 1977, p. 35.
- 7 See, for instance, Kerr, David. "The New Eurasianism: The Rise of Geopolitics in Russia's Foreign Policy." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol 47, No.6, 1995: 977-988, and Talbott, Strobe. "The new geopolitics: defending democracy in the post-Cold War era." *The World Today*, January 1995: 7-10, and Afanasyev, Iurii. "Seems Like Old Times? Russia's Place in the World." *Current History*, Vol 93, NO. 585, October 1994: 305-307.
- 8 Wesson, Robert. *The Russian Dilemma*, Praeger Publishers, 1986, p. 4.
- 9 Ibid. pp. 3-4.
- 10 Pleshakov, Konstantin. *Geo-ideologichsheskaia pardigma*, Rossiiskii nauchnyi fond, 1994, p. 39.
- 11 Rieber, Alfred & Rubinstein, Alvin. *Perestroika at the Crossroads*. M.E. Shap, Inc., 1991, pp. 7-8.
- 12 Wesson, pp. 4, 7, 8.
- 13 LeDonne, John P., Lecturer, Harvard University. Interview, 31 January 1997.
- 14 LeDonne, John P. *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 1. See also: Gray, p. 26; Hauner, Milan. *What is Asia to us? Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today*, Unwin Hyman, 1990, pp.238-239.
- 15 LeDonne, p. xiii.
- 16 LeDonne, pp. xiii, 355.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 347, 348.

- 18 "A fortress-fleet strategy at sea is the equivalent of a close-border policy on land. It assumes that the purpose of a fleet, with its supply depots and berthing installations, is not to project power beyond the proximate zone of the empire but to guard an invisible "red line" against intrusions by foreign ships. It seeks not so much to gain possession of straits to the wide oceans as to prevent entry by foreign ships in order eventually to transform the proximate maritime zone into an inner frontier zone of the empire." LeDonne, p. 7.
- 19 LeDonne, p. 368.
- 20 Gray, p. 37.
- 21 LeDonne, pp. 351, 352, 356, 357.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 355, 365.
- 23 Pleshakov, p. 43.
- 24 LeDonne, pp. 355, 357, 362.
- 25 Ibid., p. 369.
- 26 Sorokin, Konstantin. *Geopolitika sovremenosti i geostrategia Rossii*, Rossiiskaia politicheskaia entsiklopedia, 1996, p. 9. Vladimir Razuvaev, rejecting allegations of Soviet "secret geopolitical studies," argues that the Foreign Ministry of the USSR did not apply any geopolitical principles. See: Razuvaev, Vladimir. *Geopolitika postsovetского prostranstva*, Institut Evropy Rossiiskaia Akademia Nauk, 1993, p. 4. See also: Kerr, p. 980.
- 27 Pleshakov, pp. 26-31.
- 28 Pleshakov, pp. 45,46.
- 29 Among Pleshakov's models of the relation between ideology and geopolitics, Lenin's action would be a variety of the third model, putting ideology above geopolitics. Pleshakov, p. 31.
- 30 Ibid., pp. 31, 32, 54, 55.
- 31 Wesson, pp. 70, 71, 82; Pleshakov, pp. 55, 56.
- 32 Wesson, p. 86.
- 33 Wesson, p. 87; Pleshakov, p. 56.
- 34 Kerr, p. 980. Pleshakov, p. 56.
- 35 Pleshakov, p. 56, and Wesson, p. 89. Wesson also refers to the Soviet Union's close explorations for expansion outward in several directions. Molotov had repeatedly pressed for a share of the former Italian colonial empire, especially Libya, and Stalin had demanded a base on the Turkish Straits. The USSR also claimed two provinces of eastern Turkey, which had been taken by Russia in 1878. Wesson concludes: "The chief direction of Stalin's territorial aims, the Balkans and the Turkish Straits, was traditionally Russian and had nothing to do with communism." (Wesson, pp. 89, 93.)
- 36 Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Game Plan: A Geostrategic Framework for the Conduct of the U.S. - Soviet Contest*, The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986, pp. 17-19; Pleshakov, p. 59; Wesson, pp. 92, 93.
- 37 For more about polarity and stability, see: Brecher, Michael; Wilkenfeld, Jonathan. *Crisis, Conflict and Instability*, Pergamon Press, 1989, pp. 29-34.
- 38 Konstantin Pleshakov uses the term "total field", meaning the

- contiguous space which is under the control of a national unity. For example, continental Eurasia was the total field of the USSR for most of the post-World War II era, including the territory of the USSR, the other Warsaw Pact states and Mongolia. For more, see Pleshakov, pp. 12-14.
- 39 Pleshakov, p. 60.
- 40 Ibid., p. 65.
- 41 For more about the influence of developments in weapons technology on geopolitics, see, for example: Sprout, Harold and Margaret. "Geography and International Politics in an Era of Revolutionary Change." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol IV, No 1, March 1960: 158-160.
- 42 Wesson, pp. 94-99.
- 43 Ulam, Adam B. *Expansion and Coexistence. Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-73*, Praeger Publishers, 1974, pp. 661, 668-669.
- 44 Pleshakov, p. 65.
- 45 Wesson, pp. 100, 104, 120. Pleshakov, p. 84. For a more extensive discussion of this point, see: Gelman, Harry. "Rise and Fall of Détente." *Problems of Communism*. March-April 1985 VOL XXXIV: 54-56, 60, 67- 68.
- 46 Pleshakov, p. 88; Wesson, p. 104. For a Russian analysis of the geopolitical aspects of the invasion of Afghanistan, see, for example, Pleshakov pp. 87-89. According to Konstantin Pleshakov, the Soviet leadership did not take sufficiently into account the geopolitical consequences of the invasion. On one hand, the strong reaction abroad can be explained by the fact that the invasion was an extension of the continuous Soviet total geopolitical field and not e.g. a creation of a new geopolitical control point. Such extensions had not been conducted by the Soviet Union since 1944-1948 (in Eastern Europe) and 1945-1953 (in China and North-Korea). On the other hand, the future of Afghanistan was too closely linked to the future of the total geopolitical field of the Soviet Union. There was a risk that a new Afghan leadership might be anti-Soviet and if so, might shift the country into the military orbit of the United States. Ultimately, the unification of Afghanistan with Soviet Central Asia created an explosive Islamic community inside the Soviet total geopolitical field, and this risk has proved real after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, e.g. during the civil war in Tadjikistan. The Soviet leadership did not plan to make Afghanistan a geopolitical bridgehead for further expansion to the Indian Ocean. Afghanistan did not play a role as a potential counterbalance to the United States or to contain China. The extension of the Soviet total geopolitical field to Afghanistan created geopolitical panic in the world without bringing any geopolitical advantage. It caused counteractions taken by the United States, China and many Western countries, broke up détente, and created a situation, in which the Soviet Union was under stronger geopolitical pressure than ever before. The West, counting on continental containment by China and maritime containment by the United States in the Pacific, countered the establishment of Soviet control over Afghanistan, Vietnam and Indo-China and created new geopolitical pressure on the Soviet Union in

Europe, where the issue of the intermediate-range nuclear weapons became a crucial problem in Soviet-American relations until 1987. The reactions on the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan changed the relation between ideology and geopolitics, strengthening the role of ideology, which partially marked a return to the situation of the 1950s.

For a Western analysis of the invasion, see, for example: Garthoff, Raymond L. *Détente and Confrontation. American Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, The Brookings Institution, 1985, pp. 1077-1083. Garthoff also discusses the reasons why *détente* did not succeed. See: Garthoff, pp. 1068-1089.

In LeDonne's geopolitical model, Afghanistan is a boundary between the Heartland and Coastland. Soviet penetration into that area failed, which proves the applicability of the model. Contrary to Pleshakov's analysis, it could also be argued that the purpose of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan was to desabilize Pakistan as a countermeasure to the American influence there.

47 Pleshakov, pp. 89-90.

48 *Novaia geopoliticheskaia situatsia Rossii*. Mezhdunarodnii fond sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh i politologicheskikh issledovani (Gorbatshev-fond), 1992 pp. 3-4. Wesson suggests a similar structure of circles; see Wesson, pp. 118-120.

49 *Novaia geopoliticheskaia situatsia*, pp. 3-4.

