

Russian Democracy—A U.S. National Security Interest

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Russian democracy and American national security are intimately intertwined. This link is not new, but it is not well understood. When the cold war ended and Soviet communism disappeared, American national security was enhanced. If dictatorship returns to Russia, the United States and its allies will once again be threatened. Containment would likely be adopted as the guiding principle of American foreign policy. The United States could find itself in an arms race with Russia. We argue here that the connection of Russian politics and U.S. security needs to be clearer in the minds of U.S. decision makers. Failure to recognize and respond to this link will have consequences for U.S. security interests.

Most analysts and policymakers reject or minimize the importance of this link. For realists, power and place within the international system drive foreign policy behavior, not the internal composition of a state. The domestic institutions of Russia (or any country) do not figure in analyses or policy prescriptions. For others, culture, history, and tradition matter most. Russia's culture, history, and tradition are, in their view, imperial and therefore dangerous.

Even those who accept the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy disagree about what this means for U.S. policy. Within this camp, some believe that the United States cannot effectively promote democracy abroad and should not try to do so in Russia. Others see democracy promotion as interference in the domestic affairs of states. A third group believes that the negative consequences of such interference outweigh the positive effects. A final group believes that the United States can and should promote democracy in Russia, but that other more important security interests such as arms control and nonproliferation must take precedence.

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We disagree. In this article, we first spell out the causal relationship between Russian internal politics and American national security. This relationship suggests why the United States has an interest in promoting a specific type of political arrangement—that is, democracy—in Russia. In the second section, we examine the extremely unfinished business of democracy in Russia and briefly review the mixed experience with promoting democracy there over the last decade. In the final section, we offer specific policy recommendations for why and how to promote democracy in Russia more effectively.

Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy

Domestic politics often drives foreign policy. Certainly the power capabilities of a state constrain foreign policy options. Weak states, no matter what their internal regime type, cannot threaten powerful states.¹ Geographic location also influences a state's foreign policy. Democratic states located in nondemocratic neighborhoods will pursue a different foreign policy than democratic states surrounded by other democratic states. But an analysis of international politics that does not include the domestic politics of states is incomplete. An understanding of U.S. national security that does not adequately address the domestic politics of other states is misguided.

The Importance of Domestic Politics in Ending the Cold War

The superpower rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States is illustrative. Conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective socioeconomic systems—capitalism versus communism—defined the central drama within the international system for four decades after World War II. Because each country believed that its system was superior, each actively promoted the replication of its system in other countries, while resisting the expansion of the other's system. Power capabilities played an important role in fostering conflict. If the Soviet Union had not developed a massive army and nuclear weapons, the United States would not have been as threatened by this communist regime. The main source of competition, however, derived from the ideological divide between the two states.² In other words, the Soviet Union and the United States were rivals not *only* because they were the two greatest powers in the international system, but because they were two powers with antithetical visions about how domestic politics and economies should be organized.³

The cold war truly ended when the communist regime governing the Soviet Union collapsed.⁴ At different moments during the cold war, U.S. politicians and diplomats argued for détente with Soviet dictators, setting aside human rights abuses and other matters internal to the Soviet Union for the sake of allegedly more important strategic goals such as arms control and “stability” in U.S.–Soviet relations. Improved relations with the Soviet state did help to open up Soviet society, allowing contact with Western ideas and people that was not possible in more confrontational periods in U.S.–Soviet relations.

Yet, neither brilliant diplomacy, nor greater respect for Soviet concerns, nor arms control ultimately ended the cold war. In fact, the relationship went the other

way. Specific changes *within* the Soviet Union and its eventual collapse caused structural changes within the international system. Without the shift in the internal balance of power inside the Soviet Union in favor of reformers, few, if any, of the changes (either internal or external to the Soviet Union) would have occurred. More specifically, that the changes took on a revolutionary nature and that they spun out of Gorbachev's control had little to do with the international system.⁵ The reconfiguration of the international system followed from the revolution within the Soviet Union and its collapse.⁶

The Importance of Domestic Politics in the Post–Cold War Era

The collapse of Soviet communism did not lead smoothly to the consolidation of liberal democracy in Russia. On the contrary, the transition from communism to democracy has been protracted, at times violent, and to date, very much incomplete.⁷ Today, Russia is not a liberal democracy. The Russian political system lacks many of the supporting institutions that make democracies robust. Russia's party system, civil society, and the rule of law are weak and underdeveloped. Executives, at both the national and regional level, have too much power. Crime and corruption, forces that corrode democracy, are still rampant. Over the last several years, Russia's media, while independent and pluralist in part, have become increasingly hostage to oligarchic business interests. The Russian state still lacks the capacity to provide basic public goods, and the Russian economy continues to sputter along. All of these conditions impede the consolidation of democratic institutions.

That said, changes in Russia over the last decade have been significant. Political leaders come to power through the ballot box. They are not appointed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. They do not take office by seizing power from the incumbent. Most elites in Russia and the vast majority of the Russian population now recognize elections as the only legitimate means to power. Political leaders and parties that espouse authoritarian practices—whether fascist or neocommunist—are increasingly marginalized. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation itself has moderated its views. Given Russia's thousand-year history of autocratic rule, the emergence of electoral democracy, however fragile and flawed, in only eight years must be recognized as a revolutionary achievement.

It is this regime change, however partial and incomplete, that has produced a different, post–Soviet dynamic in U.S.–Russian relations. Critics lament the failure to develop a “strategic partnership” with Russia. They are right to recognize the deterioration of good will that has occurred since the euphoric days immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The U.S.–Russian relationship in the year 2000 has not conformed to the desires and wishes of some. But the real and often unasked question is, *compared to what* has this relationship failed?

Speaking to the British parliament in 1982, President Ronald Reagan argued that “there are now threats to our freedom, indeed to our very existence, that other generations could never have even imagined. There is first the threat of global war. No President, no Congress, no Prime Minister, no Parliament can spend a

day entirely free of this threat.”⁸ Reagan was referring to the threat of war between the West and the Soviet Union. Today, no American president or other Western leader spends considerable time worrying about nuclear war with Russia. They worry about how to help Russia manage its nuclear arsenal in an environment of constrained resources. They worry about the Russian economy, and they watch the political transition. But they no longer regard Russia as the mortal adversary it was during the Soviet period.

During the cold war, U.S. policymakers worked to “contain” communist expansion throughout the world, often through protracted warfare, both covert and overt, with massive devastation and loss of life. Today, U.S. foreign policy-makers must still deal with threats emanating from peripheral areas, but those threats are neither instigated nor fueled by Soviet expansion. Instead of fighting or funding proxy wars in Vietnam and Angola, U.S. and Russian troops serve together in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Postcommunist Russia has pursued a largely benign foreign policy vis-à-vis the West. Certainly Russian leaders have denounced American “imperialist” actions in Europe and Central Asia. Foreign Minister Primakov called the decision to enlarge NATO “probably the worst since the end of the Cold War.”⁹ Negative Russian responses to NATO’s war in Kosovo threw a considerable chill over the relationship. But within a year of NATO’s bombing, just about every program that had been halted by the Russians had been renewed.

