

CENTRAL ASIA: A NEW GREAT GAME?

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FOREWORD

In January 1996, the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a conference on "Asian Security to the Year 2000." One focus of the conferees was the growing relevance of events in Central Asia.

Perhaps nowhere on the continent was the Cold War transformation in the security environment more dramatic than in Central Asia. There the sudden retraction of Soviet power and decline in superpower competition was rapidly followed by the creation of new states, whose prospects for legitimacy, development, and independent survival were, at best, uncertain.

The half-decade that has followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union has not been sufficient time for any of the vast challenges facing Central Asia to have been addressed definitively. Nor can we be confident that a stable regional "system" has coalesced. Yet, the past 5 years have produced an emerging pattern of relations amenable to tentative analysis.

That is the task Lieutenant Colonel Dianne Smith of SSI undertook for the Asian Security conference. In this monograph, she details the complex problems facing the region and then turns her attention to Central Asia's evolving security structure. By involving the "Great Game" analogy, she takes the perspective that, for this part of the continent, it is the nations surrounding the region that will play the primary role in shaping its future (although the new Central Asian nations are participants, not pawns, in this struggle for influence).

Colonel Smith's analysis focuses on the interests and actions of five of those surrounding nations: Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia, and China. Each has significant interests in Central Asia, and each, thus far, has tempered, to some degree, its actions to advance those interests in recognition of the competing objectives of the others. For the United States, a power vacuum in Central Asia seems a remote concern at first blush. Colonel Smith's review makes clear, however, that the paramount American stake lies in helping to ensure that Central Asia does not become a "game gone bad" that draws the great Asian powers into conflict. Her survey concludes with policy recommendations toward that end.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DIANNE L. SMITH joined the Strategic Studies Institute in August 1995. Prior to that she was Team Chief for Central Asia, National Military Intelligence Collection Center, Defense Intelligence Agency. A Military Intelligence officer and Russian Foreign Area Officer, her previous assignments include U.S. Army Exchange Officer to the United Kingdom Defense Intelligence and Security School, Ashford, Kent, United Kingdom; Chief of Strategic Intelligence Branch, Intelligence Division, Allied Forces Central Europe, Brunssum, Netherlands; Counterintelligence Officer, Combined Field Army (ROK-US), Uijongbu, Korea; and Assistant Professor of Russian History at the U.S. Military Academy. Her recent works include "Muscovite Logistics, 1475-1598" and "From Chattanooga to Durham Station, the Influence of Logistics Upon Sherman's Strategy." She holds a B.A. in history and international relations from the University of Nebraska and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Russian history from the University of California at Davis. She is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

SUMMARY

A new "Great Game" is being played out in Central Asia, one in which powers on the periphery compete for influence, but also one in which the Central Asian states themselves are active players. Their own struggle for power can influence immediate neighbors Russia, China, and Iran, and even beyond into the Indian subcontinent.

Serious political, economic, ethnic, religious, and social challenges confront the five Central Asian states. How each state is able to resolve these problems will determine its ability to emerge as a viable force in the regional struggle for influence.

Instability might seem to provide opportunities for states such as Iran or China, but the risks that such instability would ricochet back on them are too great. Thus, Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia, and China each seek, in their own way, to promote stability within Central Asia while expanding their own regional influence.

Threats to Central Asia.

The greatest threats to Central Asia are internal. The painstaking process of nation building, the legitimacy crisis, rapid social and economic transformation, environmental degradation, decolonization, ethnic diversity, and border disputes are among the sources of instability. The core issues are the ethnic composition of each state and the ability of each republic to mold a "nation" within the artificial boundaries inherited from the Soviet empire. Democracy has been sacrificed at the altar of stability in all five republics. The continuing civil war in Tajikistan remains the most crucial inter-regional security threat, while the civil war in Afghanistan remains the most immediate extra-regional threat.

Iran.

Iran has vital interests in the maintenance of peace and stability within the region, but its international isolation and pariah status prevent direct action in support of its genuine security concerns. As a contiguous state with shared ethnic minorities, Iran has the most to lose if domestic instability should cause the implosion of Central Asia, but it also has the least ability to shape events.

Pakistan.

Pakistan's security policy, long dominated by a fear of India and the search for a superpower patron to counter that

threat, now must confront threatened spillover from civil wars in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Islamabad's hopes that the new states of Central Asia would provide it with strategic depth, Islamic allies, and collective security partners in its struggle with India have been dashed. Geographical constraints and concerted efforts by non-Islamic neighbors, especially Russia and China, have stymied her efforts to become a major player in Central Asia. But, through bilateral ties and agencies such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Pakistan can still provide technical and economic assistance to the Central Asian states' efforts to resolve the issues threatening their domestic stability.

India.

The breakup of the Soviet Union and the loss of its superpower patron have created serious security concerns for India. India fears that Central Asian border realignment, ethnic disputes, and resurgent Islam or civil war would directly affect the territorial integrity of Afghanistan, which, in domino effect, would influence Pakistan, Iran, and Kashmir. To promote stability in Central Asia, India has focused its efforts on bilateral technical assistance and economic programs, building upon existing links dating back to the Soviet era. The fact that India does not border Central Asia (Pakistan and Afghanistan lie between) has hampered development, as has a shortage of investment capital. India must rely on a non-Islamic proxy, Russia or China, to provide regional security.

Russia.

Having earlier dismissed Central Asia as a burden gotten rid of, Moscow then sought to bring Central Asia, if not back into the empire, then, at the very least, back into the fold. Russia seeks to prevent other states from achieving regional hegemony, protect and expand its own economic interests, protect ethnic Russians living in the region, and stop the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. The region remains militarily tied to Russia through the Commonwealth of Independent States and the 1992 Tashkent Treaty, which created a formal collective security agreement. Russia supplies around 25,000 peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan and provides border troops along the CIS' external borders. More recently Moscow has pushed harder for closer economic and political integration and a greater share of the profit from developing energy deals. The Central Asian states are landlocked; almost all transportation and pipeline routes abroad must pass through Russia. But, Russia is hampered by a lack of funds to execute many of the bilateral agreements signed, and calls by ultra-nationalists for a return to the Soviet Union cause fear in Central Asia and drive the republics to seek

alternatives to renewed Russian hegemony.

China.

China's security position in Asia has improved with the fall of its superpower rival, the Soviet Union, but the advent of five unstable, nominally-Islamic neighbors, the war in Tajikistan, and growing unrest in the Fergana valley (which leads into China's ethnically Muslim province, Xinjiang) all support a nightmare scenario in which unrest in Central Asia spills over into China. Yet, China also hopes to use Central Asian markets as a catalyst to fuel a new prosperity zone in Xinjiang, revive the Silk Route for international trade, and gain access to Central Asian energy resources.

Implications for U.S. Policy.

America has no vital interests in, nor will it assume responsibility for, Central Asia's security. The primary focus will be damage control--to prevent existing problems from escalating into crises that might engage the other Asian powers. This is best achieved through development of free market democracies in Central Asia, for economic dislocation breeds ethnic, religious, and political extremism. A strong, vibrant economy is a prerequisite for political stability.

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This new "great game" in the heart of Asia is unfolding not so much among the old colonial powers as among their former minions, many of whom are themselves just emerging from colonial domination and seeking to define their roles in their regions and the world.¹

--Boris Rumer

Introduction.

