

Problems in American Assistance Policy Toward the Former Soviet Union *The Belarus Prism*

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The Bush administration responded to the breakup of the former Soviet Union with, inter alia, two early policy decisions: to open American embassies in all the newly independent states and to embark on a large-scale assistance program encompassing humanitarian, economic, and technical aspects. Both of these were, of course, based on considerations of U.S. national interests. In the case of diplomatic representation, opening embassies indicated U.S. acknowledgment of the legitimate aspirations of nations long subjugated not only by the communist Soviet Union but, in many instances, also by tsarist Russia. Establishing relations with each of these countries were also meant to signal unambiguously that the United States considered the demise of the USSR to be permanent.

Policy desiderata with regard to assistance were somewhat less precise. Understanding of U.S. goals in this arena varied from agency to agency and between the executive and legislative branches of government. For example, many saw as genuinely altruistic the major humanitarian aid effort that was launched to stave off perceived medicine and food deprivations. Others held the view that in providing such assistance the United States would be seen by grateful recipients as a true friend and supporter. Fostering a Western orientation in this way, it was argued, would thus serve to reinforce the centrifugal forces unleashed by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, Belarus chief of state Stanislau Shushkevich, and Russian President Boris Yeltsin with their creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States on 8 December 1991.

This article examines several policy and program aspects of U.S. government assistance activity in the former Soviet Union based on the writer's experience as American ambassador to the Republic of Belarus from 1992 to 1994. Obviously, only conjectural analysis is possible concerning how the Bush administration would have carried out its assistance policy, since it had scarcely begun when President Bush lost his reelection bid in November 1992. What can be said is that passage of the Freedom Support Act in October 1992 represented bipartisan agreement on the need for a major effort to assist the newly independent states (NIS) in rising from the ashes of the defunct USSR.

The Clinton administration's stewardship in implementing Freedom Support Act mandates as well as other assistance programs does, however, lend itself to closer scrutiny. Reflective of that administration's general disdain for foreign affairs, U.S. diplomacy with the region that was formerly the Soviet Union has tended to focus mainly on political and economic relations with Russia and on efforts to relocate to Russia all the strategic

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nuclear weapons of the former USSR. A deliberate (and highly questionable) russocentric policy line was established, spearheaded by Ambassador-at-Large (now Deputy Secretary of State) Strobe Talbott.

In its assistance policy, the Clinton administration seemed to have accepted the Bush team's premise that aid, while alone unlikely to be decisive in achieving complete transformations in the post-Soviet countries to democracy and market economics, could nonetheless have a significant impact at least at the margins and was thus a worthwhile endeavor. Nonetheless, Talbott and company devoted little policy attention to the details of assistance activity in the NIS. As a result, significant problems arose which in their totality call into serious question the effectiveness of these efforts in foreign policy terms as well as—closely related—their value to American taxpayers.

The problems in assistance policy and program implementation under

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the Clinton administration fall generally into at least two broad areas: (1) program conceptualization, including inefficiencies in delivering assistance and inadequate focus on the key goal of helping the new states

establish themselves politically and economically; and (2) bureaucratic rivalries and empire building. This article will examine these two problem areas briefly from the standpoint of U.S. assistance activities in Belarus and conclude with several recommendations for policy reorientation.

A mistake begun by the Bush administration and continued by the Clinton team was the assumption that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) should take the lead in implementing the assistance effort. As of 30 June 1995, USAID's share of Freedom Support Act obligations was \$2.35 billion, by far the greatest single amount of non-food assistance earmarked to date.¹ The assumption was that USAID, with its long years of experience and presumed expertise with Third World assistance, would be fully capable of taking on the Second World. The premise having been fallacious, the result, predictably, was flawed.

Program Conceptualization

The heart of the assistance issue in the NIS was and is: What to do, how quickly to do it, and above all, what is the desired result. Here, conflicts emerged immediately between USAID's Third World-style approach and the real needs in the new countries (and related to that, the U.S. government's policy goals in the region). One key—in the view of some, *the* key—to U.S. success with economic and technical assistance in the NIS was to show at least some quick, concrete results so that befuddled populaces, set adrift by the sudden demise of the USSR, could see the benefits for themselves, at the individual and family level, of embarking on the kind of systemic transformations that the West was urging on them. Otherwise, the exact opposite of the desired results could occur. And they did, such as the growth in organized crime and the emergence of a thin stratum of ultra-rich, with widening gaps between themselves and the masses. Throughout the former USSR, the generalization would appear still valid that the great majority of people live no better, or indeed, significantly worse, than they did when the

Soviet Union ceased to exist. Many observers see this as a ticking time bomb.