Despite the perceived threats to Russian security and the up-and-down quality of the U.S.–Russian relationship, the general thrust of Russian foreign policy in the 1990s was one of incremental integration into rather than balancing against the international community.¹⁰ This direction of policy has not been entirely consistent or uncontested. Attempts at creating a security alliance within the Commonwealth of Independent States failed.¹¹ Alliances exist among some Commonwealth states, but those cannot be understood as credible attempts to balance against NATO.¹² Calls to build-up (let alone maintain) the Russian nuclear arsenal have to date had little resonance; Russian policymakers have decided that continued negotiations with the United States on security issues are more important than balancing against an alleged NATO threat. Likewise, no progress has been made in building an anti-Western coalition of Asian powers. Ultimately, China, India, and Russia all recognize that continued cooperation with the West—even an expanding West—is still more important than deterring “Western aggression.”¹³

Political change within Russia is not the only cause of the shift in Russian foreign policy. Obviously, Russia today is much weaker—both in military and economic terms—than the Soviet Union was just ten years ago. Even if Russia wanted to support anti-American guerrilla movements in Latin America, it may not have the means to do so.¹⁴ Yet, power capabilities are not the only variable that explains the absence of balancing against the West. After all, Russia is still the second largest military power in the world and still armed with thousands of nuclear weapons. Russian capabilities have changed only marginally in the last decade. Russian intentions, on the other hand, have changed considerably.

The Democratic Peace

What specific role does the movement toward Russian democracy—or any political regime type—play in U.S.–Russian relations? Scholars argue that there is a lower propensity for democracies to fight one another. The correlation between democracies and peace is robust.¹⁵ Some argue that this is the consequence of domestic institutions and norms within democratic states.¹⁶ These peaceful norms develop much more slowly than democratic institutions but once in place provide a more powerful constraint on belligerent behavior than institutions themselves. (The trick, of course, is how states develop such norms, a central point that we will return to below.) Other scholars argue that democratic institutions compel leaders

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to pursue the peaceful preferences of society at large.¹⁷ If “constitutional law” governs relations between state leaders and societal groups, then rulers will be more cautious in engaging in costly military activity for which citizens must pay.¹⁸

Certainly, even old, consolidated democracies endowed with a full complement of these “dovish” norms and

institutions still fight wars, but the point is that they tend to be against non-democracies.¹⁹ Like-minded democracies encounter much less uncertainty when interacting with one another.²⁰ Not only do they not fight one another, but they tend not to engage in arms races with one another. The phenomenon known as the “security dilemma,” in which one side is inclined to increase its security by building arms, thereby making the other side less secure and prompting costly and dangerous arms races, does not occur among like-minded democratic states.²¹

Over time, repeated, peaceful interactions between democracies produces self-enforcing habits and institutions that everyone has a stake in maintaining.²² Together, these democratic states form a “pacific union” or “international society” in which interstate interactions are much more predictable and peaceful than interstate relations either between nondemocratic states or between democratic states and nondemocratic states.²³ The international institutions that form this peaceful interaction in turn help to keep the peace.²⁴ Other interactions that may serve to reduce uncertainty and thereby enhance peace include alliances, trade, and the presence of transnational—that is, nongovernmental—links.

The phenomenon of the democratic peace is hardly academic. It suggests rather that the formation of democratic institutions and norms within a country is a central security issue for integration into the international community. It suggests that these institutions and norms tend to precede the complete integration of states into peace-sustaining international institutions. In other words, the formation of democratic institutions and norms within Russia is a precondition for Russia’s comprehensive integration into the community of Western democratic

states. The United States, therefore, has a national security interest in not only watching over but engaging in the further consolidation of democratic institutions and norms in Russia.

Putin and the Dangers to Russian Democracy

Russia has made progress toward developing democratic institutions, but the process still has a long way to go. Russian democracy, in fact, has become more imperiled since the election of Vladimir Putin as president in March 2000. Although Putin does not aspire to become a dictator, he is not a passionate defender of democracy.²⁵ In his first several months in office, Putin has demonstrated that he is willing to use the power of the state and ignore the democratic rights of society in the pursuit of his objectives.

In the realm of electoral politics, Putin and his allies wielded the power of the Russian state in ways that did considerable damage to democratic institutions. Putin and his allies created an electoral bloc, Unity, out of thin air in October 1999, which then won nearly a quarter of the vote in December. State television incessantly promoted the new “party” and destroyed its opponents with a barrage of negative advertising shocking even for Russian politics.²⁶ Putin then used national television to broadcast his *anticampaign* campaign for the presidency.

More troublesome and gruesome has been Putin’s indifference to human rights. Perhaps no where is this clearer than in the way the war in Chechnya has been waged. Abundant and consistent testimony gathered by organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights, the Russian group “Memorial,” the French groups “Doctors of the World” and the Nobel Peace Prize winner “Doctors Without Borders” points to systematic and indiscriminate use of force against both civilians and those who care for the wounded. Evidence suggests that Russia is in violation of the Geneva Convention and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These violations reveal the low priority Putin assigns to internationally shared principles.

The Federal Security Service (FSB) under Putin’s leadership has harassed core parts of civil society, including investigative journalists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and even Western NGOs. Reporters such as Andrei Babitsky from Radio Liberty have suffered the consequences of reporting news from Chechnya that contradicted the Kremlin line. Commentators and columnists critical of Putin report that many newspapers are unwilling now to carry their articles. Self-censorship has returned to Russia.

At a minimum, many in Russia argue that it is harder to be a social or political activist today than at any other time in the post-Soviet period.²⁷ Many in the Russian NGO community believe that Putin is hostile to criticism and competition. The Russian government has gone on record claiming that the protection of human rights, for example, is the business of the state and not independent groups. Accordingly, the state refused to register many human rights groups, leaving them legally vulnerable to being shut down.²⁸ Environmental NGOs also have come under increased harassment from the FSB following an interview with Putin that appeared in a Russian newspaper in July 1999, in which he claimed, but provid-

ed no evidence, that these groups were in the employ of foreign intelligence agencies.²⁹ The treatment of Russian NGOs has gotten so bad that Western environmental groups were prompted to send a letter of protest to Putin in March 2000.³⁰

Putin's plans for political reform, although vague and usually circulated through surrogates, also sound undemocratic. Putin advisers speak openly about eliminating proportional representation from the Duma electoral law, a revision that would practically eliminate all pro-democratic political parties in Russia. Putin and his aides also have expressed support for the highly antidemocratic idea of appointing rather than electing governors. Putin has even hinted that he would like to extend the term of the Russian president to seven years, instead of four. Putin will face resistance should he try to implement any part of this plan. Without question, however, the Putin era will present new and greater challenges to those within Russia dedicated to preserving and deepening democratic practices.