Is there a new "Great Game" being played out in Central Asia? Boris Rumer argues that the successor states to the Russian and British empires have renewed the struggle for hegemony in the center of the Asian continent. As the world shifts from a bipolar to a multipolar focus, the nations of Asia search for new trans-regional security arrangements. More specifically, the breakup of the Soviet Union and the creation of five Central Asian republics² (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan), have complicated the security relations of the Asian states. (See Figure 1.) But, this new struggle is not a repeat of the 19th century "Great Game," by which the Central Asian states are but pawns of great powers as *they* jockey for power and position. Instead, the Central Asian states themselves are active players in this struggle for power, in a unique geo-strategic position to influence immediate neighbors Russia, China, and Iran, and even beyond into the Indian subcontinent. Once considered a backwater of little importance during the Soviet era, Central Asia could play a pivotal role in Asian politics in the next decade.

Enlargement and Engagement set domestic political stability, regional peace, and the maturation of market economies in the five Central Asian states as policy goals of the United States. The key to Asian, especially Central Asian, regional security is economic. A strong, vibrant market economy is a prerequisite for political stability and the growth of democracy. Political stability, however, is itself a key element to economic development; peace in the region, especially in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir, must be gained before that economic takeoff can occur.

Serious political, economic, ethnic, religious, and social challenges confront the five new Central Asian states in this quest for regional security. How each state is able to confront and resolve these problems will determine its ability to emerge

as a viable force in this struggle for influence, in this new



Figure 1. Central Asia.

"Great Game." Instability might seem to provide opportunities for states such as Iran or China to expand their influence, but the risks that such instability would ricochet back on them are too great. Thus, Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia and China each seek, in their own way, to promote stability within Central Asia while expanding their own regional influence.

Implications for American security from this struggle derive from the U.S. desire to prevent existing problems within Central Asia from escalating into crises that might engage Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia or China.³ Therefore, we must first identify those centrifugal forces threatening Central Asia, then review each of these states in turn, to analyze their behavior, identify their regional objectives and state policies in relation to Central Asia, and evaluate the impact of Central Asia upon their own security. Doing so offers a better perspective on our own strategic interests in post-Cold War Asia.

Threats to Central Asia.

The greatest threats to Central Asian security are internal. The painstaking process of nation-building, the legitimacy crisis, rapid social and economic transformation, decolonization, ethnic diversity, border disputes, and a catalogue of other issues are all sources of instability in the post-Soviet republics.⁴

The core issue is the ethnic composition of each state. Since no nation-states existed in the centuries before Russian conquest, substantial transmigration of ethnic groups characterized the region. As a result, major concentrations of ethnic minorities reside within countries other than their titular⁵ nation, to include: one million Uzbeks in the Khojent province of Tajikistan, half a million in the Osh area of the Fergana valley in Kyrgyzstan, and 280,000 in the Chimkent region of Kazakhstan; one to two million Tajiks in Samarkand and Bukhara, Uzbekistan; nearly a million Kazakhs in Uzbekistan; and roughly eight million (a number declining daily due to emigration) Russians, Ukrainians, and Germans in the northern part of Kazakhstan.⁶ The percentage of the titular nationality (and the ruling elite) in each republic may be less than half.⁷ Ethnic populations are also split by international boundaries; for example, there are more ethnic Tajiks in Afghanistan than in Tajikistan itself.⁸

These titular nationalities are caught outside their home republic because artificial boundaries, established during the Stalinist era, purposefully cut across nationalities, to "divide and conquer."⁹ Central authorities meant these boundaries as internal administrative lines of demarcation--no one dreamed the Soviet Socialist Republics would ever become actual states. This ethnic mix was further complicated when the area became a wartime dumping ground for exiled nationalities, such as Volga Germans, as well as the relocation of war industries during the early 1940s, the Virgin Land program of the 1950s, and Moscow's systematic immigration of ethnic Slavs (to dilute the titular nationality) after Stalin's death.

All five republics have suffered sharp economic dislocation since gaining independence. They were suddenly cut off from the centralized command economy that directed their resource allocation, long-range planning, investment funding, and management. Exploitation of rich natural energy and mineral resources has been stalled; no longer a part of the Soviet Union, the five republics are all landlocked, and goods must transit through a second nation via transportation networks that do not yet exist (other than through Russia). Economic reform and movement toward a market economy have been uneven, as states fear that further economic dislocation will produce massive internal unrest and political instability. The lack of modern financial

systems, transportation networks, banking institutions, and enforceable legal systems all hamper foreign investment. Migration of ethnic Slavs to Russia has cost the republics a large cadre of skilled technicians and managers; migration of ethnic Germans has cost the republics the group most responsible for cultivated agriculture. Many local nationalities are a generation or two from being nomads or herdsman. At the same time, overpopulation pressures from large Central Asian families (often having five to six times the birth rate of urbanized Slavic states) have produced an underclass of poor un- or under-employed, less-educated workers whose dissatisfaction in the 1980s often provoked the riots leading up to independence. Ethnic discrimination during the Soviet era produced few senior, local leaders in the military, industrial, legal, diplomatic, or managerial fields from the Central Asian republics.

Soviet degradation of the environment created massive economic distortions and mammoth health problems that have resulted in rival demands for finite state funds. The question is whether or not states will use their limited resources to rectify current problems or invest in the future. Huge tracts of land were used to test Soviet weapons of mass destruction--with little regard for the local nationalities living downwind, many of whom now suffer disproportionate cancer rates.¹⁰ Under the Soviet economic system, cotton monoculture produced 90 percent of the USSR's cotton requirements and 17 percent of the total world cotton production. Cotton usurped practically all grain crops and has taken over land used previously for fruits and vegetables. As a result, not only does the once agricultural heartland suffer from an insufficiency of vegetables, wheat, meat, and milk, but the region is beset with ecological disaster created by defoliants, airborne salts, industrial pollution, over-fertilization, water diversion schemes (the Aral Sea), and an exhausted water supply.¹¹ Irrigation, the water distribution system, and control of waterways all threaten to become major issues in the next decade.¹²

Efforts to resolve economic ills through inter-republican or regional associations have not flourished. In 1993, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan formed a customs union, but a lack of resources and Russian opposition to any program of which it is not a part have hampered full implementation. Similarly, Russia (unsuccessfully) opposed Central Asian membership in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), founded by Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan in 1992.¹³ Turkmenistan's reluctance to enter into any multilateral regional agreement also has stifled attempts to find common solutions to common problems.

Democracy has been sacrificed on the altar of stability in all five republics. None of the Central Asian Communist leaders wanted independence; indeed, most favored the 1991 coup attempt

in Moscow.¹⁴ Early constitutional efforts lacked real checks and balances or public commitment to their survival. When legislatures attempted to play a genuine role in the decision making process, the executive branch progressively usurped their power, and in the case of Kyrgyzstan (September 1994) and Kazakhstan (March 1995) the presidents dissolved them outright. Authorities repressed organized opposition political parties, especially those Islamic in nature.

The continuing civil war in Tajikistan remains the most crucial threat to inter-regional security. Initially portrayed as the result of radical Islamic fundamentalism, the civil war is, in reality, less about religion or ideology and more about economic, linguistic, ethnic, clan, and regional rivalries for access to political and economic spoils.¹⁵ Russian force of arms has failed to end the conflict, even with token units contributed to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Peacekeeping force by Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. However, the war justifies the stationing of nearly 25,000 Russian forces in the area (9,000 peacekeepers and 16,000 border guards) and affords excessive Russian influence on the Tajik government.