USAID's approach, however, as transplanted from its "expertise" in the Third World, was to begin with "strategic planning," a euphemism for self-justification of the bureaucratic overlay the agency brought and continues to bring to the assistance table. Next, USAID typically awarded contracts and/or itself conducted studies, and more studies, of issues surrounding a given proposed program activity. For example, in mid-1993, USAID proposed conducting a study on privatization of state-run enterprises in the country to the Belarus government. What the Belarusians actually needed was assistance to facilitate commencing the destatization process. Further, privatization had already been studied extensively in neighboring Russia, which, of course, had an identical industrial policy and enterprise organization setup as Belarus in the old USSR. Another new study on the subject was not needed.

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Another problem with the USAID approach is that the agency seems to prefer dealing with established governmental entities. In Belarus, the existing government in 1992 and 1993 was a holdover from the communist era. Elections to the Supreme Soviet, or parliament, had last been held in 1990. Executive power at the national and, especially, provincial levels was in the hands of officials who had little if any desire to see Belarus reform economically or politically. Only through a quirk of fate was the Supreme Soviet chairman—nominally the head of state but without real political power—a person of reformist inclinations. Nevertheless, USAID persisted in offering assistance to the non-reform-minded establishment, typically in the form of grantees (e.g. bankers) or studies (the privatization effort).

A Darkening National Mood

Parenthetically, it is important to note that in 1994 elections for president were held in Belarus, based on that country's new constitution. A seemingly populist candidate was elected, an event generally attributed to voter impatience for change and growing disquiet with worsening economic conditions. A year later, parliamentary elections were held, but low voter turnout combined with a complicated electoral system prevented election of a sufficient number of deputies to seat a new parliament. (A third round of parliamentary elections may occur by the time this article is published, possibly resolving the current impasse.) This election was interpreted as reflecting voter malaise and a growing sense of hopelessness that *any* government could improve things in the country. Concomitantly, however, voters overwhelmingly approved referenda calling for closer ties to Russia. This was seen as an indication of Belarusians' dark national mood over the deepening economic crisis and a desire to return to the low but relatively stable material levels of the Soviet era. These straws in the Belarusian wind reflect, in this writer's opinion, precisely the outcome that American technical and economic assistance programs were supposed to help prevent, but haven't.

USAID's Activities in Belarus: Lost Opportunities

With regard to USAID's activities in Belarus, in sum, the agency's direct involvement has been more on a theoretical plane than a practical, concrete one. Technical assistance has been geared more to studying problems than to solving them. While perhaps a case can be made for that approach in situations where time is not of the essence, in the former Soviet Union the luxury of time may not be as real as elsewhere in the world.

Another problem area in program conceptualization is that of educational and other exchanges. The United States Information Agency (USIA) has a long and generally quite distinguished record of facilitating international visitor, educational, and cultural exchanges. The agency was thus the natural locus for a whole range of programs and activities mandated by the Freedom Support Act. According to USIA, by fiscal year 1994 agency funding for NIS programs had reached nearly \$183 million (of which \$126 million was provided via the Freedom Support Act).² These, of course, were not just exchanges but also expanded educational, cultural, and democratization programs.

In Belarus, USIA and USAID quickly established relations with the Belarus State University in Minsk, an unreformed institution of higher education that was the premier university in the then-Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. If this university in 1992 offered courses, for example, in Principles of Economics, they were taught by the very professors who a year earlier were teaching Marxist Economics. In other words, course content changed little and the heavy hand of state censorship and control continued to dominate. Numerous exchange programs, all of dubious value, resulted from USIA's involvement with this and other state-run educational institutions.

In the meantime, the European Humanities University (EHU) was established in Minsk as the Soviet Union was dissolving. This university was one of the first independent institutions of higher education—if not the very

first—to be established between Moscow and the Polish border since the inception of the USSR.

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The EHU, not surprisingly, survives by a thread. Its rector, a member of the Belarusian Academy of Sciences, was able to arrange for classes to be held at

the academy. Eventually, the Orthodox Church turned over to EHU ownership a run-down building in central Minsk that it had received back from the state, and some refurbishing was made possible through the assistance of the Soros Foundation and other Western donors, but not the U.S. government. The EHU has been able to generate funding for as many as 300 students in part from private sources inside Belarus and from private Western donors. From the outset of the American diplomatic presence in Belarus, EHU sought the help of the United States in its very survival. Aside from modest grants of books such as English-Russian dictionaries and occasional short-term visitor exchanges, neither USIA nor USAID has seen fit to help the EHU.