50 Pleshakov, pp. 32-33.

51 Kerr, p. 977.

52 Sherr, James. "Russia: geopolitics and crime." *The World Today*, February 1995: 32-36.

53 Kerr, p. 977; Sherr, p. 34. Evgenii Bazhanov distinguishes four schools in foreign policy, calling them "Westernizers", "Anti-Western camp", "Enemies are everywhere" and "Balanced foreign policy". All these, except the "Anti-Western camp", coincide with the division of positions presented by Kerr. See, Evgenii Bazhanov. *Russia's Changing Foreign Policy*, Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, 1996, pp. 21-27.

54 See, for example, Razuvaev, pp. 3; Sorokin, p. 12 and Trenin, Dmitrii. "Transformatsia rossiiskoi vneshnei politiki." *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, April 5, 1997: 4.

55 Sherr, p. 34.

56 Discussing the reasons for the rise of geopolitics, some Russian scholars draw parallels between the post-Soviet Russian situation and the situation in Germany after World War I, having identified common features like an ideological vacuum, a crisis situation, feelings of revenge, etc, in both countries.

57 Gray, p. 5. Sorokin, pp. 5-14.

58 Ideas about new geopolitics have been presented by Saul Cohen, David Kerr and Osmo Tuomi. Samuel Huntington and Michael Don Ward have also dealt with new emphases in geopolitics. See, for example, Kerr, David. "The New Eurasianism: The Rise of Geopolitics in Russia's

Foreign Policy." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No.6, 1995: 977-988; Tuomi, Osmo. *Uusi Geopolitiikka*, Tammer-Paino Oy, 1996; Don Ward, Michael. *The New Geopolitics*. Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1992; Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster, 1996; Saul B. Cohen. *Geopolitics in the New World Era: A New Perspective on an old Discipline*, in: Demko, George J.; Wood, William B. (Eds.) *Reordering the World. Geopolitical perspectives on the Twenty-first Century*, Westview Press, 1994, pp. 15-48. The concept of "new geopolitics", according to Osmo Tuomi, takes into account the diversity of powers affecting the political and regional division of the world, the increased number of players in international politics, including non-state actors and new emphases in the field of political methods and means. Tuomi argues that physical geography has indirect connections with social geography and the composition of world economy as well as with communications. According to him, economic communities, ethnic groups, etc., may also act "geopolitically". Though international organisations, multinational companies, etc., are not geopolitical actors, they have to be taken into account by political communities. Tuomi also suggests that the tendency of states to increase their power and influence is no longer the primary motor of the international system, as assumed in traditional geopolitics. Instead, powers affecting regional divisions of states are combinations of economic, cultural, historical and political factors. According to Tuomi, the drive for territorial expansion is not inevitable (though it cannot be excluded), and the military seizure of an area or the enforcement of political unification are not necessary preconditions for an increase of influence. According to Cohen, the new geopolitics challenges traditional Western military-strategic perceptions. For example, the strategic significance of the Southern Hemisphere is diminishing and becoming important in other ways, as a source of environmental warming and pollution, place of origin for drugs and a source of disruptive migration streams. Cohen's geopolitical map contains "nested regions with overlapping boundaries." Russian scholars Konstantin Pleshakov and Vladimir Razuvaev have presented ideas about how classical geopolitics could be reformed for Russian needs. See: Pleshakov, Konstantin. *Geo-ideologicheskaiia paradigma*, Rossiiskii nauchnyi fond, 1994; Razuvaev, Vladimir. *Geopolitika postsovetskogo prostranstva*, Institut Evropy Rossiiskaia Akademia Nauk, 1993. Note that the term "new geopolitics" is sometimes used to depict the new geopolitical features of the contemporary world situation rather than new approaches in geopolitical analysis. See, for example, Talbot, Strobe "The new geopolitics: defending democracy in the post-Cold War era." *The World Today*, January 1995: 7-10.

59 For example, the geopolitical significance of economics is not new. There have been earlier transnational actors like trading companies (e.g. East India companies) that have acted like political actors, as "agents of empire." The simple polarization of the world during the Cold War is

- one reason why geopolitical considerations disappeared from the practice of international relations.
- 60 Sorokin, pp. 16-22. Note that Saul Cohen has also dealt with national, inter-transnational, continental- regional, provincial, and local frameworks. According to Cohen, "the interaction of spatial and political processes at all these levels creates and molds the international geopolitical system." See: Cohen, pp. 17,18.
- 61 Pleshakov, pp. 7, 18; Sorokin, pp. 17-19. Note that Saul Cohen has also discussed national, inter- transnational and continental-regional as well as provincial and local frameworks. According to Cohen, "the interaction of spatial and political processes at all these levels creates and molds the international geopolitical system." See: Cohen, pp. 17, 18.
- 62 Sorokin, pp. 19-20.
- 63 Sorokin, p. 20. Sorokin deals with geopolitics in very wide terms. Most of these factors seem to have indirect rather than direct relation between geography and politics.
- 64 Pleshakov, p. 7; Sorokin, pp. 19-20.
- 65 Sorokin, p. 21.
- 66 Sorokin, pp. 21-22. I wonder, if the issue of technological and other developments in small countries would fall under foreign and trade policies rather than under geopolitics.
- 67 Pleshakov, pp. 15-25. See also Kerr, p. 981.
- 68 Sorokin, pp. 32-33. Here the relation between geopolitics and foreign policy remains obscure. Sorokin advances political factors that do not have any direct connection with geography, moving to the area of general foreign policy. So the aforementioned types of expansion are bound not only to geopolitical interests but also foreign policy interests in general. Perhaps information-related expansion is the only genuinely new form of expansion, since the other forms have arguably been used throughout history in one way or another.
- 69 Sorokin, pp. 33, 44; LeDonne, pp. xii-xiv, 1; Pleshakov addresses multipolarity and regional power centers, too. Pleshakov, p. 8. Razuvaev, pp. 7-8. One cannot completely agree with Sorokin about the lack of exact zones of confrontation. Sorokin's argument apparently refers to multistructuralism, meaning that a country may simultaneously be a member of several organisations, say, Western European Union, European Union, NATO, etc. Razuvaev, in his considerations on the modification of geopolitical theories, goes so far as to abandon the whole Heartland doctrine. I agree that the traditional concept of possessing the Heartland and consequently dominating the world is obsolete. According to Mackinder, trade and production were concentrated in coastlands, because of better climate, soil and population concentrations. The Heartland provided communication routes between the coastland areas, mainly thanks to railroads. This postulate is obsolete for three reasons. First, the evolution of technology has reduced the relative importance of railroads. Second, controlling the Heartland does not mark controlling the world's resources. Third, the experience of history shows

- that Russia/Soviet Union did not control the world although it controlled the Heartland. Nevertheless, the Heartland is still a significant geopolitical factor as such, albeit economically weakened, and a vital land mass playing an important role in Russia's economy and security and as a connector of Asia and Europe.
- 70 Some Russian scholars see geopolitics as a better foreign policy principle than the "pro-West", "Eurasian" and "Slavonic" orientations and as a generator of recommendations to the future Russian foreign policy, because "Russia today needs recipes how to survive and develop." These approaches may contain a risk of making geopolitics a value rather than an instrument. About misuse and misunderstanding of geopolitics, see, for example: Kristof, pp. 15-51.
- 71 *Novaia geopoliticheskaia situatsia Rossii*, p. 1; *Interfax in English*, January 1, 1997.
- 72 Konstantin Pleshakov uses the term "total geopolitical field," meaning the continuous space which is under the control of a national unity. For example, continental Eurasia was the total geopolitical field of the Soviet Union for most of the post-World War II era, including the territory of the USSR, the other Warsaw Pact states and Mongolia. Pleshakov, p. 14.
- 73 Konstantin Pleshakov uses the term geopolitical cross field, meaning a space where two or more states have claims. Pleshakov, p. 13.
- 74 Pleshakov, pp. 92-93; Razuvaev, p. 55.
- 75 Razuvaev, p. 32; *Novaia geopoliticheskaia situatsia Rossii*, p. 6.
- 76 *Novaia geopoliticheskaia situatsia Rossii*, pp. 5-6; Razuvaev, p. 22,26.
- 77 Razuvaev, p. 23.
- 78 Razuvaev, p. 32.
- 79 Andrianov, V. D. *Rossia v mirovoi ekonomike*, Izdatel'stvo Tsentra kompleksnyh sotsial'nyh issledovaniy i marketinga, 1995, pp. 69-74.
- 80 U.S. Department of State. *Russia Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996*. Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, January 30, 1997.
- 81 *Argumenty i Fakty*, 6 (851), February 1997: 16.
- 82 U.S. Department of State.
- 83 David Filipov. "Russia population declining: aging, ailing society seen." *The Boston Globe*, February 28, 1997: A 10; Vdovina, Natal'ia. "Chto ponimat' pod korrekcirovkoi kursa?" *Rossiiskie Vesti*, No. 18 (1185), 30 January 1997: 2.
- 84 Sorokin, pp. 50, 51.
- 85 *Rossiiskaa Federatsia: Bezopasnost' i voennoe sotrudnichestvo*. Informatsionno-akademicheskoe agentstvo "OBOZREVATEL' ", 1995, p. 60.
- 86 The Treaty on Economic Union was signed on 24 September 1993 by all CIS Member states, except Ukraine, which declared its wish to join the Union as an associate member. According to the treaty, the main objective is the gradual establishment of a common economic space with free circulation of goods, services, capital and labour as well as monetary union. The entry into force is still pending. See: Organization for