The Mixed U.S. Record of Promoting Democracy in Russia

Given Putin's rise to power and the subsequent uncertainty regarding democratic consolidation in Russia, the United States in the coming years should be even more committed to promoting Russian democracy than in the past. In doing so, however, U.S. policymakers must be careful not to repeat mistakes.

The Clinton administration's declaratory policy on democracy in Russia has been clear. Almost every speech ever given by a high-ranking administration official has rightly stressed the importance of Russia becoming a democracy.³¹ Officials often recite a list of "success stories" relating to political and social developments in Russia: civil society is on the march with the development of 65,000 nongovernment organizations, while favorable progress has been made in the development of the rule of law, transparent elections, functioning political parties, independent media, and labor unions.³²

But closer examination of U.S. policy on promoting democracy in Russia reveals a large discrepancy between the rhetorical support and the amount of financial assistance and diplomatic attention devoted to other issues. Over the last decade, Western assistance has concentrated not on democracy promotion but on three other areas—denuclearization, economic reform, and humanitarian projects. Those three areas constituted \$ 4.48 billion of the \$5.45 billion in assistance distributed to Russia by the U.S. government from 1992 to 1998. Of the \$5.45 billion, only \$130 million (2.3 percent) has been devoted to programs involved *directly* in democratic reform. In the last aid budget for Russia, democracy assistance received only \$16 million.³³ When International Monetary Fund disbursements of \$16.5 billion and World Bank transfers of \$6 billion are added to the equation, it is clear that democratic assistance has not been a top funding priority for governments or international institutions.³⁴

The Early 1990s: Choices about Institutional Design

The little money allocated to democracy assistance *has* helped produce results. In the initial stages of Russia's transition, Western NGOs facilitated the transfer of ideas about institutional design—such as the creation of new rules of the game

for structuring politics—at a time when a vacuum of expertise, knowledge, and texts on democracy existed in the Soviet Union and then Russia. American assistance programs helped to translate constitutional practices common in the West into the Russian experience, for example, through direct grants to the Constitutional Commission of the Congress of People's Deputies, training exchanges and seminars with key constitution drafters, and the translation of Western constitutions and constitutional debates, including the Federalist Papers, into Russian. After the 1990 elections for *oblast'* and city soviets, U.S. funded assistance programs also injected Western models and ideas about the local separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches through a similar mix of seminars, exchanges, and translations.

After the choice between parliamentary and presidential institutions, choices about electoral laws may rank as the next-most-important design decisions that new democracies must make. The kind of electoral law influences the kind of electoral outcome.³⁵ In this more technical field, Western assistance played a direct role in introducing Russian politicians to the different effects of proportional representation, first-past-the-post systems, and mixed systems. In 1992, a U.S.-based NGO, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), convened a series of working group meetings on the relationship between electoral systems and parties, which included electoral experts on the American single-mandate system, as well as the Portuguese, German, and Hungarian electoral regimes.³⁶ All of Russia's key decision makers on the electoral law at the time participated in these meetings, including Giorgy Satarov, and People's Deputies Viktor Balala and Viktor Sheinis—the two leading authors of competing electoral law drafts at the time—as well as senior officials from the Presidential Administration. Of course, Russian politicians had other sources of information about electoral systems, but most of the sources drew on the Western experience.

In addition to the constitutional design issues, Western NGOs provided ideas and convened meetings on the entire range of institutional issues facing Russia's new democracy, from elections and parties to the development of independent media, from the role of advocacy groups in democracy to the importance of civic education in developing democratic practice. Western groups were instrumental in providing Russian activists with specific technical information on how to monitor elections, how to design electoral campaigns, the development of media watch-dog groups, and the role of the internet in bringing networks together. It is beyond the scope of this article to detail all of these programs, and unfortunately, a truly comprehensive, independent description and history (let alone assessment) of the entire portfolio of U.S. democratic assistance programs has yet to be compiled.³⁷

As a general rule, it is fair to say that information on the design of all democratic institutions came from or originated in the West. During the early period of institutional design in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Russians were most interested in exploring ideas about democracy, specifically with Americans, and actually loath to listen to experts or historical models from “smaller” countries such as Poland, Romania, or the Philippines. Even if the experiences of these more

recent transitions to democracy was more relevant to the Russian situation, Russians still wanted to compare themselves with the other superpower.³⁸

The window of opportunity for institutional design in Russia was not open for very long, and at the time, the West's attention was focused on other issues. In Russia, debates about institutional design began to crystallize only in fall 1990. To the extent that U.S. decision makers were focused on the Soviet Union and later Russia, it was mainly from a traditional strategic point of view.³⁹ By December 1993, with the ratification of the new constitution and the adoption of a new electoral system, the big debates in Russia over specific design choices were over. Constitutional debates lingered on, and the design of institutions below the constitutional level continued, yet never with the same vigor.

The mode of Russia's transition—imposition rather than negotiation—further limited the opportunities for democratic ideas to enter into institutional design debates. For instance, Russian officials in the executive branch at the national and regional level may have been exposed to ideas of checks and balances and may have embraced such rules if forced through compromise to do so. But both of Russia's major transitional moments, in August 1991 and in October 1993, were resolved through armed conflict and not compromise, allowing the victors in those clashes to dictate the political rules of the game. Some successful democratic designs, such as the Russian electoral system for the State Duma, appeared as much through chance as by intention.⁴⁰

The swiftness of the initial transition phase meant that, overall, American impact was limited. Most American NGOs were reluctant to work with Russian officials during the Soviet period. USAID opened a full-scale office in Moscow only in 1993, and few if any of the development experts there had ever worked in a postcommunist country, let alone in Eastern Europe. The role of Western actors, therefore, was limited initially and, not surprisingly given the conditions, the results were mixed.

The Mid-1990s: Engaging Democratic Actors and Organizations

Democratic rules work only if democratic activists and organizations exist to sustain them. In Russia, civic advocacy organizations, independent trade unions, competitive political parties, advocacy lawyers, and business associations had only begun to form in 1992. Environmental groups, human rights activists, and eventually even overt political organizations such as the Moscow Popular Front, the Union of Coal Miners, and Democratic Russia did sprout *organically* within the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union despite little or no contact with Western actors. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, U.S. and European democratic assistance programs mostly played an educational role in providing ideas about the role of parties, unions, and NGOs in a democratic society.

For instance, although all consolidated democracies have political party systems, communicating the need to build political parties to the Soviet and later the Russian elite was more than a trivial task. During the height of anticommunist mobilization in 1990 and 1991, democratic leaders in Russia shunned the idea of creating parties because the word "party" connoted one thing in the context of

the times: the enemy. Likewise, new civic groups had an aversion to political parties because they understood them to be instruments of control rather than potential allies in promoting social or political change. Perhaps most important, senior leaders in the anticommunist movement such as Boris Yeltsin feared parties, and technocrats in charge of economic reform after the collapse of the Soviet Union also viewed parties as constraining forces that might complicate their task.