The ongoing civil war in Afghanistan remains the most immediate extra-regional threat to security. Afghanistan faces the real prospect of disintegration if the power struggle between northern ethnic groups and the Pashtun leadership degenerates into a conflict along ethnic lines. Such a split might eventually draw in Afghanistan's neighbors, notably Iran, Pakistan, and the Central Asian republics (relatively unstable themselves), which have close ethnic-religious ties across the border.¹⁶ An Islamic regime in Kabul could encourage the religious resurgence already growing across the border in Central Asia.¹⁷

Political alignments within Central Asia could be profoundly affected by events in Afghanistan. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan have large numbers of ethnic kinsmen across the border. The disintegration of state power occurring in Afghanistan could result in a new regional realignment; northern Afghanistan nationalities might forge new links with their ethnic kinsmen across the Amu Darya, rather than being subordinate to a Pushtun-dominated government in Kabul.

The current growth of Islam is both a cause and a result of secular leaders' mistrust. Central Asian leaders have exaggerated the incursion of radical Islamic fundamentalism and pushed it forward as the new "threat" to justify their suppression of internal dissent. They overstate Central Asian adherence to the religious elements of Islam and the potential of Islamic states to export their revolution. Such repression can backfire, as religious martyrdom often generates new converts even as the old ones are driven underground. True, there has been an explosion of

mosque-building and Koran distribution (funded externally, especially by the Saudis), but at this stage much of the interest has been in "folk Islam"--the rituals of daily life and death--and in rediscovering a lost cultural identity, rather than a purely religious conviction. Attempts to limit or control Islam and nip "fundamentalism" in the bud without simultaneous dramatic attempts to reverse the economic and social decline hasten the growth of more strictly observed Islam.¹⁸ Martha Olcott argues that secular leaders themselves are responsible for Islam's growth:

What none of Central Asia's leaders seem to understand is that Islam is not the agent of instability and the competing power they take it to be, but that its spread is instead a response to their own inability to control their economies, their societies and their states.¹⁹

Whether Islam itself is an element of instability is debatable, but central authorities' fears--provoking arrest, imprisonment, and exile--fuel the flames of intolerance and authoritarianism that surely do destabilize the region.

These centrifugal forces (and the threatened spillover if they should explode into ethnic, religious, and social conflict) alarm the region's Asian neighbors. Each seeks to promote stability within all the Central Asian states through a variety of bilateral and multilateral means. Geographic, political, financial, religious, and ethnic factors affect the ability of each to achieve its security goals and promote its hegemonic aspirations.

Iran.

Iran has vital interests in the maintenance of peace and stability within the region, but its international isolation and pariah status prevent direct action in support of its genuine security concerns. Fears of a tide of refugees fleeing southward from civil war, or of revolutionary slogans hitting a chord with Iran's own ethnic minorities, can only be met by economic investment and reliance on proxy allies (e.g., Russia). Iran's strategy is to use Central Asian markets to reconstruct its own war-ravaged and constricted economy, project itself as a redeemer of Islamic values against all non-Shi'ite challengers (especially Saudi Arabia and Turkey), and act as a key player in the game of petro politics in the international arena.

The volatile security environment presents direct military problems for Iran, but Teheran is prohibited from seeking direct military solutions. Almost overnight Iran went from having one superpower neighbor, the Soviet Union, to eight fractious

neighbors in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Soviet Army was replaced by a CIS military organization that exists mostly on paper. Each state formed small national forces from existing Soviet units. Several years passed until treaties re-established a professional border guard system, run by Russia. Civil war in Georgia and Tajikistan and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the Caucasus destabilized the region. At the same time Iran's international political isolation prohibits establishing direct military ties or security agreements with her Central Asian neighbors. Going it alone, Iran reorganized its armed forces, modernized its military equipment through foreign arms sales, developed a chemical warfare capability, and initiated an R&D program to produce surface-to-surface missiles capable of reaching throughout Central Asia. Robert Gates, then Director of Central Intelligence, testified to Congress that Iran could have a nuclear capability by the end of the century.²⁰ Yet, Iran cannot use these forces in Central Asia. Any Iranian military move in the region would provoke an immediate response from both the Russian Federation and the United States. Thus, Iran must rely upon others to maintain peace and stability in the region. Russia is the key to her long-term interests, and nothing must jeopardize that relationship.

Iran's cultural and religious influence upon Central Asia will also be limited. Tajikistan's ongoing civil war hinders Teheran's ties with that country, to which it is related by language (Farsi) and ethnicity (Persian), but with which it does not share a border. Plus, any cultural initiative on the part of Iran tends to be interpreted politically.²¹ Its closest ties are with neighboring Turkmenistan (Turkic and Sunni), but they focus on transit and energy issues. When Iran first recognized the newly independent republics, many feared that Iran would try to export its own revolutionary political philosophy and religious dogma. Perceived threats of Islamic fundamentalism sweeping across Central Asia have proven grossly over-exaggerated, as has talk of Central Asia's adoption of an "Iranian model." After seven decades of a "Soviet model," the Central Asians are reluctant to adopt any ideological pattern for their development; they do not want an Iranian "big brother" any more than they want a new Russian "big brother." Iran offers specific geographical and transportation advantages the Central Asian governments hope to exploit, but they want to rely on their own institutional heritage or that of more successful economic models in the West or Far East.

Barred from military, cultural, or religious persuasion, Iran seeks to increase its regional influence by focusing attention on *its* main appeal to the Central Asian republics: a land corridor to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Teheran has started construction on several free-trade zones along its northern border. A railway line from its Persian Gulf port of

Bandar Abbas to join the national railway network at Bafq has been completed, as has an extension from Mashhad to Sarakhs, completing the link between Iran and Turkmenistan (and the old Soviet rail system). Additionally, a private-sector Iranian company is planning a 1,100 mile railway from the new port of Chah Bahar direct to Sarakhs.²² Funding and a construction schedule, however, remain unresolved.

Iran also offers Central Asians an alternative means to avoid Russian efforts to force their way into future Central Asian energy projects. In September 1995, Iran and Turkmenistan began discussions on the construction of a \$215 million pipeline to connect the gas field at Korpedzhe to Iranian outlets, reconstruction of the Turkmen-Bashi gas refinery, and operation of the Siri refinery. Iran is to provide 80 percent of the financing, and is prepared to buy annually up to eight billion cubic meters of Turkmen gas after the pipeline is in operation.²³

The greatest stumbling blocks to these endeavors are political and financial. First, the main players in the oil and natural gas bonanza sweepstakes are American companies, which cannot or will not invest in pipeline schemes that cross Iranian territory. Secondly, Iran will always subordinate its relations with Central Asia to those with Russia. Iran still views Iraq as its greatest regional threat. Teheran will do nothing (in Central Asia or the Caucasus) to alienate Russia as a potential ally in this struggle.²⁴ Moscow supplies Iran with arms and suppressed Baku's interest in reuniting with Iran's Azeri population in return for a nonaggressive policy in Central Asia.²⁵ Finally, the investment funds needed within Central Asia are too great for any one state to provide.