- Economic Co-operation and Development. Centre for co-operation with the Economies in Transition. *Trade policy and the transition process*, OECD 1996, p. 196-197.
- 87 Pavel Shinkarenko. "Ideia SNG okazalas' edinstvenno vozmozhnoi." *Rossiiskie Vesti*, No 233 (1154), 10 December 1996: 3.
- 88 Razuvaev, pp. 55-56. Sorokin, pp. 51, 66-67.
- 89 For example, in March 1996 Belarus, Kazahstan, Kyrgystan and Russia signed a treaty of developing integration in the economic and humanitarian spheres. Shinkarenko, p. 3.
- 90 Yudin, Pyotr. "Russia's Navy Breaks Down Amid Chronic Lack of Funds." *Defense News*, Vol 12, No 45, Nov 10-16, 1997: 16.
- 91 Berezko, Vladimir; Sidel'nikov, Mihail. "My dolzhny uचित'sia byt' pragmatikami." *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No 198, 3 September 1998:1.
- 92 In 1994 Russia had a 7.5 percent share of the world market and a 13.4 percent share in 1995. See: Working Centre for Economic Reform. *Russian Economic Trends*, Volume 5, Number 3. Hobbs the Printers, 1996: 98.
- 93 Berezko, Sidel'nikov: 1
- 94 Berezko, Sidel'nikov: 1.
- 95 To a degree the developments in the armed forces resemble the "Muddling down-Muddling through" scenario that Daniel Yergin and Thane Gustafson have advanced to depict the necessary evolution phase of the Russian society, during which a new distribution of power and wealth is being worked out. See: Yergin, Daniel; Gustafson, Thane. *Russia 2010 And What It Means for the World*, Random House 1993, pp. 119-131.
- 96 "Voennaia doktrina i reformirovanie Vooruzhonykh Sil Rossiiskoi Federatsii." *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No 132, 17 June 1998: 1, 3. President Yeltsin has called for the end of general conscription by 2000. According to former Defense Minister Rodionov, elements of a professional army should be established gradually. For example, it is necessary to re-establish the institution of senior NCO's (non-commissioned officers, "institut serzhantov"), which was lost. A professional infantry is not possible for the time being. According to Rodionov, this is why the passage of a law on alternative service will mean the disappearance of the armed forces. Budberg, Aleksandr. "Dzhazmen tsveta haki." *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, No. 69, 12 April 1997: 2.
- 97 See, for example: "Russia-s in-the-red-army." *The Economist*, Aug 2nd-8th, 1997: 17-18.
- 98 Falichev, Oleg. "Novyi etap voennogo stroitel'stva v Rossii." *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No. 181, 13 August 1998: 1.
- 99 Bazhanov, p. 29.
- 100 The strategic nuclear parity may change over the next 10-15 years for two reasons. First, Russia may not be able to keep up the strategic nuclear forces fully. According to the Chairman of the Russian State Duma Defence Committee, Lev Rohin (June 1997), for financial reasons in 2008 Russia will no longer have sufficient nuclear deterrent forces. According to First Vice-Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Jurii Masl'ukov, in

- 7-8 years, maximum 10 years, missiles that were built during the Soviet era will not be operational any more. See: Petr Karapetian. "Nas ne poimut, esli my seichas otkazhemsia ot SNV-2." *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No. 238, 20 October 1998: 1. Second, the missiles that will then be left can be neutralized by the powerful Anti-Ballistic Missile defence of the United States. At the talks in Helsinki (March 1997) the U.S. agreed not to renew the ABM Treaty of 1972 before 2009. Note that the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation of 27 May 1997 states a possibility of NATO-Russia cooperation in Theater Missile Defence. Note also that Russian statements on this issue may be exaggerated for improving Russia's position in negotiations.
- 101 Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur. "Origins of the Cold War." *Foreign Affairs*, October 1967, Vol. 46, No.1: 26-27, 29. I admit that the comparison of the views is somewhat theoretical; in practice the world order has been based on their combination.
- 102 Bazhanov, pp. 12, 3, 37. Sorokin, p. 46. In the Russian usage the term "near abroad" means the closest neighbours of the Russian Federation that belonged to the Former Soviet Union.
- 103 In the future, however, the possibility of deploying Russia's military forces in the "near abroad" is not necessarily excluded. That could happen on the basis of mutual agreements in states where Russia already has troops, like in Tajikistan. In Tajikistan Russia has had the 201st Motor Rifle Division (up to 6000 men) and a group of Russian frontier troops (more than 15,000 men) reinforced with heavy weaponry, "protecting and defending the Tajik-Afghan border" under a bilateral agreement. Golotiuk, Jurii. "Afganskaia voina stanovitsia dlia Rossii ugrozoi No. 1." *Segodnia*, No. 35, 22 February, 1997: 3; *Argumenty i Fakty*, 6 (851), February 1997: 16.
- 104 Bazhanov, p 33.
- 105 Tatarstan is an example of sovereignty depending on Russia and perhaps a rare example of a sovereign state completely surrounded by another state (Russia).
- 106 Sorokin, pp. 54-58.
- 107 The distinguishing criteria are the extent of economic liberalization, success in monetary-financial policy, and the accomplishment of privatization, measured in terms of numbers of people employed in the non-state sector or the proportion of GDP produced in that sector. See: Latynina, Iuliia. "Rossiia vse bol'she ostaet ot mnogih byvshih respublik SSSR v ekonomicheskoi reforme." *Segodnia*, No 147 (752), August 16, 1996: 2.
- 108 According to Russia's Deputy Prime Minister, Alman Tuleiev (April 1997), the Western countries are pushing Russia out of CIS markets. Western investments in the former Soviet republics are over 30 Bn USD. Kazakhstan, Azerbaidzhan, Uzbekistan and Kirgistan in particular are seeking western investments.
- 109 Trenin, p. 4.