By 1993, American NGOs such as the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute, as well as European organizations, were providing information to Russian politicians about the role of parties in democracies, emphasizing the role that parties played in elections, parliament, and society more generally. The initial

post-Soviet period was particularly difficult for Russia's new parties because Yeltsin did not convoke a "founding election" after the Soviet collapse but instead waited until December 1993 to hold Russia's first postcommunist election. Beyond the initial period, however, NGOs such as NDI and IRI provided practical menus

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of problem-solving campaign and electoral skills, such as how to use focus groups and polling data in designing a campaign. Partly due to long-cultivated relationships with Russian activists, IRI and NDI helped to transfer "election technology" to a country that had never before had competitive parties or elections.

By acknowledging and working with new parties such as the Democratic Party of Russia, the Social Democratic Party of Russia, the Republican Party of Russia, and the Christian Democratic Party of Russia, American NGOs helped to raise the profile of those organizations. Recognition by and connection with external actors helped to establish the legitimacy of domestic parties. For example, three Russian Christian democratic parties competed for recognition by the Christian International. Various social democratic parties vied with the Communist Party and others for recognition from the Socialist International.

In a short span of time, since 1992, the idea of a party system has achieved taken-for-granted status for Russia's political elite.⁴¹ Leaders now feel compelled to create their own party to be considered a serious national political figure. Of course, the initial result was negative as parties proliferated at an alarming rate. Given the Russian historical legacy of either an absence of political parties or the monopolization of the political process by a party-state, however, party proliferation should be seen as a comparatively positive development. Today, political parties dominate only one branch of government, the Duma, due in large measure to the consolidation of strong executives at the national and regional levels. Parties have much work to do to build stronger links to nongovernmental groups and to constituents. Yet, parties do exist, and the idea of a party system is now

understood. Post-Soviet political parties such as Yabloko and the Union of Right Forces that have managed to survive the tumultuous politics of the 1990s have maintained interaction with their Western counterparts.

A similar story could be told in Russia about almost every democratic organization. The links between Russian political and social activists and Western activists make up a transnational democratization network.⁴² Russian NGOs involved in every aspect of Russian society have established ties to their Western counterparts. American grant-making institutions, such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the Eurasia Foundation, the Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia, and the Open Society Institute, have devoted important and sustained support to Russian NGOs at a time when Russian funding sources were either nonexistent or extremely limited. Likewise, the AFL-CIO has developed ties and provided assistance to independent trade unions. In the early years, the simple act of AFL-CIO recognition of their Russian counterparts, for example, provided real symbolic assistance to these new societal actors.

Throughout the 1990s, Russian women's organizations, trade unions, human rights activists, and environmental organizations have been increasingly integrated into international networks and forums, which offer them both comparative experience and legitimacy. Independent media outlets in Russia also have benefited from direct financial assistance from American sources such as Internews. Western assistance on media issues has been aimed at the Russian regions, compensating for the imbalance in resources between the capital and the periphery. Public interest law firms supported by Western assistance have empowered workers to use the court system to sue for wage arrears and access to social services. Practical and important activities in the Russian women's movement can also be traced to U.S. assistance. For example, crisis centers and hotlines have spread across Russia, an important achievement in a country in which 16,000 women a year are victims of domestic violence. Western assistance has facilitated use of the internet by Russian NGOs to network among themselves and to integrate into the international NGO community. For many organizations, the funding for internet access has been a lifeline. In summary, beyond helping to legitimize them, Western NGOs have shared strategies and tactics for development to help these organizations succeed in the post-Soviet environment, one characterized by a historical legacy of authoritarian rule and severe economic constraints.

In addition to supporting democratic institutions and activists, American assistance also has provided some limited support for helping to spread ideas about democracy to the citizens of Russia. The U.S. government has directly funded the Voice of America's radio and television programs and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. These media outlets devote considerable program time to issues of democracy and the rule of law. American NGOs have funded Russian-produced television and radio programs on topics ranging from abstract issues such as the separation of powers in democratic states to concrete matters such as how to use the court system to sue the state. These programs have been low cost yet have reached millions of people. Additionally, important texts in democratic theory have

been translated into Russian, and new textbooks on civic education have been written. In a country that has not entirely examined its Stalinist past, the textbooks are important means for Russians to explore all of their history. Finally, while educational exchanges are often not considered a part of democracy assistance, there is no better laboratory for understanding how democratic societies function (and sometimes malfunction) than an extended visit to the United States.

The Lessons of U.S. Democratic Assistance in Russia

Mistakes have been made, progress in consolidating democracy in Russia has been slow, and the effects of assistance have been difficult to measure. An honest and critical discussion of the impact of assistance is always obscured by two hard facts—Russian democracy has not consolidated as fast or as well as we in the West expected and U.S. organizations that provide democratic assistance are compelled to overestimate their impact to justify future funding.⁴³ Because the resources devoted to democracy promotion in Russia have been minuscule compared with other forms of assistance, the size of the country, and the scope of the agenda, measuring impact is almost impossible. Economic assistance programs were huge compared with democracy assistance programs—billions of dollars versus millions—and we have difficulty measuring their impact on economic reform in Russia. Isolating the ripple effects of a tiny democracy assistance effort in the vast sea of political change in Russia is extremely difficult.

The ubiquitous emphasis on metrics, such as the number of NGOs trained or the number of electoral victories by Western-trained candidates, does little to capture the long-term effects of assistance programs. The number of NGOs in a country does not tell us much about civil society or social capital, both of which funders see as central to a democratic state. Even in the most fertile settings, such as the United States, democratic practices took decades, if not centuries, to take root, yet evaluators of U.S. programs in Russia are always focused on short-term results. American NGOs are engaged in a long-term, incremental process of changing behavior and perceptions that is simply neither linear nor quantifiable.⁴⁴

In addition, Russian participants in democracy programs, especially the most political such as party and trade union assistance, have a complex set of motivations for downplaying the role of foreigners. It is insulting to the ego and damaging to the political prospects of a party leader to admit that American consultants helped to build her party. It is equally damaging to a trade union leader to be known as a “Western lackey.” At the same time, Western assistance programs have an interest (at times not acknowledged by them) in downplaying their role. When Westerners claim credit for a political development in Russia, they alienate their Russian partners personally and taint their partners politically. Finally, tracing the direct causal influence of any *specific* program is difficult, as education, experience, and the flow of ideas are cumulative. Western ideas about democracy float freely in Russia, buoyed by an American NGO, a British academic studying at Moscow State University, a student exchange program to Berkeley, California, or the internet. Separating out the unique contributions of a specific program provided by a single American NGO, therefore, is scientifically suspect.

Despite these difficulties in evaluation, and although a full-scale evaluation is beyond the scope of this article, some lessons have been learned in a decade of experience with democracy promotion in Russia. As we have suggested, American NGOs have played a role in providing information about how to *build* institutions associated with democratic states. They have done little as yet to affect how these institutions actually *function*. Formally, Russian political rules resemble democratic institutions, but informally, nondemocratic procedures still permeate Russian politics. For instance, elections in Russia occur and do have consequences, but they are not entirely free and fair. U.S. programs to promote the rule of law by working with Russian state agencies have demonstrated little tangible success in making the legal system function better. Finally, ideas about checks and balances and the importance of the separation of powers have been pumped into Russia through numerous channels, but executives continue to dominate.