Thus, Iran uses multinational organizations to defuse anti-Iranian antagonism and share the massive burden of investment. Iran supported the Central Asian states' entry into the resurrected ECO, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and the Organization of Caspian Sea Littoral States (also known as the Caspian Sea Cooperation Zone). In the case of the ECO, for example, Iran works with Turkey and Pakistan, rivals for influence within Central Asia, to provide a framework for supporting economic change, to solicit aid and coordinate pooling of investment funds, and to divide up responsibility for the massive effort needed to modernize Central Asia. At its 1992 summit, the ECO decided that Turkey would focus on education, administration and industrial management; Pakistan on transport, communications, banking and services; and Iran on oil and mineral resources.²⁶

As a contiguous state with shared ethnic minorities, Iran has the most to lose if domestic instability should cause the implosion of Central Asia. But, it also has the least ability to

shape those events. An international pariah with a weakened economy, any reaction on Iran's part would be met with an immediate American response.

Thus, the current regime has deferred exporting Iran's revolutionary rhetoric or Shi'ite faith, and focused on economic and technical assistance, especially in the field of energy resources. Iran offers Central Asia the most direct route to the sea, although political constraints hamper its exploitation. But Turkmenistan, and perhaps other Central Asian states, may refocus their attention southward to avoid the greater threat of integration from Russia.

Pakistan.

Two themes have dominated Pakistani policy since independence: fear of India (harkening back to three wars, the last in 1971 which cleaved off Bangladesh) and the search for a superpower patron to counter that threat. Today a third theme exists: threatened spillover from the civil wars in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. For the last three decades America served as that patron,²⁷ but this relationship faltered with the fallout from Pakistan's nuclear program and the Pressler Amendment²⁸ (which ended all U.S. economic and military aid to Pakistan) and American attempts to improve relations with India. Moscow's withdrawal from Afghanistan and the breakup of the Soviet Union had already weakened Pakistan's importance to the United States. Thus, Pakistan today must find another patron, form a new multilateral security arrangement, or foster bilateral ties with potential regional allies.

Pakistan has failed to find a new patron or establish new security agreements. China's sale of sensitive nuclear weapons-related equipment to Pakistan last year reflects a shift of traditional power relationships in South Asia, but it does not make China a patron-replacement.²⁹ Islamabad has had similar fortune in finding regional allies. Pakistan can recruit on a basis of pragmatic *realpolitik* or shared Islamic roots.³⁰ A new China-Pakistan-Iran axis would match ideological affinity, geopolitical necessity, and complementary interests.³¹ China has consistently supported Pakistan militarily, economically, and politically since the 1960s. Iran, also Muslim and co-founder of ECO, has supported Pakistan in its disputes with India, played a crucial role in guaranteeing Islamabad's security after the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, and sought to exploit Pakistan's recent alienation from the United States. Nevertheless, serious flaws hamper this improbable alliance. Even as the United States and Great Britain are separated by a common tongue, so Pakistan and Iran are separated by a common faith. Saudi Islam and virulently anti-Shi'ite Wahhabism greatly influenced the brand of Islam

popularized in Pakistan during the last decade. Iran and Pakistan are on opposite sides of the Afghanistan conflict. Teheran supports the Shi'ites (mainly Hazaras) and Persian speaking groups, while Pakistan favors the Pashtun Sunnis. Iran objects most of all to Pakistan's relationship with Saudi Arabia, seeing it as the military arm of a long-term Saudi policy of expanding its influence in Central Asia. Finally, each nation has its own competing regional ambitions.³² The likelihood for such a tripartite alliance remains slim, but Pakistan has continued military exchanges, arms sales, and high-level visits with China and Iran.³³

A second alternative, targeting shared Islamic roots with the Central Asian republics, has also met with little success. Islamabad has no historic ties with Central Asia because Pakistan itself was not formed until 1947. With the sudden appearance of five nominally Islamic neighbors in 1991, Pakistani policymakers initially envisioned a Muslim security belt stretching from Turkey to Pakistan with Central Asia as the "buckle," to provide both "strategic depth"³⁴ and needed allies in her policy struggles over Afghanistan and Kashmir.

It immediately became apparent that Islam would not be an entree to forming a multilateral defense arrangement. The Central Asian states signed the CIS collective security agreement in May 1992. Islamabad also failed to obtain unilateral support from any Central Asian state for its position regarding Kashmir, the litmus test for Pakistan (and India) for potential allies.³⁵ Central Asian rulers are unwilling to involve themselves in the Kashmir dispute in light of their own nationalities and territorial problems and its religious (Islamic) overtones.

Rebuffed, Pakistan shifted toward establishing bilateral (and through the ECO multilateral) economic and cultural ties with the Central Asian states and offering assistance in transnational issues such as drugs and terrorism. Economic ties are a vital asset to boost Pakistan's fragile economy. One analyst has suggested that the region has a potential annual market of \$80 billion; even if Pakistan secured only five per cent of that market, it could earn up to four billion dollars per year--about equal to Pakistan's current total annual exports.³⁶ Moreover, the "Islamic card" was not totally abandoned; Pakistan decided not to "push" Islam as a religion, but as a shared cultural identity. Thus, Pakistan has built mosques, sponsored attendees to the World Islamic Conference, funded scholarships abroad, and donated printing presses to publish the Koran.

Pakistan aggressively sought to develop bilateral economic ties. Penetration of Central Asian markets began with high-level visits in November-December 1991. Pakistan offered a \$30 million credit to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and proposed

joint ventures in cotton, textiles, garments, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, surgical instruments, telecommunications, and agro-industry.³⁷ Within two months of the Soviet Union's collapse and Central Asian independence (February 1992), Pakistan signed its first agreement--with Kazakhstan--on education, tourism, culture, trade, and science and technology. Pakistan also has offered to provide training and infrastructure support for banking, insurance, and joint stock venture capital.³⁸ In July 1992, Islamabad signed an agreement with Uzbekistan to establish a satellite communications link, construct highways, produce telecommunications equipment, and manufacture railroad rolling stock.³⁹ Pakistan agreed to construct four highways in Afghanistan and one in Uzbekistan to improve its links with Central Asia. A rail link from Chaman (Pakistan)-Herat (Afghanistan)-Kushka (Turkmenistan) has been proposed, but not yet constructed. Pakistan also sought to exploit Central Asian petroleum, natural gas, and hydro-energy to solve its ongoing energy shortages. For example, in April 1992, Tajikistan signed an agreement to provide annually 1000 megawatts of power at a fixed price for 30 years beginning in 1997 in exchange for \$500 million in Pakistani aid to complete the Ragun dam.

Pakistan has had mixed success in bringing these bilateral agreements to fruition. They reflect the gap between intent and capability. The greatest obstacle to Pakistan's Central Asian ambitions is lack of direct access to the region; Afghanistan and a small strip of China intervene.⁴⁰ Air routes between Pakistan and Central Asia (dating from May 1992) are insufficient for major transfer of goods and services. The second obstacle is regional instability. Political disintegration and civil war in Afghanistan⁴¹ make construction and transit prohibitive. The civil war in Tajikistan has derailed the hydroenergy agreement, although the concept is sound (albeit expensive) once peace (or at least quiet) returns to Tajikistan. A third obstacle is Pakistan's inadequate domestic communications network. Pakistani (and Central Asian) rail lines currently end at the Afghan border. Internal Pakistani road, rail, and seaports also need major upgrading. The fourth obstacle is financial. Pakistan lacks the resources to fund these investments. Even the credits offered have been largely symbolic in nature. The Central Asian states as well are unable to contribute significantly to these projects.⁴²

Pakistan's hope that Central Asia would provide strategic depth, new Islamic allies, and collective security partners in its struggle with India has been dashed. Geographic constraints and focused efforts by non-Islamic neighbors, especially Russia and China, have stymied her efforts to become a significant influence in Central Asia. But, through bilateral ties and agencies such as the ECO, Pakistan can still provide technical and financial assistance to the Central Asian states' efforts to

confront the economic and social issues which threaten their domestic stability.