At the same time, Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey succeeded in tacking a \$50 million exchange program onto the Freedom Support Act. This grant money is being used to bring high school and college exchange

students from NIS countries to the United States for up to a year of study at an estimated cost of \$20,000 per student. Extremely questionable in its concept, the Bradley program may rather be funding the first year of residence for future U.S. citizens who, once they have seen McDonald's and the shopping malls, often have little if any desire to return to their home countries.

In this writer's opinion, a much wiser expenditure of public funds would be to support universities such as the EHU in Minsk. Certainly, in cost-benefit terms it is vastly more rational to send students to independent universities (where they exist) in their own countries rather than bring them to the United States, instilling in them a desire to stay here. In the case of the EHU, for the cost of sending one Belarusian student to the United States under the Bradley program, forty such students could receive stipends to study free market economics and democracy in their own country. Does the present program make sense in terms of best use of scarce taxpayer dollars when such an alternative is available? No.

Aside from the problem of the Bradley program's costly and low-benefit exchanges, both USIA and USAID have also adamantly refused to provide direct funding to save the seriously endangered EHU, which is in dire need of building refurbishment, equipment procurement, and administration assistance. Both agencies participated in funding The American University in Sofia, Bulgaria, so precedent exists for an assistance program of this type. The sums would not be large, certainly not when compared to other U.S. assistance programs in the NIS. Nevertheless, the opportunity for the United States to make a clear, concrete contribution to the development of a reformed, democratic Belarus in this area has so far been lost.

Ill-Conceived Agricultural Assistance

Another area of ill-conceived U.S. assistance to Belarus has been agriculture. An exceptionally fertile country, Belarus under the Soviet command system "exported" many agricultural commodities to the rest of the USSR. With less than 5 percent of the Soviet Union's population, the Byelorussian SSR (BSSR) had what is generally acknowledged to be the highest standard of living in the USSR, with the possible exception of the Baltic republics. Directed from Moscow, the BSSR concentrated on dairy and meat production, as well as grains other than wheat. The collective farm system was highly developed, and collective farm managers were, and still are, probably even more powerful politically than their counterparts in the other areas of the former Soviet Union.

Nonetheless, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has concentrated heavily on Belarus in its food aid program to the NIS. Under its Section 416(b) programs, using commodity inventories owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation, and Public Law 480, Title I programs, USDA from 1992 through the end of 1994 had provided Belarus \$184.5 million in surplus agricultural commodities.³ For example, in 1994 alone USDA provided 120,000 metric tons of soybean meal and corn, valued at \$27.5 million, in a government-to-government concessional sales program "to help Belarus meet its animal feed shortfall."⁴ Early in 1995, another \$10 million worth of soybean meal was delivered to Belarus under the aegis of the Public Law 480 commodities program. Of all the NIS countries, Belarus

has received the fourth (after Russia, Armenia, and Georgia) greatest amount of USDA food assistance.⁵

Belarus did not need this assistance. The American Embassy in Minsk repeatedly apprised USDA of the relatively high standard of living in the country, of the government's ability to use its comparative advantage in dairy products and meat to acquire wheat and feed grains from its neighbors, particularly from Kazakstan, and, especially, of the inhibiting effect subsidized deliveries or outright grants of food aid from the United States would have on the process of decollectivization of the country. In fact, in a country where economic reform proceeds at a snail's pace, agriculture sector reform lags even further behind.

Food assistance from the United States to Belarus should have ceased long ago. The commodities could no doubt be more effectively directed to NIS countries having true need or, absent that, used to alleviate genuine starvation situations elsewhere in the world.

One legitimate use of U.S. surplus agricultural commodities in Belarus could have been to monetize those delivered under government-to-government programs and use the derived funds for encouraging private agricultural entrepreneurship. This approach worked exceedingly well in neighboring Poland, for example. The United States in late 1993 proposed, and an obviously reluctant Belarus government agreed in principle, to negotiate establishment of a joint commission for this purpose. Funds realized from the wholesale and retail sale of U.S. commodities would finance the commission's operation of making loans and/or grants to private citizen applicants to start up small-scale agricultural projects such as growing berries for export to western Europe's fruit yogurt market. An intergovernmental agreement on the matter was nearly reached by the time of President Clinton's visit to Minsk in January 1994. Indeed, one of the documents signed then noted progress toward an agreement and reaffirmed the parties' commitment to establishing this commission. Since then, unfortunately, the matter has languished, there apparently being little interest on the part of the present Belarusian government to conclude the agreement. Consequently, U.S. agricultural commodities continue to flow into Belarus on concessionary terms with absolutely no benefit for the U.S. goal of fostering agricultural reform in the country.