- 110 Trenin, p. 4; Medvedev, S.A.; Podlesnyi, P. T. *Geopoliticheskie peremeny v Evrope, politika zapada i al'ternativy dlia Rossii. Doklady Instituta Evropy*, N 19. Rossiiskaia Akademia Nauk Institut Evropy, 1995, pp. 77-80. According to Medvedev / Podlesnyi, every move toward strengthening the CIS as a whole or strengthening ties other than economic, meet resistance from Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Moldova and Azerbaidjan. Both Medvedev / Podlesnyi and Sorokin stress the importance of Russia's individual and bilateral approaches to the other CIS countries, since integration is not successful. See also: Sorokin, p. 71. Undoubtedly, the fact that even Russia's national interests in relation to the CIS have not been clearly defined also undermines the possibility of agreeing on common strategies.
- 111 Jensen, Kurt. "The Baltic Sea in the Post-Cold War World." *Naval War College Review*, Volume XLVI, Number 4, Sequence 344, Autumn 1993: 30; Miljan, Toivo. "East vs. West: Political and Military Strategy and the Baltic Littoral." *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Volume XII, Number 3, Fall 1981: 209-211.
- 112 Miljan, p. 211.
- 113 Miljan, pp. 210-213; Jensen, pp. 29-30; LeDonne, p. xvi; Bitzinger, Richard. "The Baltic. A Changing Security Situation." *Scandinavian Studies*, Fall 1992, Volume 64, Number 4: 607.
- 114 An assessment of the Baltic Port Organization. See: Tiilikainen, Teppo. "Merenkulun asema vahvistuu Itämeren alueen kuljetuksissa." *Helsingin Sanomat*, 8 December 1996. The Baltic Port Organization is an international cooperation organ of the Baltic Sea ports.
- 115 Jensen, p. 30.
- 116 Bilmanis, Alfred. *Baltic Problem and United Nations*. (Manuscript). The Latvian Legation, 1947, pp. 34-36, 53, Appendix I. (Bilmanis a)
- 117 See maps in: Channon, John, Hudson, Robert. *The Penguin historical Atlas of Russia*, Penguin Group, 1995, pp. 20-21, 34-35.
- 118 Note also the Bialowieza forest. Bilmanis a, p. 35; Bilmanis, Alfred. "The Legend of the Baltic Barrier States." Reprinted for private circulation from *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 2, July 1946: 137. (Bilmanis b)
- 119 Estonia became a province of Sweden in 1561. The southern part, Livonia and Courland, was incorporated into the Polish-Lithuanian union. In 1622 Livonia also passed to Sweden. In 1721 Estonia and Livonia were transferred to Russia. Courland passed to Russia with the last partition of Poland in 1795. Roucek, Joseph S. *The Geopolitics of the Baltic States*, 1945, p. 173; Von Rauch, Georg. *The Baltic States. The Years of Independence 1917-1940*, St.Martin's Press, 1995, p. 2.
- 120 Pleshakov, p. 41.
- 121 Alfred Bilmanis goes so far as to argue that a power which dominates the Baltic states also dominates the Baltic Sea. This was not the case in recent centuries. Germany dominated the sea after the mid-nineteenth century with Russia possessing the Baltic states' area. Bilmanis, Alfred. "Baltic States - The Belgium of Eastern Europe." Reprint from *Social Science*,

- Vol. 21, No.1, January 1946: 32. (Bilmanis c)
- 122 LeDonne, p. 348.
- 123 Miljan, p. 210.
- 124 LeDonne, p. 355.
- 125 Ibid., p. 358.
- 126 Pleshakov, p. 43.
- 127 LeDonne, p. 355.
- 128 Roucek, p. 171; Bilmanis b, p. 137.
- 129 Wesson, p. 80.
- 130 Roucek, p. 174.
- 131 Bilmanis b, p. 139.
- 132 Ibid., p. 140.
- 133 LeDonne uses the term "optimum line of conquest" in the historical context.
- 134 Here, I would like to refer to a statement made by the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vasillii Sidorov on the 2nd of April 1997, saying that Russia aims to construct international relations on the basis of multipolarity and will not admit domination by any single power center. *Interfax in English*, April 2, 1997.
- 135 In the context of NATO enlargement, with the expression "countries bordering Russia" I mean Russia proper. So the special case of common border between Poland as a NATO member and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad does not fall into this category.
- 136 Bitzinger, Richard A. "The Nordic/Baltic Region: A New Strategic Significance?" *Defence Analysis*. Vol. 12, No. 3, 1996: 371-372 (Bitzinger a); Jensen, p. 36.
- 137 Tillotson, H. M. *Finland at Peace and War 1918-1993*. Michael Russal, 1993, pp. 108, 110, 112, 116-117.
- 138 Note also that in 1812 Napoleon's troops had halted outside Riga.
- 139 Bilmanis b, p. 132.
- 140 Jansson, Nils-Ove. "The Baltic: A Sea of Contention." *Naval War College Review*, Volume XLI, Number 3, Sequence 323, Summer 1988: 50-51, 55-56.
- 141 Mutton, Alice F. A. *Central Europe. A Regional and Human Geography*, Butler & Tanner Ltd, 1961, pp. 22-23, 33; LeDonne, p. 283.
- 142 Schlesinger, p. 33.
- 143 Alfred Bilmanis has found similarities in the geostrategic positions of the Baltic states and Belgium, both being frequently invaded by their larger neighbors. As Bilmanis puts it, Belgium is a door between Germany and France and the Baltic states are a door between Germany and Russia. I admit that there is something common between their positions, but the Baltic states are nowadays clearly located more to the side of the main attack route. See: Bilmanis c, pp. 31-32. However, it should be noted that earlier the Baltic countries were within the main attack route. In the nineteenth century Livonia was an important strategic area and there were large troop concentrations. At that time Riga-Prussia (East Prussia) was the main attack direction in the region.

- 144 Turbiville Jr., Graham H. *The Voroshilov lectures. Materials from the Soviet General Staff Academy*. National University Press, 1989, pp. 92-106. Some sources provide different information about the sector boundaries between the strategic entities. According to a Western assessment from the late 1980s, the Baltic republics belonged to the western theater of military action (*TVD, Teatr voennyh deistvii*) that covered all western Europe and included the Danish Straits and southern Sweden, while the border between the western and northwestern theatres was running along the northern coast of the Gulf of Finland to Stockholm area and further to the west, cutting southern Norway roughly at the level of Lillehammer. See: Jansson, p. 53.
- 145 "Russians fear a new Cold War." *The Times (UK)*, NO. 65,835, 12 March, 1997: 18.
- 146 In 1996, Russia's armed forces' strategic command and staff exercises Redut-96 practiced operations against NATO members and countries seeking NATO membership, including the Baltic states. See: Bulavinov, Il'ia. "Rossiia delaet poslednii broсок na Zapad." *Kommersant-daily*, No. 29, 13 March 1997: 4.
- 147 Here, I should point out that I do not see any possibility that Russia will have real offensive capability in the next fifteen to twenty years because of its slow economic and military improvement.
- 148 Air and ground units withdrawn, *i.a.* from Poland and Czechoslovakia were relocated to Kaliningrad region. *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol 5, No 2, February 1993: 60.
- 149 The ground forces in the Kaliningrad Military District consist of two motorized infantry divisions, two armoured brigades, one surface-to-surface missile brigade/regiment, one surface-to-air missile brigade/regiment, one attack helicopter regiment, 790 battle tanks and 1000 armoured combat vehicles, 305 artillery/multiple rocket launcher/mortar, 18 *Scud/Scarab* surface-to-surface missiles and 42 attack helicopters, totaling 14.4 thousand troops. In addition, the Baltic Fleet Headquarters is stationed in the area as well as one air defence regiment (28 Su-27) and one naval infantry brigade/regiment. Thus the maximum personnel strength can be roughly 30 to 40 thousand. See: The International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 1998/99*. Oxford University Press, London, 1998, p 117. See also: *The Military Balance in Northern Europe 1997-1998*. The Norwegian Atlantic Committee, Oslo, Norway, p. 13; The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1996-97*. Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 100, 118. According to the Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet, in 1993 the naval strength in Kaliningrad region was 25 thousand. *Jane's Intelligence Review*, February 1993: 60. See also: *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol 6, No 12, December 1994: 572.
- 150 "Dogovor o Soiuzu Belarusi i Rossii." *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, No. 66, April 3, 1997: 1.
- 151 The air defence forces of the two countries have been on joint alert since 1996. For example, in Moscow 12 March 1997, the Russian and