The record is also mixed regarding support for democratic actors and organizations. Political parties, trade unions, independent media outlets, and local NGOs are all now part of the Russian political landscape, and their links with foreign groups are considerable. Grant programs also have helped to sustain NGOs, which might not otherwise exist. Yet, this dependence on foreign sources of funding comes at a cost. Because of the asymmetries of resources, Russian NGOs can become consumed with meeting the demands of their Western donors to the neglect of their domestic constituents.⁴⁵ Some Russian NGO leaders have become professional grant writers. The most fluent English speakers in the NGO community may be the most well endowed financially, while others working on issues more salient to the local community lack funds.

Russian organizations can also lose their links to their own societies. For example, Western NGOs have influenced the electoral activities of new political parties and the organization of media-watch groups, but they have done little to help make parties responsive to constituents or major media outlets in any way independent of the narrow political interests of their owners. Women's groups have mushroomed at the same time that they have grown increasingly closer to their transnational partners than to the constituents they are meant to represent or the governments they claim to be influencing. By creating a cadre of professional activists involved in their own networks, Western assistance has in some ways widened the distance between the Russian women's movement and the rest of society. The same could be said about some environmental organizations.⁴⁶

New Ideas for Democracy Assistance

Past setbacks should compel U.S. leaders to seek better ways to promote democratic consolidation in Russia and not be cited as justification for closing down those activities. If Russian democracy is a U.S. national security interest and the consolidation of democracy in Russia is a multidecade undertaking, then American foreign policymakers must be prepared to stay engaged for the long haul. There are specific ways in which they can do this.

Recast Russian Democracy as a U.S. National Security Interest

Public critics of the Clinton administration often refer to democracy assistance as altruism or humanitarian aid. Privately, even some members of the Clinton administration hold this view, believing that the well-intentioned “do-gooders” of the American NGO community should be encouraged as long as their efforts do not interfere with the more important tasks of arms control or economic reform. In fact, if a focus on democracy threatens to interfere with traditional security matters, such as getting an agreement concerning nuclear weapons, then it slips from the agenda. This attitude and approach show that policymakers do not understand that *democracy promotion is defense by other means*. The consequences are that they miss or do not sufficiently support opportunities to enhance our security.

U.S. national security has benefited tremendously from the Russian transition from communism, however bumpy and incomplete. Just as we have an interest in seeing the continued dismantling of weapons of mass destruction, the United States has a security interest in seeing the continued consolidation of Russian democracy. Democracy promotion should no longer be understood exclusively as “assistance,” which can be stopped or started again as if it were a gift to Russia; like Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR), the weapons dismantlement program, it is “preventive defense.”⁴⁷ It is *as* necessary for ensuring U.S. national security as the dismantlement of weapons. Unfortunately, in the most recent U.S. budget, policymakers explain cuts in the democracy budget as a trade-off for more money to expand CTR. This is the government equivalent of robbing Peter to pay Paul. It is not good defense planning.⁴⁸

Ultimately, the greater the degree to which Russia becomes like-minded with democratic states, the less need for traditional forms of security. After all, it is not the fact of having nuclear weapons that causes concern, it is *who* has the nuclear weapons. No one in the U.S. government worries about Great Britain’s nuclear weapons. They worry about North Korea having nuclear weapons.⁴⁹

An important result of understanding democracy promotion as security by other means should be increased funding. Compared to CTR, democracy promotion is inexpensive, but to date it has been enormously underfunded. If policymakers in the United States continue to define the development of democratic institutions in formerly communist states as an important policy priority, and if they begin to understand it as part of our national security, then they must be sure that organizations assisting in the development of those institutions get the resources they need to better do their job.

Constructive Engagement with the Russian State and Society

In some countries, the best strategy for promoting democracy is to assist society and sanction the state. In other countries, the only course is to engage the state. Russia, especially under Putin, is at a place in which it makes sense to engage *both* the state and society but to target funding away from the state and toward society.

Because Putin wants good relations with the United States, American foreign policymakers have leverage to promote democratic ideas through state channels.

Rather than shower Putin with faint praise about his businesslike demeanor as a way to secure the Russian president's support for arms control treaties, U.S. policymakers need to stress that the preservation of democracy in Russia is a precondition for Russian integration into the Western community of states. The next president of the United States has an obligation to stress that the new Russian leader will have to tolerate democratic practices and norms, including criticism of his policies, if Russia wants to be part of the global community. Good relations and substantive integration with the international community cannot happen unless it is based on shared values. The ongoing war in Chechnya demonstrates that the gap in values between the West and Russia is still significant.

“The United States must become more engaged in defending and assisting those individuals and organizations within Russia fighting for democratic institutions and values.”

Frank and serious engagement with the new Russian president can help to close the gap.

It is not enough, however, to engage only Putin and his government. The United States must become more engaged in defending and assisting those individuals and organizations within Russia fighting for democratic institutions and values. Unlike the debate about the

market, the debate about democracy in Russia is not over.⁵⁰ As long as advocates for democracy within Russia remain active and engaged in the battle for Russian democracy, we must continue to support their struggle through the dissemination of ideas, educational opportunities, moral support, and technical assistance.

That means empowering democratic activists in Russia through high-level meetings with U.S. officials. President Ronald Reagan never went to the Soviet Union to meet with Soviet leaders without holding separate meetings with societal leaders. That practice must return. Independent journalists, human rights activists, civic organizers, business leaders, and trade union officials must be engaged, celebrated, and defended—especially when the Russian state abuses their rights.

A renewed strategy for defending Russian democracy also means increasing, not decreasing as currently planned, assistance programs designed to strengthen independent media, trade unions, political parties, civil society, and the rule of law. Heroes in the struggle against Soviet communism such as Sergei Kovalev have warned that Russian democrats are facing their most difficult test in the coming years.⁵¹ It makes no sense from a security or, equally important, from a moral standpoint to abandon these people now. Critics say that U.S. assistance to the agents of democratic change taint their image within Russia. We say let Russia's democrats make decisions about their image at home. Let them decide the level of engagement they desire to pursue with their Western counterparts. Based on the experience of the last ten years, engagement seems to be very important to Russian activists.

Less Assistance for Russia, More Assistance to Russians

Although the next American president should continue to work directly with President Putin, the bulk of U.S. assistance for democracy should be transferred through and to nongovernmental actors. The Clinton administration has moved gradually in that direction, but too many resources continue to be channeled into corrupt government entities. Instead, the main support should go for the continued development of political parties, civic organizations, business associations, and trade unions—and *not* state bureaucrats. It should be targeted at public interest law organizations and provide seed money for a Russian version of the Civil Liberties Union rather than as a source of money to Russian law enforcement officials. State reform in Russia will not be generated from within the state. Rather, state institutions will reform only when there are strong societal groups in place that can pressure them to do so. The focus should be on helping them develop the necessary strength and resources.