India.

The breakup of the Soviet Union and the loss of its superpower patron⁴³ created serious security concerns for India. New Delhi feared that Central Asian instability would mirror the chaos of the Caucasus. Border realignment, ethnic disputes, resurgent Islam, and civil war would directly affect the territorial integrity of Afghanistan, which, in domino fashion, would influence Pakistan, Iran and Kashmir. In such an environment drug trafficking,⁴⁴ illegal arms, and crime syndicates flourish, threatening not only Central Asia but all its neighbors. Such a scenario would have inevitable consequences for India's national security.⁴⁵ India is also alarmed at Pakistan's call for Central Asia as a strategic hinterland and its Islamic initiatives such as the ECO. As a consequence, India is seeking new security arrangements with the republics of Central Asia.⁴⁶

The new security environment presents both challenges and opportunities for India to influence affairs within Central Asia. Pakistan's failure does not mean India's success. Central Asia's distrust of Pakistan's Islamic agenda does not make it pro-Indian. As a non-aligned, non-Islamic state, India rejected military alliances, security agreements, and cultural ties as tools for promoting stability in Central Asia. Instead, it focused its efforts on bilateral economic programs. India's special relationship with the Soviet Union provided New Delhi with existing economic links (e.g., a consulate in Tashkent) and a lively trade with the Central Asian republics. India offered many advantages to Central Asian authorities converting to a market economy: a large, urban, educated elite fluent in English; a functional Anglo-Saxon judicial system; industry and management based on Western lines; and an established and vibrant stock market.⁴⁷

Indian economic programs focused on the two regional linchpins: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. India offered credits worth ten million dollars to Tashkent in 1992 and 1993, and in 1992 signed a treaty on "the principles of interstate relations and bilateral cooperation," promising cooperation in fighting terrorism, arms and drug trafficking and extremist ideologies.⁴⁸ Specific investment projects included hotel construction in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. In 1992 India signed a group of agreements with Almaty to develop its textile and hotel industries. India also offered Kazakhstan ten million dollars in credits in 1992 and 1993.⁴⁹ An April 1992 Indo-Turkmen agreement promised cooperation in fields such as natural gas extraction, chemicals, agricultural products processing, hotel construction,

and banking. In June 1994 India offered Turkmenistan a 10-year loan worth five million dollars.⁵⁰ Little has been done with Kyrgyzstan and war-torn Tajikistan.

The gap between intent and capability also colors India's plans for Central Asia. The fact that India is not contiguous has hampered the development of trade. No overland routes exist between Central Asia and India. If built, India's access would depend on Pakistan and Afghanistan. Air transit is cost prohibitive. Also, India has insufficient capital for the massive investment needed to make a real impact. Indian investors, hampered by a lack of reliable banking facilities in Central Asia, have experienced difficulty in receiving payments and repatriating money.⁵¹

Regardless of its recent military buildup, India itself cannot provide security to the states of Central Asia; it must rely upon a (non-Islamic) proxy. Some Indian sources argue that ultimately only Russia (with whom India has an agreement on defense planning and cooperation) could act as a balancing force in Central Asia.⁵² Another option is China, with whom relations have improved since last year's surprise proposal to form a bilateral trade block to counter regional trade groupings and recent confidence-building measures.⁵³ However, that option will fade rapidly if the China-Pakistan relationship develops.

Pakistan remains the main focus of India's interest, but Afghan instability and a threatened domino effect from civil war in Central Asia make efforts to promote regional peace and security an Indian national interest. India will politically support the region's secular regimes, for strategic denial of fundamentalist Islam in Central Asia will remain a prominent concern. New Delhi will continue to use economic and technical assistance as a policy tool and to enhance its own commercial interests.

Russia.

According to the Primary Chronicle, the first Russian state was formed in 862 A.D. when inhabitants of the Dnepr' Valley begged transiting Varangians (Norsemen, or Vikings), led by Prince Rurik, to establish Kievan Rus'. "Our land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come to rule and reign over us."⁵⁴ In its heart of hearts, this is the scenario Moscow envisions for Central Asia: incapable of ruling on their own, the penitent republics beg Moscow to reassert its control over the region. This has not happened, so a more aggressive program toward economic and political integration has been adopted.

When Russia formed the CIS in 1991, it appeared relieved to

jettison the burden of subsidizing the Islamic fringes of the empire. With Russia's focus on economic collapse at home, loss of superpower status, and security issues in Europe, and burned by its involvement in Afghanistan, Central Asia was a backwater.⁵⁵ Then, within one calendar month, the fall of Kabul, the coup in Dushanbe, and trips by Islamic leaders to Central Asia occurred. The threat loomed of significant Iranian and Turkish influence spreading throughout the region.

Russia took a hard look at the economic and security implications of its earlier dismissive attitude and formulated a foreign policy to bring Central Asia, if not back into the empire with a "gathering of the lands," then, at the very least, back into the fold. Moscow sought to maintain regional stability, prevent other regional powers from establishing hegemony, protect and expand its economic interests, protect ethnic Russians living in Central Asia (and prevent their migration back to an economically strapped federation), and stop the spread of Islamic fundamentalism (especially from Afghanistan via Tajikistan).

By 1995 Russia began to talk of creating an "economically and politically integrated association of states capable of claiming its proper place in the world community."⁵⁶ Edict Number 940, issued on September 14, 1995, stated:

our main vital interests in the spheres of economy, defense, security and the protection of the rights of Russians are concentrated on the territory of the CIS, and the safeguarding of those interests constitutes the basis of the country's national security.⁵⁷

The edict identified Russia's main tasks: to ensure political, military, and economic stability; to promote economically and politically stable CIS states friendly toward Russia; to consolidate Russia as the leading force in formulating a new system of interstate relations; and to boost integration processes within the CIS. It added, "when collaborating with third countries and international organizations, it is necessary to seek their agreement that this region is primarily a zone of Russian interests."⁵⁸

Almost immediately after the USSR's break up, Moscow staked its claim as regional hegemon in Central Asia. Even after the division of Soviet assets⁵⁹ and the creation of republican armed forces, the new states were incapable of ensuring their own territorial integrity and domestic security. In military affairs the Central Asian states remained dependent on Moscow. On May 15, 1992, a formal collective security agreement⁶⁰ replaced Russia's original passive policy, which regarded Central Asia as a vast buffer zone, over which Moscow exerted a benign equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine--"We aren't going to get actively involved

ourselves, but everyone else stay out." Moscow then followed up with bilateral defense treaties with each of the five Central Asian states. Under the new treaty, Russian Border Guard forces were responsible for patrolling Central Asia's external boundaries,⁶¹ while a coordinated CIS air defense system guarded the skies above. In March 1994 Moscow signed an additional 22 bilateral military agreements⁶² with Kazakhstan, to include Russian lease of the Baikonur Cosmodrome (for an initial period of 20 years with an option to extend a further 10 years) for \$115 million annually (deducted from Almaty's debts to Moscow) and resolutions on the strategic nuclear forces temporarily deployed in Kazakhstan. Moscow also agreed to train 500 Kazakhstani officers per year at its various military academies.⁶³ A January 1995 agreement gave Russia continued access to several missile test ranges, proving grounds, and military communications sites in Kazakhstan.⁶⁴ Both nations also promised to cooperate on forming Joint Armed Forces, conducting joint planning for the training and use of troops, and providing weapons and military equipment.⁶⁵