- Belorussian air force commanders discussed widening air force cooperation between the two countries. Bulavinov, p. 4.
- 152 Berezko, Vladimir. "V interesah edinogo oboronogo prostranstva." *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No. 236-237, 17 October 1998: 1.
- 153 Kaija Virta. "Venäjä sulki tutkasilmänsä Latviassa." *Helsingin Sanomat*, 1 September 1998: C4.
- 154 *The Military Balance in Northern Europe 1997-1998*, The Norwegian Atlantic Committee, Oslo, Norway, pp. 10-12.
- 155 Rau, Erwin. "Russia and the Baltic Sea: 1920-1970." *Naval War College Review*, Volume XXIII, Number 1, September 1970: 25.
- 156 Jansson, p. 53.
- 157 Rau, p. 27.
- 158 Jansson, pp. 55-56.
- 159 The ratio calculation included the Baltic Fleet and the navies of Poland and the German Democratic Republic, opposed by the navies of Denmark and Germany. Rau, p. 28.
- 160 Rau, p. 28; Jansson, p. 50.
- 161 Jansson, pp. 50-51.
- 162 The principal surface combatants of the Baltic Fleet include 2 destroyers, 4 frigates. *The Military Balance 1998/99*, p. 111.
- 163 There are five shipyards in St Petersburg. Jensen, p. 6; Bitzinger b, p. 610.
- 164 According to Russia's defense minister, Igor Rodionov, with the "hypothetical" entry of the Baltic states into NATO, the Alliance would gain strategically advantageous naval bases, and the activities of Russia's Baltic Fleet would be substantially impeded. *The Times (UK)*, 12 March 1997: 18.
- 165 Jansson, p. 54.
- 166 Lambeth, Benjamin S. *Russia's Air Power at the Crossroads*, RAND, 1996, pp. 22, 68; "Russian Air Force faces unstable future." *Aviation Week & Technology*, VOL. 143, NO. 6, August 7, 1995: 22.
- 167 Trapans, Jan Arved. "Conference in Salzburg." *RFE/RE Research Report*, VOL. 1, NO. 49, 11 December 1992: 21.
- 168 Lambeth, p. 68.
- 169 Lambeth, p. 22.
- 170 Mann, Paul. "Russian Air Force Besieged, Broke." *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, VOL. 145, NO. 16, October 14, 1996: 28.
- 171 Lambeth, p. 71.
- 172 *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 69, 78, 79.
- 173 Lambeth, p. 72.
- 174 Sorokin, pp. 58-60.
- 175 Kostinskogo, G. D. Rossiia i SNG: *Dezintegratsionnye i integratsionnye protsessy*, Institut geografii, Tsentr izucheniia rossiiskih zemel' zhurnal "Vash Vybor", 1995, p. 20; Mints, A.A., Rostovtsev, M. I. *Sovetskaia Pribaltika*, Izdatel'stvo "Nauka", 1966, p. 81.
- 176 *Trends in Developing Economies 1996*, The World Bank, 1996, p. 172. (World Bank b)
- 177 World Bank b, p. 172.

- 178 Mints, Rostovtsev, p. 161.
- 179 Ratnieks, Henry. "The Energy Crisis and the Baltics." *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 3, 1981: 246.
- 180 Ratnieks, p. 247. Kand, Villu. "Estonia: A Year of Challenges." *RRE/RL Research Report*, Volume 3, Number 1, January 1994: 93; Misiunas, Romuald J., Taagepera, Rein. *The Baltic States. Years of Dependence 1940-1990*, University of California Press, p. 289; ETA, 4 February 1997; Transboundary and Environmental News, 12 March 1997, Vol 3, No. 3, p. 6; Ministry of Environment of Estonia. *Estonian mineral resources, 1997*, pp. 10-30, 52-53; Statistical Office of Estonia. *Statistical Yearbook of Estonia 1996, 1996*, p. 254.
- 181 World Bank b, p. 282; Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. *Statistical Yearbook of Latvia 1996, 1996*, pp. 22-25.
- 182 Bungs, Dzintars. "Latvia: Transition to Independence Completed." *RFE/RL Research Report*, Volume 3, Number 1, 7 January 1994: 97.
- 183 Girnius, Saulius. "Lithuania: Former Communists Fail to Solve Problems." *RFE/RL Research Report*, Volume 3, Number 1, 7 January 1994, p. 100 (Girnius a); World Bank b, p. 300; Mints, Rostovtsev, p. 242.
- 184 Ratnieks, p. 247.
- 185 Different sources provide different information about oil resources. According to the *Oil and Gas Journal*, the resources are estimated at more than 2.2 billion bbl, of which Lithuanian shelf is believed to contain 0.8-1.2 billion bbl. According to the Lithuanian Statistical Office, Lithuania's identified resources are 5 million tons, while the reserves are 100-200 million tons. See: "Latvia eyes possible Baltic Sea resources." *Oil and Gas Journal*, June 7, 1993, Vol. 91, No. 23: 22; "OGJ Newsletters." *Oil and Gas Journal*, December 14, 1992, Vol. 90, No. 5: 4; Department of Statistics to the Government of Lithuania. *Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania, 1996*, pp. 178-179; Kaminskas, Valdos. "A topic on Everyone's lips." An interview with Minister of Energy Arvydas Lescinskas, *Lithuania in the World*, Vol. 4, 1996: 30-34.
- 186 Statistical Office of Estonia. *Energiabilanss 1995, 1996*, pp. 3-36; *Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania, pp. 240-247*; World Bank b, p. 282; *Lithuania in the World*.
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- 190 Tabata, Shinichiro. "The Anatomy of Russian Foreign Trade Statistics." *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. XXXV, No. 8, October 1994: 452.
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- 192 Ziedonis Jr., Arvid, Taagepera, Rein, Valgemäe, Mardi. *Problems of*

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- 193 Reardon, Jack. "An Assessment of the Transition to a Market Economy in the Baltic Republics." *Journal of Economic Issues*, Volume XXX, Number 2, June 1996: 630. (Reardon a)
- 194 Noren, James H., Watson, Robin. "Interrepublican Economic Relations After the Desintegration of the *Soviet Union*." *Soviet Economy*, Volume 8, April-June 1992, Number 2: 128; Reardon, Jack, Lazda, Paul. "The Development of the Market System in the Baltic Republics." *Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol XXVI, No. 2, June 1993: 539.
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- 196 *Soviet Geography*, p. 510.
- 197 Kaminski, Yeats, p. 47.
- 198 Keep, John L.H. *Last of the Empires. A History of the Soviet Union 1945-199*, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 315; *Soviet Geogphy*, p. 511. In 1988, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania produced 0.6, 1.1 and 1.4 percent of the USSR's total NMP respectively, while their shares were 0.6, 0.8 and 1.1 percent of USSR's foreign exports and 0.7, 1.0 and 1.3 percent of foreign imports respectively.
- 199 Oxenstierna, p. 255.
- 200 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. *Economic transition in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Transition report*, 1994, p. 104.
- 201 Wyzan, Michael. "Economies Show Solid Performance Despite Many Obstacles." *Transition*, VOL.3, No. 6, 4 April 1997:13.
- 202 Kostinskogo, p. 20.
- 203 In 1995, main destinations of Estonia's exports were Finland (21.3 percent of total), Russia (17.7 percent) and Sweden (10.7 percent). Main origins of import were Finland (38.3 percent of total), Russia (15.4 percent) and Sweden (10.7 percent). Main destinations of Latvia's exports in 1994 were Russia (28.1 percent), Germany (10.5 percent) and UK (9.7 percent), while main origins of import were Russia (23.6. percent), Germany (13.5 percent) and Finland (8.5 percent). Lithuania's main destinations of exports in 1994 were Russia (28.2 percent), Germany (11.5 percent) and Latvia (8.4 percent) and main origins of imports Russia (39.3 percent), Germany (13.8 percent) and Ukraine (5. 0 percent). Economist Intelligence Unit a, pp. 22, 45, 65; Kostinskogo, p. 20.
- 204 OECD, p. 160; Wyzan, pp. 11-12.
- 205 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Trade Policy and the Transition Process*, OECD, 1996, p. 42.
- 206 Working Centre for Economic Reform. *Russian Economic Trends*, Volume 5, Number 3, 1996, pp. 94, 95.
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- 208 Gács, János, Peck, Merton J. *International Trade Issues of the Russian Federation*. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, 1995, pp.