Direct assistance to Russian societal actors must be expanded with an emphasis on small-grants programs that give small amounts of money directly to Russian organizations. This is not a new idea. Organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, Internews, and the Eurasia Foundation have followed this model for years and provide excellent examples for others to emulate. Programs with large budgets often translate into waste, corruption, and big salaries for Washington-based consultants. Private foundations should also continue to play an active role and coordinate where possible with government supported efforts.

Increase the Role of Russian Experts

Because foreign assistance can distort the priorities and constrain the activities of domestic NGOs, special attention must be given to catering grant programs to fit Russian needs rather than American concerns. This works best when Western NGOs have representatives in the field and Russians on the staff.

The next administration can make sure that the U.S. government as a donor does not rely solely on Western practitioners. For developing and implementing assistance strategies, for example, it should encourage organizations to fund local experts who can better help target Russia's needs. Western practitioners such as civic organizers or political campaign workers tend to be unfamiliar with the organizational cultures and domestic political settings in which they find themselves working. This negatively affects the strategies that they propose to Russian organizations. They are handicapped in understanding how their suggestions compete with or are affected by the local context, including the legacy left by the Soviet state. So if there is to be continued engagement on the democracy front, then the local voices must be heard and empowered. In fact, the more interactive the partnership, the greater likelihood of impact; it helps Western NGOs make clear that the democratization process is an interactive one rather than one of direct importation. Eventually, Russians, not expatriates, should run or assume leadership roles in all Western-funded democratic assistance programs.

Less Focus on Institutional Design, More Focus on Civic Education

The era for influencing the design of Russian political institutions is over. Instead, the development of liberal economic and political institutions in Russia will be a long and difficult process, punctuated by still more short-term failures in the future. The era for disseminating democratic ideas within Russian society has just begun. This part of the American strategy needs much more attention.

Information and education are the best tools for assisting the development of Russian civil society. Above all else, educational programs for young Russians must be expanded so that some day there are as many Russians studying in American universities as there are Chinese. In 1998, for instance, the U.S. government funded only seventy undergraduates and seventy-seven graduate students to study in the U.S. These numbers should be increased ten fold. Mass civic education projects within Russia also should be expanded. While hundreds of business schools have sprouted throughout Russia, there are virtually *no* public policy schools and only a handful of organizations dedicated to the dissemination of materials on democracy. Because the concept of democracy in Russia has been discredited by a variety of harmful policies undertaken in its name, those seeking to resurrect democratic ideals must be fully supported.

Any program that increases the flow of information about entrepreneurial and civic ventures throughout Russia should be encouraged. The demonstration effect of a successful NGO in Samara will mean much more to a future NGO in Novosibirsk than an example from Chicago. More generally, programs that increase contacts between Russians and Americans also must be expanded. America's most effective tool in promoting markets and democracy is the example of the United States itself. The more Russians are exposed to this model, the better. This exposure can come from military-to-military programs, sister city programs, or internship programs in U.S. businesses and nongovernmental programs. For instance, Russian entrepreneurs who visit and intern in Western companies through programs organized by the Center for Citizens Initiatives learn firsthand how companies operate in a market environment. Russia still has a dearth of market oriented managers. Likewise, Russian party organizers visiting the United States during an election period have learned more in two weeks about campaign strategies, party organization, and NGO participation in the electoral process than they learned in years of academic study.

Pluralize Assistance

In the next phase of engagement, we should be focused on small amounts of support to many rather than large amounts to a few. In the early years of democracy assistance, the communists were considered the bad guys and the "democrats" were the good guys. Perhaps such a Manichean view of Russian politics was justified at the time. But the categorization is less meaningful as the democratization process unfolds. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation as well as many communist-leaning civic organizations and trade unions have demonstrated that they are willing to play by democratic rules. In other words, these groups

are no longer threats to Russian democracy. Consequently, Western assistance programs should stop the practice of boycotting the communist groups and instead be more inclusive of them in their programs. Likewise, funders must be less concerned about targeting only “the democrats.”⁵² Engagement of communist organizations does not mean that all groups should be given equal attention. In several respects, the withering of those organizations may create the opportunity space for other, new democratic actors to emerge. But active disengagement is no longer necessary and in fact politicizes assistance programs (such as election monitoring training seminars) that need to be nonpartisan to be effective.

Focus on Horizontal Links

A key idea still missing in Russian democratic culture is the need to build large coalitions to pursue specific objectives shared by many. This is not simply a box to be checked off a blueprint for democracy. Fostering horizontal links between nongovernmental organizations that put pressure on government is an important strategy for addressing the crisis of governance that has grown steadily worse in Russia over the years.

The oligarchic business community has coordinated to seek mutually advantageous outcomes, such as the election of Boris Yeltsin. But Russian political parties and NGOs have rarely cooperated collectively to achieve outcomes of mutual benefit, be it the election of environmentally friendly candidates to the Duma or the passage of new legislation protecting the legal rights of NGOs and political parties. Instead, most NGOs see their work as apolitical. Many of the Western funders actually encourage that perception and refuse to fund NGOs with overt political objectives. For their part, political parties have not tapped into NGO networks to mobilize voters or lobby for legislation. Particularly striking are the very weak connections between parties and trade unions. This is one ideational vacuum in which the American experience could be particularly useful.

Getting the Relationship to Economic Assistance Right

After a decade of postcommunist transition, one of the most surprising outcomes is the positive correlation between democracy and economic growth.⁵³ The countries in the region with the highest economic growth rates have also progressed the farthest in consolidating democracy. Consequently, democratic and economic assistance programs must be understood as mutually reinforcing and not antithetical to each other. Above all else, these programs must be better integrated.

The new focus on corruption provides an excellent area of potential integration. Corruption is usually coded by Western financial institutions as an economic issue or state capacity problem. Consequently, strategies for addressing corruption focus on deepening liberalization, thereby eliminating state rents or strengthening the law enforcement institutions of the state. Strengthening democratic actors can work as a complement to these other strategies. After all, corruption in the White House during the Nixon administration was exposed and addressed by independent, investigative journalists. Similarly, campaign finance corruption charges in the 1996 U.S. presidential campaign came to the fore because of a

strong and independent opposition party, that is, the Republican Party. Courts, laws, and police were part of the equation, but independent media and a robust party system have played a central role in reducing corruption in the United States. If stronger, they could play the same role in Russia. In other words, the promotion of independent media and political party development must be understood as a strategy for fighting corruption.

More generally, democratic assistance programs are often aimed at increasing the transparency of the state's activities, which in turn empowers societal actors to control and monitor the state. Greater attention should be devoted to increasing the monitoring capacities of NGOs with a special focus on the role of the internet. For example, tracking state expenditures and monitoring vote counts are two crucial arenas. Increased societal capacity to monitor the activities of the state in turn serves the legitimate business community and deters the parasitic economic elite who make money through state connections.