Success of Non-Governmental and Private Voluntary Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) have been to date by far the most successful in delivering true assistance to the countries and peoples of the former Soviet Union. In the case of Belarus alone, independence brought a cascade of privately managed activity.

For example, Citihope International by the spring of 1992 had developed a major program for delivering privately generated medical supplies, a program augmented later by deliveries of USDA surplus commodities such as baby foods and flour (the latter, especially, of questionable need as noted above). By 1993, Citihope's activities had expanded to include giving seminars to interested ordinary Belarusian citizens in entrepreneurial techniques.

Numerous U.S. religious groups became active in Belarus beginning in 1992 with both humanitarian and technical assistance programs. Some of these have been notably effective, such as the Missouri Baptist

Convention's work in setting up dental clinics at several locations in the country. Too, the United Methodist Church has been effective in delivering privately generated medical supplies to Belarus and in initiating student exchange programs.

By far the single most effective non-governmental organization operating in Belarus, though, has been Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA). Funded largely by USAID, VOCA has succeeded in maintaining its own independent project decision making and operational control, at least in Belarus, and results have been remarkable. Where USAID studies privatization, for example, VOCA organized a privatization seminar in Minsk, bringing in both U.S. farmers and those from Eastern Europe where agriculture has only recently been privatized. They provided detailed information to an enthusiastically receptive audience on how to run private farms.

VOCA operates successful farmer-to-farmer programs in Belarus and provides strong, hands-on technical support to would-be private farmers. In one instance, a small \$5,000 VOCA grant to permit a private agricultural newsletter to print extension materials resulted in a doubling of that paper's and a projected quantum leap of its circulation by the end of the year. VOCA has provided practical advice to agricultural innovators in such diverse areas as crayfish and trout raising, beekeeping, and forestry.⁶

VOCA was instrumental in implementing an idea generated by the American embassy in Minsk to see if radiation-free biofuels could be developed by growing canola on Chernobyl-polluted lands in southern Belarus. Over 500,000 acres of rich agricultural land have lain fallow since the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986. Research has proven the viability of this project, and American companies are following up with proposals to provide equipment and technology to convert canola seed to oil in an inexpensive and environmentally sound manner. Inter alia, this project is designed to provide the kind of concrete results to the Belarusian people that will give them hope to believe the West's involvement and market transformations can in fact be in their best interests.

In fairness, mention must be made of one U.S. government agency whose work in the NIS is concrete and results-oriented. The Trade and Development Agency (TDA) is active throughout the region. In Belarus, TDA recently provided a \$750,000 grant to the Belarusian Ministry of Industry as partial funding for a feasibility study of a proposed joint venture between that ministry and several U.S. companies to manufacture fuel-efficient, environmentally certified diesel engines for truck and industrial applications. TDA also sponsored a recent visit to the United States of Belarusian pharmaceutical industry factory managers to meet with potential U.S. investors.⁷

Bureaucratic Intrigue

If it does nothing else well, USAID excels at ensconcing itself in large numbers at all its missions abroad, so naturally it began its NIS adventure by "staffing up." For the western NIS countries of Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine, USAID established a regional mission at the American embassy in Kiev. Leasing extremely expensive (and comfortable) office space and staff housing, USAID went from zero staff at Kiev to fifteen full-time, direct-hire Americans (more American employees than the entire U.S. embassies in

Belarus and Moldova). A locally hired staff of twenty-four was added, resulting in total staff costs alone of \$2.33 million annually.⁸ This startling (and, at the policy level, unplanned) growth resulted in part from USAID's convincing an inexperienced U.S. ambassador of the need for such a large staff and in part from the absence of adequate Washington-level stringence in terms of approving overseas staffing. By 1994, however, the State Department's undersecretary for management had informed the embassy at Kiev of a freeze in U.S. personnel increases. Reportedly, USAID has succeeded in circumventing this freeze by stationing in Kiev up to twelve additional U.S. citizens on a full-time contract basis.

At the Washington end, the Clinton administration's State Department, responding to a Freedom Support Act mandate but, more importantly, to the explosion in assistance activity the act spawned throughout the government, created an office for assistance coordination. This office was supposed to have clout both in policy and program decision making.