- 18, 19; Tabata, p. 442.
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- 210 Statisticheskii Komitet Stran Sotrudnichestva. *Statisticheskii Ezhegodnik 1996*, 1996, pp. 4-5; *Estonian Foreign Trade 4*. 1996, pp. 11, 24, 27.
- 211 Kostinskogo, p. 20.
- 212 *Estonian Foreign Trade 4*. 1996, pp. 27-29; *Monthly Bulletin of Latvian Statistics 2*. 1997, pp. 121-122; *Economic and Social Developments in Lithuania 4*. 1997, pp. 84-85.
- 213 *Estonian Foreign Trade 4*. 1996, pp. 27-29; *Monthly Bulletin of Latvian Statistics 2*. 1997, pp. 121-122; *Economic and Social Developments in Lithuania 4*. 1997, pp. 84-85; Economist Intelligence Unit a, p. 23, 46; The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, 2nd quarter 1996*, 1996, p. 30 (Economist Intelligence Unit b); *Estonian Foreign Trade 4*. 1996, p. 24-26; *Monthly Bulletin of Latvia's Statistics 2*. 1997, pp. 119-122.
- 214 Exportation of agricultural products is difficult because of the European Union's policies. See: Grennes, Thomas, "The Economic Transition of the Baltic Countries." *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Volume XVIII, Number 1, Spring 1997: 21.
- 215 Dealing with entrepreneurship in Estonia, Kari Liuhto outlines this kind of developments. Liuhto, p. 134.
- 216 Andrianov, pp. 66-68.
- 217 Kostinskogo, pp. 20, 74.
- 218 Andrianov, p. 68; Consul Ilkka Luotamo. "The Economic Dependence between the Baltic States and Russia." A presentation at the *Infrastructure Seminar* organized by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Helsinki, 6 May 1997.
- 219 In some cases it seems that the Russians are exaggerating their difficulties in the current situation in order to improve their positions in negotiations. For example, one could ask whether it is the dissolution of the Soviet Union that has diminished the country's port capacity for domestic needs, or are the roots of the 37 percent deficit perhaps somewhere else than in the disintegration of the Soviet Union.
- 220 Kostinskogo, pp. 73, 74. When assessing the significance of the change, it should be noted that the volume of export (in dollars) in Soviet foreign trade dropped approximately 30 percent and import about 40 percent from 1990 to 1991. Russia's foreign trade (in dollars, excluding trade with former Soviet Union countries) fell at least 40 percent from 1990 to 1993. (Tabata, pp. 435, 443, 449.) Taking also into account that the proportion of RFSFR in Soviet export and import was at the level of 65-70 percent (Tabata, p. 437), the aforementioned one third decrease in seaport freight from 1990 to 1993 does not seem that dramatic. Additionally, it should be noted that the change of freight volume is calculated in tons of weight, while the changes of export and import volumes are discussed in terms of their value in dollars. It should also be taken into account that the proportion of sea in Russia's transportation was 18.4 percent in 1994. Yet again, from 1993 to 1995, exports grew about 30 percent and imports

- about 25 percent in Russia's foreign trade with non-CIS countries. (Working Centre for Economic Reform, p. 92).
- 221 Figures of different sources are inconsistent. According to Efimova, Sutirin, in 1994, 68 million tons and in 1995, 62 million tons was transported through Russia's own ports. That is only thirty-eight percent of the total cargo given by Kostinskogo. See: Efimova, E., Sutirin, S. *The Transport Network Structure of the St Peterburg's region and its Impact on Russian-Finnish Economic Cooperation*. Suomen Pankki. Idäntalouksien katsauksia 4. 1996, 1996, p. 48.
- 222 In 1993, 44 million tons was transported through the Baltic states, 42 million tons through Ukraine, 0.8 tons via Transcaucasia and 5.5 million tons through Finland. Kostinskogo, p. 74; Andrianov, p. 68.
- 223 Karasik, Theodore W., *Russia & Eurasia Facts and Figures Annual*, Volume 21. Academic International Press, 1996, p. 270; Kostinskogo, p. 74; Republic of Latvia Ministry of Economy. *Economic Development in Latvia*, 1996, pp. 57-59.
- 224 Bloomberg Business News. "Russian Deal For Sea-Land." *The New York Times*, 2 April 1994: 34 (L).
- 225 Kostinskogo, p. 70.
- 226 Fuhrman, Peter. "Shipload by shipload, Russia's economy emerges." *Forbes*, September 27, 1993, Volume 152, Number 7: 113.
- 227 Kostinskogo, p. 75.
- 228 Tiilikainen.
- 229 For example, transporting a container from Japan to the West may take one month by sea, but only 20-22 days when the Trans-Siberian railroad is used. Fuhrman, p. 119; Kostinskogo, p. 75.
- 230 Calculated in thousands of shipping movements from a bar chart in Fuhrman, p. 114-115.
- 231 Laving, Juri. "The Development of Transit, Export and Import Flow in Estonia." *Strategic Planning Work Group of the Governmental Transit Committee*, 1996, p. 10.
- 232 "Taking the long way round." *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, VOL. XLVI, NO. 43 (1994): 21; "Kaliningrad seen as Russia's next major oil port." *Oil and Gas Journal*, July 31, 1995, Vol. 93, No. 31: 40; Fuhrman, p. 119.
- 233 ITAR-TASS in English, 13 February 1997.
- 234 *Statistical Yearbook of Estonia 1996*, pp. 35-36; *Statistical Yearbook of Latvia 1996*, pp. 22-25; *Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania*, pp. 167-174.
- 235 Laving, pp. 3-9, 11-14, 15-17.
- 236 Luotamo
- 237 Luotamo
- 238 Kostinskogo, pp. 74-75.
- 239 "Kaliningrad seen as Russia's next major oil port." *Oil and Gas Journal*, July 31, 1995, Vol. 93, No. 31: 40; *The Current Digest*, p. 22.
- 240 Transportation costs per unit of product are in Russia 6 times higher than in the United States and 4.5 times higher than in China, although the transportation scales of these countries are comparable with each other.

- Andrianov, p. 66.
- 241 In 1990, the USSR transported 73 million tons per year through the Baltic republics' ports of Ventspils, Klaipeda, Tallin and Riga, and 14 million tons through the current Russian ports of St Petersburg, Vyborg and Kaliningrad. Kostinskogo, 74.
- 242 The final decisions on the realization of the project are not yet made. See: Gotova, Natal'ia. "Smenu provitel'stva rossiiskie nefnianiki perezhдали v Londone." *Segodnia*, No. 55, 20 March 1997: 6.
- 243 Kalinina, Iuliia. "Rossiiane ! Vot vam spisok, chego boit'sia." *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, No. 88, 15 May 1997: 2.
- 244 "Kontsepsiia natsional'noi bezopasnosti Rossiiskoi Federatsii" *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 27 December 1997: 1, 3.
- 245 ITAR-TASS in English, 13 February 1997.
- 246 President Yeltsin's statement 22 March 1997. ETA in English 24 March 1997.
- 247 ETA in English 24 March 1997.
- 248 ETA in English 13 February 1997.
- 249 ITAR-TASS, 1 April 1997.
- 250 Girnius, Saulius. "Back in Europe, to Stay." *Transition*, VOL. 3, No. 6, 4 April 1997: 8. (Girnius c)
- 251 Velehov, Leonid. "Rossiia sformulirovala svoiu baltiiskuiu politiku." *Segodnia*, 14 February 1997: 3.
- 252 Sorokin, pp. 46, 59. Sorokin's remarks are slightly contradictory. On one hand he speaks about the countries of the "near abroad" and on the other hand he speaks about the CIS countries. Anna Kreikemeyer deals with Russia's special responsibility toward the "near abroad" in conjunction with the Russian minorities in the new independent states. According to Kreikemeyer, Russia's military doctrine (November 1993), dealing with security threats, leaves the Baltic states in a grey zone. See: Kreikemeyer, Anna. *Renaissance of Hegemony and Spheres of Influence - The Evolution of the Yeltsin-Doctrine*, in: Erhart, Hans-Georg, Kreikemeyer, Anna, Zagorski, Andrei V. (Eds.). *Crisis Management in the CIS: Whither Russia?* Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995, pp. 99-100.
- 253 See: Kortunov, Sergei. "Dogovor ne mozhет byt' platoi za rasshirenie." *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 13 February 1997: 5.
- 254 The strategic warning time is here understood as the minimum time, within which the components of the defence system that are at the highest readiness in peace time must reach their wartime readiness.
- 255 The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation of 27 May 1997.
- 256 See: Henry Kissinger. "The Dilution of NATO." *The Washington Post*, 8 June 1997: C 9.
- 257 See: William Drozdiak. "Yeltsin Acts to Ease Tensions in Russia. NATO's Link With Moscow Floundering." *International Herald Tribune*, September 5-6, 1998: 1, 7.
- 258 Sorokin, pp. 66-69, 161-163. The shares of foreign countries' direct investments in Estonia in September 1996 were as follows: Finland 34.5