Comprehensively Evaluate the 1990s

Finally, a comprehensive and independent evaluation of all U.S. sponsored assistance programs is long overdue. Such an evaluation cannot be completed by USAID or even the General Accounting Office but should be undertaken by a consortium of practitioners and academics from Russia and the United States. We have suggested some lessons here that, if learned, have the promise of making continued engagement more meaningful. But every aspect of engagement should be examined, and the lessons enforced.

Conclusion: Humility for the Long Haul

Russia is midstream in a radical transformation of its society, economy, and polity, rivaled in modern history only by the French, Bolshevik, or Chinese revolutions in scope and consequence. Whether talking about privatization, party building, or health care reform, external actors are peripheral players in this drama of change. Western assistance programs to Russia and assessments of those programs, therefore, must remain humble regarding expectations and accomplishments.

It is misleading and inaccurate for Western advisers to take credit for developments inside Russia such as privatizing 100,000 enterprises. Obviously, Russians privatized those enterprises. Measuring the real role played by outsiders is difficult. Would only 90,000 enterprises have been privatized had Western advisers not been present? Similarly, it is misleading to blame Western programs for the lack of democracy in Russia. Russians are ultimately responsible for both successes and failures in the development of democracy. Western organizations have played and can play a role, but they, like the Russian activists, are deeply constrained by powerful structural, historical, institutional, and political factors. Strategies that take those constraints into account tend to be better designed and have a greater impact.

The history of reform in Russia so far suggests that the constraints are more consequential than we first assumed a decade ago. Expectations should accord-

ingly remain low, and the impulse to claim credit for successes must be checked.⁵⁴ To sustain Russian societal actors dedicated to building these institutions over the long haul, the providers of assistance must have long-term objectives, patience, and humility. When compared with America's own drawn-out experience with democratization, eight years of experimenting with democracy in Russia is a very short time. If we are serious about supporting Russian democratic consolidation we must understand that it will take an extended commitment.

NOTES

1. Of course, even small states can threaten large states if the regime in place gives them the ideological motivation to do so. American concern with North Korea is a good example. By any measure, North Korea could not be considered a world power. Yet, the United States appears ready to spend \$60 billion on national missile defense to defend against this tiny country. Obviously, much bigger powers such as Japan, Germany, England, or France, which are like-minded, do not pose the same threats to the United States even though their power capabilities are much greater than North Korea.

2. The West was worried about communism well before the Soviet Union became a superpower. After all, Western powers invaded Russia to try to repel the Bolshevik revolution.

3. In contrast, there have been other periods in which the both the norms of behavior between states and the internal organization of states more closely correlated. See Edward Gulik, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955); Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age* (New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1964); and Robert Jervis, "From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation," *World Politics* 38, no. 1 (October 1985).

4. Two current studies in progress date the end of the cold war as correlating with the end of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe in 1989. Findings are forthcoming from "End of the Cold War" projects at the Mershon Center, Ohio State University, and at the Watson Institute, Brown University, both funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

5. Sarah E. Mendelson, *Changing Course: Ideas, Politics and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 5, 126.

6. For alternative arguments, see Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," *International Security* 16 (Winter 1991/92): 74–118; William Wohlforth and Stephen Brooks, "Globalization and the End of the Cold War," paper presented at the Watson Institute Research Workshop on "The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War," April 2000. Note also that realists posit that war is the only event that can change the balance of power in the international system in an abrupt way. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 203.

7. For elaboration, see Michael McFaul, "Lessons from Russia's Protracted Transition from Communist Rule," *Political Science Quarterly* 114, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 103–30. The incomplete nature of the political and social transition is of course not unique to Russia. See Sarah E. Mendelson and John K. Glenn, *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Paper Series, February 2000).

8. Reagan, "Address to Members of the British Parliament," in *Administration of Ronald Reagan, 1982* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1983), 743.

9. As quoted in Angela Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 223.

10. Russia, for example, is a member of the G-8, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe. However flawed, it has a formal relationship with NATO through the Permanent Joint Council. For discussion, see James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, "Core and Periphery

in Post-Cold War Europe,” manuscript, 2000; and Michael McFaul “The Precarious Peace. Domestic Politics in the Making of Russian Foreign Policy,” *International Security* 22, no. 3 (Winter 1997/98): 5–35.

11. By 1999, only six countries still expressed a willingness to participate in the CIS Collective Security. See Martha Brill Olcott, Anders Aslund, and Sherman Garnett, *Getting It Wrong: Regional Cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

12. The classic example is the “alliance” between Belarus and Russia. This alliance has more to do with electoral politics in Russia than Russian security concerns in Europe. See “Russia and Belarus Will Counter NATO Plans,” *Washington Post*, 17 October 1998, A14.

13. “Dance of Giants: Despite warming ties, China and Russia remain less than partners,” *Asiaweek*, 9 May 1997.

14. On the rhetoric of the Russian “muscular” foreign-policy community versus the reality of Russian capabilities, see Sherman Garnett “Russia’s Illusory Ambitions,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 2 (1997): 61–76.

15. Admittedly, the causal relationship between domestic democratic regimes and international peace is still poorly understood. For more on this, see Michael Brown, Sean Lynn-Jones, and Stephen Miller, eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996); and Kurt Taylor Gaubatz, “Kant, Democracy, and History,” *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 4 (October 1996): 136–50.

16. Bruce Russett, “Why Democratic Peace,” in *Debating the Democratic Peace*, Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller, eds., 82–115.

17. Conversely, leaders in authoritarian regimes can pursue belligerent foreign policies that go against the preferences of society more easily than their counterparts in democratic states. See Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, University Press, 1978).

18. For the Kant quotation, see Michael Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs,” in *Debating the Democratic Peace*, Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller, eds., 24–25. Frivolous or unwinnable wars rarely will be fought. Michael Doyle asserts that “liberal wars are only fought for popular, liberal purposes,” 25.

19. Failure to make the necessary connection between domestic-level and international-level variables is often the source for much of the misunderstanding surrounding the democratic peace thesis. While scholars such as Doyle have recognized this critical interdependence between these two set of variables, others—especially policymakers—often leave out one side or the other in championing the virtues of the democratic peace.

20. Political scientist James Fearon has taken this argument one step further by arguing that commitments from democratic governments tend to be more credible than those from authoritarian regimes, because policymakers care more about how their audiences, that is their constituents, respond to them. Simply put, reputation matters more for those who have to face reelection. See James Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 1 (February 1997): 68–90.

21. On the security dilemma, see Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30 (1978): 186–214.

22. Randall Calvert, “Rational Actors, Equilibrium, and Social Institutions,” in *Explaining Social Institutions*, Jack Knight and Itai Sened, eds. (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1995), 57–94.

23. The phrase, “pacific union” comes from Kant (as quoted in Russett, “The Fact of the Democratic Peace,” 59), while “international society” comes from Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: McMillan, 1997).