From the beginning the Central Asian states have had mixed feelings about the CIS alliance. On the one hand, Central Asian leaders recognize the consequences if Russia does not get involved. Faced with civil war in neighboring Tajikistan and Afghanistan, President Karimov of Uzbekistan has stated that he would "like to see the Russian Federation as a kind of 'guarantor of stability' in the region, or more simply put, as a guarantor of the survival of the administration that exists in Tashkent today."⁶⁶ On the other hand, CIS members' suspicions and concerns about Russia's intentions to inherit the Soviet Union's ambitions are heightened by the rise of ultra-nationalists such as Zhirinovskii and the impressive showing of the Communists in recent elections.⁶⁷ The example of the Warsaw Pact, which Russia frequently puts forward as a model for the CIS, makes Central Asian leaders uncomfortable, remembering as they do that Pact's "multinational response to attempts at political self-direction in Hungary and Czechoslovakia."⁶⁸

On the surface the collective security agreement has maintained stability in Central Asia. Widescale civil war and ethnic separatism have not occurred in Central Asia, as they have in the Caucasus. Russian forces did reestablish a pro-Moscow government in Dushanbe. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan did send limited peacekeeping contingents to Tajikistan. Moscow continues to broker diplomatic efforts to end the crisis. Yet, deployment of Russian troops to Tajikistan fits Russia's long-term interests. To paraphrase Clausewitz, peacekeeping is the continuation of politics with other means. The forces preclude involvement by neighbors who wish to extend their own influence in the region. Introduction of Russian peacekeepers limits Western policy options and marginalizes the role of United

Nations' peacekeeping overtures.⁶⁹

Russia also seeks to protect and expand its economic position in Central Asia as part of a larger effort to revive its regional economic (and hence political) influence. Moscow's political leaders realize that a major source of funding for that revival lies just to its south. Russia lacks the investment capital or technology to compete for lucrative deals being cut by foreign consortiums for Central Asia's energy and mineral wealth. But it does possess access. All five Central Asian states are landlocked, and although Iran, Pakistan, India, China, and Turkey all promise transit routes in the future, Russia can offer access now.

As a consequence, Russia has actively inserted itself into foreign investment plans. Oil and natural gas can be exported through Iran, Russia or unstable areas in the Caucasus and Afghanistan. American investors (such as Chevron in Kazakhstan) are prohibited, for U.S. domestic political reasons, from using the southern route through Iran to export oil. Turkish environmental concerns are threatening supertanker transit through the Bosphorus. Caucasian pipelines pass through major areas of armed conflict. Recent proposals to pass thru Afghanistan to Pakistani terminals are equally precarious. The only immediate alternative left is Russia. Moscow has stymied construction of new pipelines across Turkey and is pushing use of existing pipelines transiting Russia, thereby giving her enormous leverage over pipeline flow and a greater percentage of revenues.

Russian coercion has been crude, but effective. Russia pressured Turkmenistan by cutting off gas exports to Europe and refusing to hand over \$185 million in gas revenues earned in 1993.⁷⁰ Russia also apparently bought Ashgabat's natural gas⁷¹ supply at low prices and resold it to Turkey at a 300 percent markup. In 1994, Russia halted coal payments to Kazakhstan and partly paralyzed the country by reducing its fuel supplies.⁷² Moscow reportedly demanded a 20-40 percent interest in Kazakhstani fields under exploration. That same year Moscow also blocked almost all of Kazakhstan's oil exports from May to August and forced its refineries to halt production.⁷³ Russia refused to raise the 44 million barrel annual ceiling for Kazakhstani oil pumped through its pipeline network, forcing Chevron to reduce its daily production at Tengiz in half.⁷⁴ Russia's "hard ball" approach won. In August 1994 Moscow doubled the volume of oil deliveries, in exchange for Kazakhstan handing over to Russia its export transit volume of one million tonnes of oil, which Russia then re-exported for hard currency. As a result, Kazakhstan's oil producers, left with no hard currency income themselves, were forced to assume high interest bank loans. Industry experts estimate Almaty will have to export at least 250,000 tonnes (through Russia) to pay off the loans--for which it will receive

only \$20 million.⁷⁵ Until alternate transit routes can be developed, Kazakhstan and, to a lesser degree, Turkmenistan remain dependent upon Moscow to generate the energy revenues needed to break away from that dependency.

The creation of Central Asian currencies exemplifies Moscow's equally heavy-handed attempts at financial hegemony.⁷⁶ The "rouble zone" created by Moscow for the CIS little resembled Central Asian visions of free trade and tariff-free borders. Moscow refused to surrender control of the rouble, excluded other CIS leaders from financial policy management, and, in November 1993, even demanded CIS states keep all their gold and hard currency reserves on deposit in Moscow. This provoked Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan that same month to follow Kyrgyzstan's May 1993 introduction of a national currency. Uzbekistan followed suit in June 1994. Even Tajikistan, which exists solely at Moscow's sufferance, has announced plans to introduce its own currency in 1996.

To stymie Moscow's efforts, the Central Asian states have exploited economic ties with other regional powers and created intra-regional institutions. For example, all five republics joined the ECO in 1992 and work with its Investment Development Bank. Almaty hosted the December 1995 "Conference on Asian Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures," which was devoted to the questions of providing mutual guarantees for political independence, territorial integrity, and state security.⁷⁷ In July 1994, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan agreed to establish their own Central Asian Bank of Cooperation and Development (in Almaty) to settle accounts between countries in hard currency or national currencies.⁷⁸ They simultaneously formed an Interstate Council and the Association of Entrepreneurs of Central Asia.⁷⁹ Presidents of the three states meet periodically to exchange views on harmonizing their economies to the year 2000.⁸⁰

Russian security policy exploits the fate of the 8-10 million ethnic Russians who still live in Central Asia.⁸¹ Russia wants to safeguard them, but also keep them where they are. Many of these Russians feel stranded abroad and threatened by the rise of Islam, even though all the republics' governments support secularism. The Russians resent the loss of their privileged status in Soviet society and fear replacement (justly so) in positions of authority within business, academia, and government by titular nationalities. They protest having to learn the local language. Faced with growing anti-Russian discrimination, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians have returned to Russia (where no jobs or housing await them) or migrated to more ethnically diverse republics such as Kazakhstan.⁸² Russia cannot afford their return and does not want to lose the hostages which might justify intervention. Moscow hoped to ease their fears by gaining dual citizenship for ethnic Russians in CIS countries,

but only Turkmenistan has signed a treaty granting dual citizenship. Two 1995 documents defined the legal status of Russian citizens who are permanent residents of Kazakhstan (and *vice versa*) and agreed on simplified procedures for such people's "cross acquisition of citizenship" in the other state, but stopped short of dual citizenship.⁸³

When Russian analysts today talk of "the Threat," they refer to the Islamic world. Moscow supports military action in Tajikistan to avoid a "domino effect" by which Central Asia and the Caucasus would fall under the influence of an "insidious faith" and the hegemony of their regional rivals, Turkey and Iran. Georgii Kunadze, the Russian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs "with special responsibility for Central Asian issues" expressed a common attitude:

Obviously, not one of the countries of Central Asia is capable without our help of protecting its own borders. . . . If we were to leave, we must be prepared for Islamic extremism, for the forces of instability in general, to pass through Tajikistan, enter Kyrgyzstan, and from there it is not far to Kazakhstan, before those forces are on the threshold of Russia.⁸⁴

Moscow's policy of "strategic denial" of the area to other powers, while forcefully integrating Central Asia's economy with that of the Russian Federation, has had short term success. But, as Deep Throat counseled during Watergate, "follow the money." Moscow lacks the huge amounts of capital to put such plans in action. It is a peer competitor with the Central Asian states for Western aid and investment funds. The Central Asian states have the right to bypass the CIS to join outside organizations such as the ECO and the freedom to seek alternate routes for their oil and natural gas. American myopia about a "trickle down" of resources to Central Asia through Moscow is giving way to greater flexibility toward involvement in the region and support of Central Asian states *vis-a-vis* Moscow. Finally, a key rival has appeared on the scene with a more vibrant economy, contiguous location, and desire to flex its own hegemonic muscles--the People's Republic of China.