- percent, Sweden 24.2 percent, Russia 6.3 percent (47.5 million USD), USA 4.8 percent. In Latvia the shares of countries in direct investments were: Denmark 33 percent, Russia 14.4 percent (77 million USD), USA 9.5 percent, UK 5.6 percent. In Lithuania: Germany 19.4 percent, USA 17.1 percent, UK 11.5 percent, Sweden 8.5 percent and Russia 6.5 percent (23 million USD). Here, direct investment means that the investor has made a significant investment in the capital stock of a company (the limit is in practice generally 10-20 percent). In 1996, of all direct foreign investments in Estonia 44.4 percent were in producing industry, 22.6 percent in wholesale and retail businesses, while 15.7 percent were in transport, storing and communications. In Latvia, 55.9 percent of direct foreign investments were in transport, storing and communications, 18.1 percent in industry and 10.5 percent in bank and financing business. In Lithuania, 44.1 percent of direct foreign investments were in producing industry, and 29.3 percent in wholesale and retail businesses. *Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 1996*, pp. 322-324; Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. *Monthly Bulletin of Latvian Statistics 2*. 1997, 1997, pp. 41-42; The Estonian Agency of Foreign Investments.
- 259 Sorokin, pp. 69-71, 137. As an example of the latter, Sorokin mentions the consensus of the Western and Arabic countries on maintaining Western, particularly American, control over the oil resources of the Persian Gulf region.
- 260 Trenin, Dmitri. *Baltic Chance. The Baltic States, Russia, and the West in the Emerging Greater Europe*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997, pp. 8, 39.
- 261 Reardon, Jack, Lazda, Paulis. "The Development of the Market System in the Baltic Republics." *Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, June 1993: 538-539. (Reardon b)
- 262 Oxenstierna, pp. 257, 258; Melvin, Neil. *Russians Beyond Russia*. A Cassel Imprint, 1995, pp. 26, 31.
- 263 Rose, Richard. "Economic Conditions of Nationalities in the Baltics." *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 8, October 1995: 482; Barrington, Lowell. "The Domestic and International Consequences of Citizenship in the Soviet Successor States." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 5, 1995: 763; Oxenstierna, p. 257; In 1939, the titular nationalities comprised 75.5 percent of the total population in Latvia and 88.2 percent in Estonia. In 1979 these figures were 53.7 percent and 64.7 percent respectively. In Lithuania the proportion of indigenous nationality has been relatively constant 80 percent. Reardon b, p. 543. Economist Intelligence Unit a, pp. 11, 33. 52. Since 1989, the proportions of titular nationalities have grown by 2.7 percent points in Estonia, 2.8. percent points in Latvia and 1.7 percent points in Lithuania.
- 264 Chinn, Jeff, Truex, Lise A. "The Question of Citizenship in the Baltics." *Journal of Democracy*, January 1996, Volume 7, Number 1: 135-136; Barrington, pp. 733, 734.
- 265 Chinn, Truex, pp. 138-139; Barrington, p. 745.
- 266 Girnius c, p. 8.

- 267 Chinn, Truex, pp. 137; Barrington, pp. 738-739, 745-746.
- 268 Barrington, pp. 740, 744. According to the director of the Estonian citizenship and immigration department, approximately 100 000 people in Estonia have taken Russian citizenship. See: Rislakki, Jukka. "Tallinnassa viranomaiset pelkäävät Venäjän valtion pystyttämistä Viroon". *Helsingin Sanomat*, 26 November, 1998: C 4.
- 269 Barrington, p. 740.
- 270 Girnius c, p. 8.
- 271 *Helsingin Sanomat*, 10 January 1997.
- 272 According to Saulius Girnius, Russia could have supported Russians in the Baltic states, for example, by promoting foreign trade in areas where Russian employees are dominating in the Baltic states. Girnius, Saulius, "Relations between the Baltic States and Russia." *RFE/RL Research Report*, Volume 3, Number 33, 26 August 1994: 33. (Girnius b)
- 273 Melvin, pp. 21, 22.
- 274 Segbers, Klaus, De Spiegeleire, Stephan (Eds.). *Post-Soviet Puzzles. Mapping the Political Economy of the Former Soviet Union*, Volume IV The Emancipation of Society as a Reaction to Systemic Change: Survival, Adaptation to New Rules and Ethnopolitical Conflicts. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995, pp. 42, 54.
- 275 Chinn, Truex, pp. 139, 145.
- 276 Smith, Graham. "The ethnic democracy thesis and the citizenship question in Estonia and Latvia." *Nationalities Papers*, Vol 24, No. 2, 1996: 206.
- 277 "Latvia in Europe." *International Herald Tribune*, October 14, 1998: 8 (editorial).
- 278 "Kansalaisuuslaki muuttuu Virossa." *Helsingin Sanomat*, 20 November 1998: C5.
- 279 These were enterprises under the jurisdiction of ministries of the Soviet Union. In Estonia, about 30 percent and in Latvia about 40 percent of the industrial labor force were employed in all-union enterprises. Oxenstierna, p. 258.
- 280 Oxenstierna, pp. 257- 259.
- 281 Barrington, p. 744.
- 282 Rose, pp. 482, 891, 493.
- 283 Dunlop, John B. "Will the Russians Return from the Near Abroad ?" *Post-Soviet Geography*, Vol. XXXV, No. 4, April 1994: 211.
- 284 Reardon b, p. 636.
- 285 Segbers, Spiegeleire, pp. 87, 88.
- 286 Smith, pp. 206, 207.
- 287 Melvin, p. 50.
- 288 Smith, p. 206. Some say that the number of Russians who left Estonia was much higher, perhaps 60 000-100 000. According to the director of the Estonian citizenship and immigration department (1998), approximately 100 000 people are estimated to have resettled from Estonia. See: Rislakki. Not all resettlers were registered, particularly during the first years.

- 289 Barrington, pp. 732, 736.
- 290 Smith, p. 212.
- 291 Helsingin Sanomat, 15 December 1996.
- 292 Girnius c, p. 8.
- 293 "Latvia votes for Europe." *The Economist*, Oct 10th-16th, 1998: 37.
- 294 Smith, p. 207.
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- 296 Wesson, p. 5.
- 297 See: Wyzan, p. 11.
- 298 This conclusion is based on the World Bank's assessment on the medium-term prospects of economies in the Baltic states and Russia and on data from the Russian Institute of Economic Analysis.
See: World Bank b, pp. 173, 283, 301, 438. See also: Lатытина, p. 2.
- 299 Mark (+) in this column means that Russia's and the Baltic countries' interests are parallel, while (-) means that they are antagonistic.
- 300 The classification of interests in the table follows an analysis by Konstantin Sorokin, dealing with Russia's basic geopolitical interests in the "near abroad" in general. Sorokin, pp. 158-160.
- 301 The basic classification of means follows Konstantin Sorokin's analysis. Sorokin, pp. 161-163.
- 302 See: Huntington, p. 159.
- 303 The classification of the forms of control is based on an analysis by Konstantin Pleshakov. Pleshakov, pp. 16-24.