Deputy Secretary of State Talbott named Thomas Simons, a career foreign service officer just concluding a tour of duty as ambassador to Poland, to set up this office. Simons was an interesting choice, having allowed a very large USAID build-up at his embassy in Warsaw. USAID correctly surmised that Simons could not effectively control its bureaucracy, which by then had developed de facto policy dominance (in the assistance policy vacuum described above) as well as program authority.

The result was near guerrilla warfare between the Simons operation (known in bureaucratic jargon as S/NIS/C) and USAID. The State

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Department's Office of Inspector General recently reviewed that situation, noting: “S/NIS/C's relationship with AID, however, remains troubled. While not dysfunctional, the recriminations and bureaucratic turf struggles between S/NIS/C and

AID have marred the relationship, made the interagency assistance-coordination process highly adversarial too often, and have been noted negatively by the General Accounting Office, congressional staffers, and other agencies.”⁹

The inspector general's report continues: “Since its 1992 legislative inception, S/NIS/C, and the coordinator personally, have had a rocky ride, facing congressional unhappiness and AID criticism from the beginning. Congressional concern peaked in 1994, focused on perceived lack of leadership by the coordinator, and slow implementation and large assistance pipelines characterizing the startup of initial assistance programs, particularly in Russia. Major congressional pressures for a high visibility assistance ‘czar’ with authority to override individual agencies led to a May 1994 decision to replace the current coordinator.”¹⁰ In fact, however, Ambassador Simons remained in place—still unable to rein in USAID—for nearly another year. Then, apparently as a reward for his loyalty, he was nominated to be U.S. ambassador to Pakistan.

Responding to congressional unhappiness and to the ineffectiveness of the State Department's assistance coordination office, in April 1995 Secretary Christopher named Richard Morningstar to replace Simons.

According to the department, Morningstar “has a broad new presidential mandate and will oversee all U.S. assistance activities in the NIS.”¹¹ He also was granted a broader title than Simons: special advisor to the president and the secretary of state on assistance to the NIS. Only six months into the job, Morningstar would appear to be taking at least some steps toward exercising policy control over the assistance community, particularly USAID. Unfortunately, much time and large amounts of taxpayer funds have already been lost. USAID continues to resist.

In the field, USAID operates much as though it were independent of the executive branch of government. The S/NIS/C 1994 annual report states, for example: “A number of embassies have expressed concerns that their expertise and authority have not been adequately sought or taken into account in the development of assistance projects.”¹² In the case of Belarus, the U.S. embassy in Minsk reports that “some USAID projects have moved forward without receiving proper concurrence from the ambassador.”¹³ The embassy also notes, with regard to Cooperative Threat Reduction assistance (the Nunn-Lugar program) in Belarus, that “seemingly endless delegations have bewildered and strained the resources of both the embassy and the Belarusian Ministry of Defense, leading the Minister of Defense to publicly criticize the program.”¹⁴

NIS Manipulation of U.S. Bureaucracies

Interesting, too, is the way skilled NIS diplomats in Washington have managed to “work the system” of interagency rivalries and narrow bureaucratic interests, not infrequently to the detriment of U.S. policy goals. Again, Belarus is a good case in point. Represented in Washington by an exceptionally able ambassador, the Republic of Belarus benefited

quite coincidentally from a long-standing acquaintanceship between its self-aggrandizing foreign minister and the Clinton administration’s first National Security Council senior director for the NIS region, Ms. Toby Gati. Building

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on this link, Belarus Ambassador Serguei Martynov developed unhealthily (for the U.S.) intimate access into the NSC, both with Gati and her deputy, Nicholas Burns. When Gati was “kicked upstairs” to the position of assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research, Burns—a relatively junior foreign service officer with no previous service in the former USSR or knowledge of the region—became NSC senior director for the NIS area.

One example of the Belarusians’ use of the NSC connection to the detriment of U.S. interests occurred in July 1993. On the eve of a high-level Belarusian visit to Washington, Ambassador Martynov met with Burns to deliver a letter from his (communist) prime minister requesting millions of dollars in additional U.S. agricultural commodity assistance. Without reference to or knowledge of either the State Department or the U.S. embassy in Minsk, Burns, now State Department spokesman, essentially directed that the U.S. Department of Agriculture comply with this request,

and it was done. As discussed above, in the Belarus circumstances such agricultural assistance runs counter to U.S. interests by helping prop up the unreformed (and politically hostile to the United States) collective farm system there.