China.

China finds itself no longer bordered by a superpower with a rival brand of Marxism, but by a bevy of small unstable states open to influence by China's rivals and a new competing ideology: Islam. The disintegration of Tajikistan and growing unrest in the Fergana Valley--with direct geographical access to China's Muslim outreaches--have magnified China's concerns. How China manages its relations with Central Asia will have profound significance

for security within China, as well as its future relations with regional rivals, the Middle East, and South Asia.⁸⁵

China's worst nightmare is that unrest in Central Asia will spill over into the Xinjiang-Uigher Autonomous Region⁸⁶ (XUAR, formerly known as Eastern or Chinese Turkestan). With 530,000 square kilometers, the XUAR comprises one sixth of the People's Republic of China, but has only a population of 15 million, of whom over 60 percent are Muslim.⁸⁷ Beijing has systematically resettled more than six million Han Chinese to the XUAR, diluting the titular population so that Uighurs (ethnic Kazakhs) now constitute just less than half of the XUAR population,⁸⁸ but the area remains a tinderbox.

The Chinese leadership dreads that ethno-nationalism alone (or in combination with resurgent Islam) could destabilize China's northwest provinces (Gansu and Qinghai) and autonomous regions (Ningxia, Xinjiang, and Tibet). These areas are of considerable strategic importance as they house China's principal nuclear testing and missile launching sites and much of its "gulag archipelago."⁸⁹ The XUAR holds vast natural resources necessary to fuel China's modernization, to include unexploited petroleum reserves in the Tarim Basin (sufficient to free Beijing from future dependence on Middle East petroleum) and large deposits of natural gas, iron, and coal.⁹⁰

China has sought to control the area with a combination of carrots and sticks. As controls over the Muslim majority relaxed in the 1980s, mosques reopened and a communist government openly anti-religious, but willing to make concessions to coopt local minorities, tolerated Muslim religious practices. Nevertheless, unrest fermented again at the end of the 1980s with a series of incidents in December 1986, June 1988, May 1989, and April 1990 which resulted in Muslims' deaths at the hands of authorities quick to suppress "local nationalism."⁹¹

Islamic groups in Central Asia fueled Chinese fears. In the early days of Central Asian independence exiled Uighurs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan pressed for the national liberation of the XUAR. However, Chinese anxiety over Central Asian collusion diminished as Beijing realized that the leaders of the new republics did not support the separatist movements.⁹² "Free Uighuristan" parties (formed in the early 1990s in Bishkek and Almaty) calling for a "new Turkestan" linking Turkic-speakers in the XUAR and Central Asia were both suppressed by Central Asian authorities. Nevertheless, the threat of ethno-nationalism and Islamic resurgence in Central Asia remains a core element of Chinese policy in the region.

Chinese policy in Central Asia is designed to maintain political stability through economic development. China borders

Central Asia and has the transportation links in place to provide the access Central Asians so desperately want. It has also embarked on an ambitious program of rail and pipeline construction which would go a long way toward freeing Central Asia from dependency on Russia. A new rail line completed in June 1992 links Almaty and Urumchi, and from there 3,000 miles on to the coastal port of Shanghai.⁹³ The October 1990 opening of the Trans-Eurasian Railroad through Central Asia has resulted in "dramatic surges" in the movement of people, goods, and hard currency.⁹⁴ During an April 1994 visit to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, China's premier Li Peng reached an agreement with Turkmenistan's President Niyazov to conduct feasibility studies for a new railroad across Central Asia and a \$20 billion pipeline that would carry Central Asian oil to China. Once completed, this transcontinental route would have consequences conceivably comparable to the impact of the advent of the Suez and Panama canals.⁹⁵

China hopes to use Central Asian markets as a catalyst to fuel a new prosperity zone in Xinjiang for foreign investment (especially by Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan) and revive the Silk Route, pushing Chinese economic interests beyond Central Asia to the Persian Gulf and even to European markets. Beijing expects economic growth in Xinjiang and Central Asia to strengthen the secular-minded governments of Central Asia against those groups which favor Islamic rule and prevent the republics from returning to dependence on Russia.⁹⁶

By the beginning of the 1990s . . . China could offer major trade opportunities as well as modest amounts of capital and technology to the economically weak Central Asian republics. By doing this, China is strengthening the republics' economies and responding to what Central Asian leaders consider their most basic need. It is not cultural, linguistic, or religious 'aid' that Central Asian elites crave, it is economic development. The Chinese clearly agree that economic development offers the best chance of limiting future ethnic and religious conflict.⁹⁷

To accomplish this, China has enacted a series of reforms to boost Xinjiang's (and by consequence Central Asia's) economic takeoff. Western attention on Guangdong and Hong Kong ignored the fact that Xinjiang placed first nationwide in terms of real income growth in the period 1985-91. In 1992 Beijing granted Urumchi (Xinjiang's capital) the same right to conduct preferential trade policies as the coastal regions. Eight "ports" (rivers, airports and railheads) are now open, and Yining, Taching, and Bole have been approved as "border open cities." This boom coincides with the breakup of Russia's political and economic ties with South Asia (India) and Southeast Asia

(especially Vietnam). As a consequence, China now wields more influence across its western and southern tier than at any time since the 18th century.⁹⁸ China quickly moved to establish ties with the new republics. Kazakhstan and China signed agreements in February 1992 in the areas of trade, scientific and technological cooperation, communications and transport, personnel exchanges, and the establishment of a joint committee for the development of further ties. China also extended credits equivalent to \$5.7 million to Kyrgyzstan and pushed exports of food, clothing, electronics, and other consumer goods. Even war-torn Tajikistan received \$5 million in *yuan* credits to buy Chinese food and consumer goods, plus \$500,000 worth of food and humanitarian aid. Dushanbe and Beijing also signed ten cooperative agreements for future economic projects such as joint ventures in the textile industry.⁹⁹

The breakup of the Soviet Union and the sharp decline of the Russian military offer China its best military position in a century and a breathing space to reevaluate its military doctrine,¹⁰⁰ manning levels, and modernization programs.¹⁰¹ With the independence of the Central Asian republics, the forward basing of the Soviet Army and border guard forces antagonistic to China's interests have been replaced by weak Central Asian indigenous forces, a strategic buffer zone, and Russian and Central Asian border guards engaged in operations to suppress Islamic fundamentalism and prevent ethno-nationalistic border changes, all of which work to the benefit of Beijing.