24. International institutionalists argue that these institutions actually make the peace. The evidence for this proposition, however, is mixed. See Russett, “Why Democratic Peace?” 84–85.

25. Vladimir Putin, *First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000).

26. On the use of negative advertising in the 1996 Russian presidential elections, see Michael McFaul, *Russia's 1996 Presidential Election: The End of Polarized Politics* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1997).

27. Authors' interviews with a wide variety of activists, December 1999 and March 2000.

28. On the state's treatment of human rights and registration problems see, "On the Violations Committed In the Course of Registration and Re-Registration of Public Associations in the Russian Federation in 1999," prepared by the Information Center of the Human Rights Movement and the Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights," Moscow, 15 February 2000. See also press conference with Sergei Kovalev, 18 April 2000, distributed by the Federal News Service.

29. As cited in "On the Violations Committed In the Course of Registration," 15. The interview was published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 8 July 1999, 9.

30. The 21 March 2000 letter was signed by Bill Pfeiffer, executive director, Sacred Earth Network; Eliza K. Klose, executive director, Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia; Thomas Jandl, director, Bellona USA; David Gordon, director of programs, Pacific Environment and Resources Center; Michael Mariotte, executive director, Nuclear Information and Resource Service; Mark Dubois and Shalini Ramanathan, international coordinators, Earth Day 2000 Network.

31. For recent statements, see Secretary of State Madeline Albright's address to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 16 September 1999 and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott's address to Harvard University, 1 October 1999. An elaboration of democracy as a national security interest can be found in Strobe Talbott, "Spreading Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (November/December 1996): 47-63.

32. For a recent example, see Strobe Talbott's Testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, 4 April 2000.

33. Cuts for democracy assistance have occurred in a more general climate of decline in U.S. foreign assistance. USAID budgets have been cut from \$14.1 billion in 1993 to \$12.6 billion in 2000, making the United States the largest industrialized nation with the smallest foreign assistance budget.

34. Figures calculated from U.S. Government Assistance to the Cooperative Activities with the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union: FY 1998 Annual Report, prepared by the Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS (Washington: U.S. State Department, January 1999); and the websites of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Arguments that policymakers offer for low amounts of assistance in the early years after the collapse of the Soviet Union (that there was little capacity to absorb the funds or the work of Western groups) are correct but do not explain later democracy assistance figures, which went down precisely as capacity increased. They also do not explain why so much more was allocated to market reform at a time when capacity in the economic sector was equally limited. Additionally, the argument advanced that NGOs engaged in democracy assistance *cost* less than the corporations under contract for economic assistance (and therefore were paid more) reflects not the marketplace but that the building of democratic institutions was a lower priority of U.S. policymakers.

35. Gary Cox, *Making Votes Count* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Rein Taagepera and Matthew Shugart, *Seats and Votes* (New Haven: CT: Yale University Press, 1989); Arend Liphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); and the discussion by Guy Lardeyret, Quentin Quade and Arend Liphart, "PR vs. Plurality Elections," *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 30-48.

36. Other experts from around the world provided written commentaries on the different drafts of the Russian electoral law. It should be noted that NDI never advocated a particular system and actually provided contradictory recommendations from Western experts.

37. For assessments see Mendelson and Glenn, *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strate-*

gies; Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999); Nancy Lubin, "U.S. Assistance to the NIS," in *The International Dimension of Post-Communist Transitions in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, Karen Dawisha, ed. (Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe, 1997), 350–78; Thomas Carothers, *Assessing Democracy Assistance: The Case of Romania* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996); Mark S. Johnson, "An Evaluation of Strengthening Russian Democracy through Civic Education," an assessment prepared for the National Endowment for Democracy, September 1998; Sarah Henderson, "Importing Civil Society: Foreign Aid and the Women's Movement in Russia," *Demokratizatsiya* 8, no. 1 (winter 2000): 65–82; Matthew Lantz, "The Democratic Presumption: An Assessment of Democratization in Russia, 1994–1998," Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, Harvard University, September 1998.

38. This statement is based on McFaul's experience working on democratic assistance programs in Russia.

39. For a discussion, see Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1999). See also Committee on Armed Services, U.S. House of Representatives, "Preventing Chaos in the FSU: The Debate On Providing Aid," 17 January 1992; Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, "U.S. Policy Toward CIS," 21 January 1992.

40. On this story, see Michael McFaul, "Institutional Design, Uncertainty, and Path Dependency during Transitions: Cases from Russia," *Constitutional Political Economy* 10, no. 1 (March 1999): 27–52.

41. Many scholars have argued that this is an important quality indicating institutionalization. For a discussion, see Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52 (1998): 887–917.

42. On transnational advocacy networks, see Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). On networks in the Russian context, see Sarah E. Mendelson, "Democracy Promotion and Russia: Revealing the Power and Limits of Transnational Networks," manuscript, May 2000.

43. See for example, "Russia's Economic and Political Transformation: Some Results of USAID Support to Date," USAID Report, Spring 1995.

44. On some guidelines for qualitative evaluation, see Mendelson and Glenn, *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies*.

45. This phenomenon is not unique to Russia. See Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

46. See the case studies that were completed as part of a Carnegie Corporation-funded project, "Evaluating Democracy Assistance and Conflict Reduction in Post-Communist States," available on the internet at <http://www.ceip.org/programs/democr/NGOs/index.html>.

47. On preventive defense see, William Perry, "Defense in an Age of Hope," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (November/December 1996): 64–79; and Carter and Perry, *Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America*.

48. Interconnections between security programs and democracy promotion must be identified and then amplified. For example, many programs funded by CTR involve building new factories to dismantle weapons. Often, before these new factories are built, a public forum is held—a town meeting or a referendum. These are important acts of public politics. American scientists have informally joined with local environmental NGOs in explaining what they are doing in these public forums but these relations should be more formal and less random. Similarly, military-to-military contact programs could be greatly enhanced if those directing the programs in the Pentagon had a better sense of how their work fit into and complimented democracy assistance.

49. This dynamic is elaborated in Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of

It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (1992): 391–425.

50. For a recent iteration of the debate over economic assistance, see George Soros, "Who Lost Russia?" *New York Review of Books*, 13 April 2000.

51. Sergei Kovalev, "Putin's War," *New York Review of Books*, 10 February 2000.

52. In the United States, NGOs and donors have feared the Congressional response of newspaper headlines claiming assistance "helped" communists or nationalists.

53. See Jean-Jacques Dethier, Hafez Ghanem, and Edda Zoli, "Does Democracy Facilitate the Economic Transition? An Empirical Study of Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union," unpublished manuscript, World Bank, June 1999; and chapter five of the *Transition Report 1999: Ten Years of Transition* (London: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1999). This finding is surprising because at the beginning of the decade, most theorists and practitioners believed that the transition to the market and the transition to democracy were incompatible objectives. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

54. An important factor in managing this tendency for claiming credit would be to develop a public education campaign in the United States on what reasonable expectations for the pace and scope of change in Russia ought to be.