Policy Implications

The problems noted above with U.S. assistance programs in the former Soviet Union suggest an urgent need for policy reorientation in Washington. The urgency stems from the fact that, with regard to USAID alone, of the \$2.35 billion obligated in aggregate from 1992 through 30 June 1995, only \$1.28 billion has actually been expended.¹⁵ By taking measures now, the remaining funds can be: (a) directed to real needs, (b) expended more efficiently, and (c) used on concrete projects offering rapid results.

The following, in this writer's view, could help significantly to improve the targeting, effectiveness, and policy relevance of quality assistance to the NIS countries:

1. Provide funding directly to assistance deliverers. USAID, there seems little disagreement, is a bureaucratic morass whose personnel add little if any value to the assistance programs. Draft legislation to abolish the agency may soon become law, making the issue moot. If not, Congress should seriously consider ways of funding directly those PVOs and NGOs with

demonstrated expertise in NIS program implementation. In the case of Belarus, VOCA is a prime example.

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2. Increase the policy authority of the State Department assistance coordination office and assure it has full

program oversight control as well. Bureaucratic warfare needs to cease and backdoor deals of the NSC-USDA variety noted above must stop.

3. Institute program criteria apparently now lacking so that each and every project is vetted carefully to assure that it is responsive to clearly articulated U.S. interests in the country involved, that it is realistic and doable, and that it will directly and rapidly benefit the people in that country.

4. Pay greater heed to and place greater responsibility on local U.S. embassies in the NIS countries to propose and to oversee implementation of assistance projects.

5. Give U.S. ambassadors in the NIS countries discretionary funding authority (and concomitant accountability obligations) for up to \$10 million each so that immediate assistance needs can be addressed without going through time-consuming bureaucratic hoops in Washington. This recommendation implies, of course, acceptance of the premise that key expertise on needs and how to address them is best found at the local embassy level.

6. Closely linked with the above, in exceptional circumstances provide assistance via direct funding where a host-country institution or organization has demonstrated its ability to advance economic and/or political reform, shape public opinion in ways commensurate with Western values, or address critical human needs.

7. Use non-governmental organizations in recipient countries as vehicles for delivering assistance wherever feasible, particularly in situations where reform is lagging through a government's lack of political will.

Conclusion

The U.S. government would be deluding itself and the American people were it to claim that the assistance program in the NIS region will be determinant in setting those countries' ultimate course to democracy and market economics. Nonetheless, significant effect can be achieved at the margin, a fact that of itself makes the assistance effort worthwhile. In the algebra of determining the ratio between long-term assistance efforts and more rapid ones with concrete, easily identifiable results, it is important to remember that the process of democratization and economic transformations may not have a long term if ordinary people continue to see little or no benefit in their individual situations.

In the final analysis, U.S. tax dollars must be spent in this arena for the sole purpose of advancing U.S. national interests. Wasteful, esoteric, and/or poorly targeted assistance programs, no matter whose bureaucratic interests they may serve, are unacceptable. This simple truth should be enshrined in the minds of each and every policymaker and program designer as the remaining U.S. assistance funds earmarked for the NIS are expended.

Notes

1. U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Government Assistance to the Cooperative Activities with the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union: Quarterly Report*, April-June 1995, "Cumulative Obligations" chart; hereafter cited as *April-June 1995 Quarterly Assistance Report*.

2. U.S. Information Agency, *Fact Sheet: U.S. Information Agency Programs in the New Independent States*, August 1994, 1.

3. U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Assistance and Related Programs for the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union: 1994 Annual Report*, January 1995, "Cumulative Expenditures" chart; hereafter cited as *1994 Annual Assistance Report*.

4. *Ibid.*, 128.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance, undated fact sheet on Belarus programs, 1-3.

7. *April-June 1995 Quarterly Assistance Report*, 4.

8. U.S. Department of State, office of Inspector General, *Report of Inspection: Embassy Kiev, Ukraine*, September 1994, 10.

9. U.S. Department of State, Office of Inspector General, *Report of Inspection: Office of the Ambassador at Large and Senior Coordinator for the New Independent States, and Office of Independent States and Commonwealth Affairs*; Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to the New Independent States, August 1995, 19.

10. *Ibid.*, 18.

11. U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Government Assistance to the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union: Quarterly Report*, January-March, 1995, 1.

12. *1994 Annual Assistance Report*, 8.

13. *Ibid.*, 12.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *April-June 1995 Quarterly Assistance Report*, "Cumulative Expenditures" chart.