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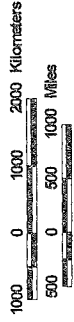
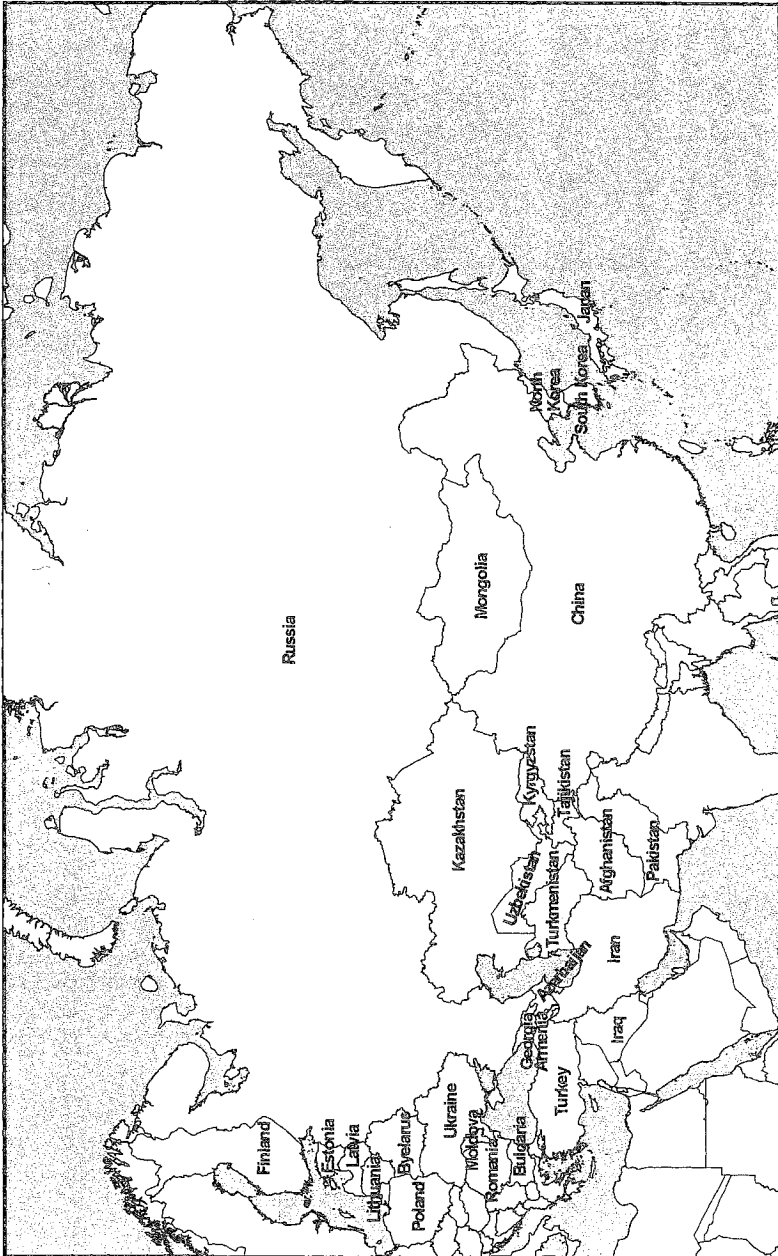
LeDonne, Jon P., Lecturer, Harvard University, 31 January 1997.

4 Correspondence

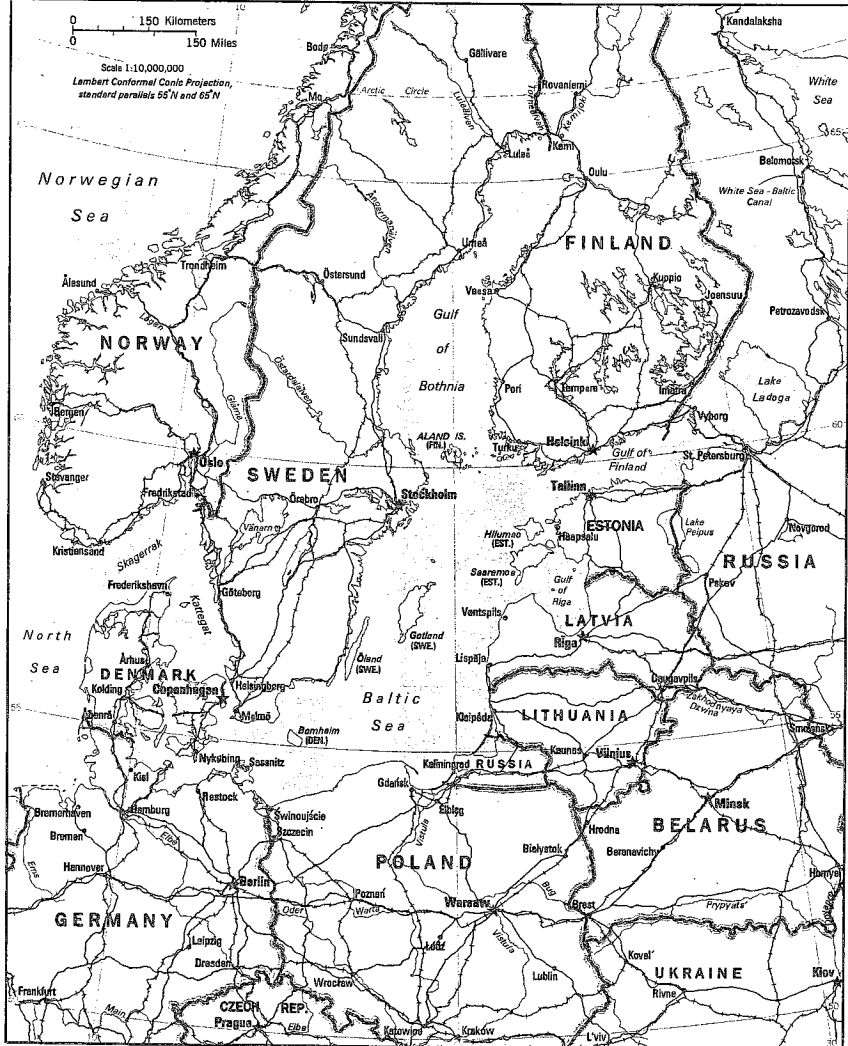
The Estonian Agency of Foreign Investments. Respond to an inquiry, May 1997.

MAP 1

Russian Federation

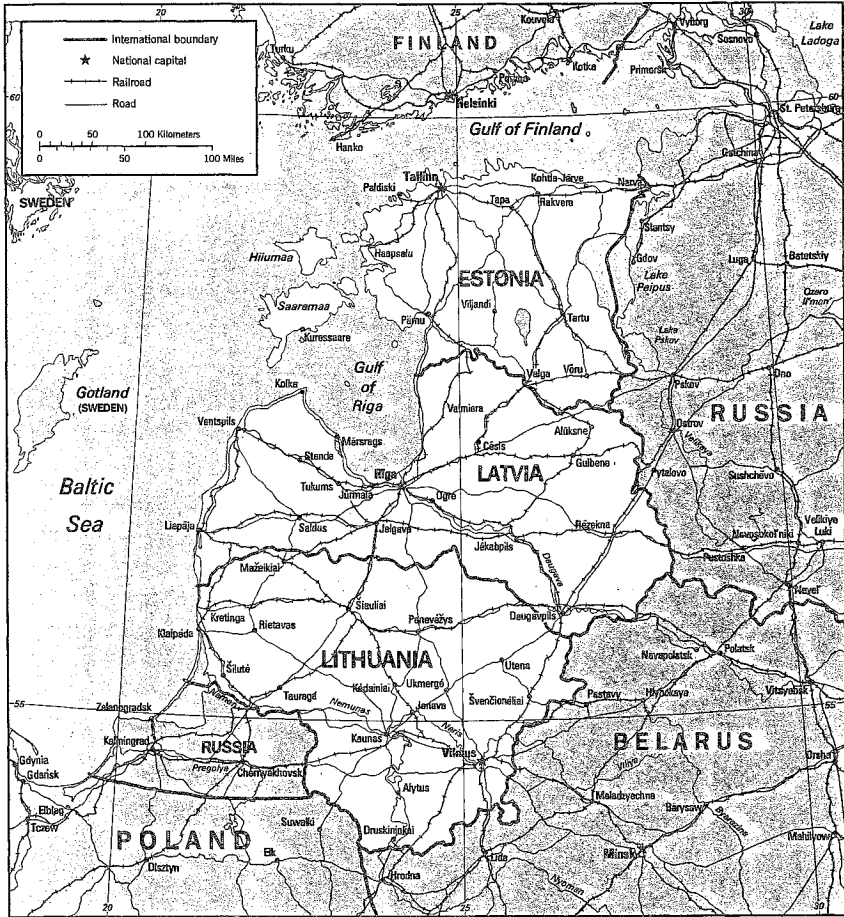


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