The success of its economic reforms has also provided China the opportunity to purchase huge quantities of advanced weapons systems from cash-strapped Russia such as the Su-27 fighter aircraft and S-300 high altitude air defence missile system. *Jane's Defense Weekly* estimates that purchases in 1992-93 alone may have totaled five billion dollars.¹⁰² With Central Asia a military backwater and with her back "covered," China's military now looks toward using the fruits of this new economic power to exert its influence outside its borders, especially in southeast Asia.¹⁰³

Stability in Central Asia is essential to Beijing's continued economic growth because China has shifted from an exporter to an importer of crude oil. Advent of the "China Century" depends on stable energy resources, domestic stability, and positive economic growth. It is estimated that China will have to import 100 million tons of crude by 2010 unless it finds new sources.¹⁰⁴ China's new, weak Central Asian neighbors are the potential, new "Kuwaits" of the 21st century. If the Chinese build a pipeline (over Russian resistance), Central Asia's importance to China will shift immeasurably in the next century, as will Chinese military attitudes towards safeguarding their strategic oil reserves.

China's relations with Central Asia are not without sore spots. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan contain thousands of square miles stolen by the tsars in the 1880s, which China has refrained from reclaiming (as opposed to the Spratlys). An April 1995 agreement provided confidence-building measures to lessen tensions over existing borders between China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Water rights and environmental issues also exist. For example, in January 1993 Kazakhstan and China agreed to build a water conservancy works over the Horgos River along their border, to address hydropower, flood control, and navigation interests.¹⁰⁵ Alteration of the river flow affects both signatories and Uzbekistan, located downstream on the river. Additionally, in August 1992 China broached Kyrgyzstan with the possibility of exploiting four rivers whose waters are shared by the XUAR and Kyrgyzstan.¹⁰⁶ China's 20 years of nuclear weapons testing in the Turfan-Kuerla region (the most recent test at Lop Nor in June 1996) have produced serious environmental consequences, to include contamination of China's third largest lake, Lake Bositeng.¹⁰⁷ Continued above-ground testing exacerbates tensions with the population within the XUAR. Kazakhstani concern, both public and private, over the impact of radiation drifting into Kazakhstan has also been quite vocal.¹⁰⁸

Chinese concerns about Central Asian domestic stability are matched by similar Central Asian concerns about China. As Graham Fuller has noted,

there is no reason to believe that China will remain immune to the forces of breakup that have affected nearly all post-Communist empires and multi-ethnic groups. . . . Few Muslim minorities ever remain happily contained within another state and culture, especially a Communist one. The model of political independence lies just over the border in former Soviet Central Asia.¹⁰⁹

China is undergoing a rapid economic and social transformation, heightened by inflation; environmental degradation; depletion of finite energy resources; a potential succession crisis following the death of Deng; the increased political influence of the People's Liberation Army (PLA); a weakened center; and economic inequality among the provinces.

China's economic and political transformation will have mixed consequences for Central Asia. At the present they can play the "China card" to thwart dependence on Moscow. In the short term Russia and China share a common interest in deterring ethno-nationalism and resurgent Islam in the region, but each for contradictory goals.¹¹⁰ Moscow and Beijing will collaborate to maintain political stability even as each jockeys to increase its

economic hold over the region. But, if Russia's decline continues unabated, in the long run, the Central Asian states risk simply changing masters. They must counterbalance Russia and China with other economic powerhouses from Asia (such as Japan or South Korea), the United States, the Middle East and Europe.

Implications for U.S. Policy.

America has no vital interests in Central Asia, nor will it assume responsibility for Central Asia's security. We have little "leverage" to directly influence events or push our foreign policy agenda on these sovereign states. Within those parameters, what are American security interests in Central Asia, and how can they best be realized?

The primary focus of the United States will be damage control--to prevent existing problems from escalating into crises that might engage Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, or India:

. . . the United States is more concerned that the region does not become the breeding ground of civil war, nuclear proliferation, radical Islamic movements, a battleground for Asian geopolitics, an ecological wasteland, an economic basket case or the target of a resurgent Russian imperial vision. The geopolitical centrality of Central Asia--its spokes radiating out in all directions across a vital continent--is of considerable importance.¹¹¹

The territorial integrity and political security of the Central Asian states are ostensibly guaranteed under the collective security agreement of the Commonwealth of Independent States. But Russia's calls for political and economic integration, its statements that Central Asia is within its sphere of influence, and its efforts to deny Western or international participation in peacekeeping efforts threatens that security. America does not want to "contain" Russia in Central Asia, but it opposes coercion and intimidation of neighboring states. The United States endorses regional cooperation only so long as it is truly and totally voluntary and only if it opens doors to the outside world.¹¹²

The United States can nurture political stability in Central Asia by disavowing through its actions the concept of the "near abroad," and refusing to condone it as justification for intervention in Central Asian affairs. As noted by Rajan Menon, while acknowledging the legal independence of the ex-Soviet republics, the very term "near abroad" itself is colored with nuances and presumptions of special Russian rights, interests, "obligations," and "responsibilities." It depicts Russia's

juridical and its geopolitical borders as different categories, and it asserts the fact and desirability of a Russian preponderance overshadowing all other powers.¹¹³ Washington's recent reassessment of deferring to Russia on the issue of pipeline routes presents such a change of focus.

Instead, America's "damage control" is best achieved through the development of free market democracies in Central Asia. Our strategic priority must be on the economic development of the region. American businesses, especially in the energy sector, have already made substantial investments in the region. But, America's interests go far beyond their profit or loss. Economic dislocation breeds ethnic, religious, and political extremism. Government reaction to stem such movements would further exacerbate social tensions. A stable economy enhances development of democracies and rule by law. Washington must also support inclusive talks, national reconciliation, a negotiated peace, and free elections in Tajikistan.

Central Asian security is also promoted through efforts by the Department of Defense to support development of viable armed forces within the region. Military-to-military contact programs provide practical expertise to rump militaries formed from the remnants of Soviet forces in each state. Recent initiatives, such as the agreement (signed by Defense Secretary William Perry) to give Kazakhstan four grants totalling \$37 million for defense conversion (in particular re-equipping the Stepnogorsk chemical products plant), are a step in the right direction. Central Asian participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace also offers an alternative to Russian assistance. Defense Attache Offices are slowly being established throughout the area. Primary focus will first fall on language training programs, so that offers to attend U.S. military education institutions can be accepted.¹¹⁴

There are no short-term solutions to Central Asia's problems. Indeed, with proposed slashes in foreign aid, direct U. S. government involvement to support the Central Asian states economically and politically will be limited. American legal and technical assistance in tackling issues such as environmental protection, drug enforcement, organized crime, and weapons proliferation will be valuable. The United States can also channel its efforts through international organizations that provide social programs such as refugee relief, health care, and family planning. Washington can support an enhanced role in the region for the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to which all the Central Asian republics belong. Finally, the United States can bolster moderate Islamic republics (especially our NATO ally, Turkey) which serve as mentors for economic and political development.

Immediate attention must be focused on both Uzbekistan and

Kazakhstan as co-stabilizers of the region. They predominate in terms of population, resources, skilled and educated elites, and industrial potential. A strong Kazakhstan deters Uzbeki irrententism. A strong Uzbekistan deters a Kazakhstani dissolution. Strong stabilizers would fill the Central Asian political vacuum, prevent Russian expansionism, and join Russia and Ukraine as the third tripod of power in the Former Soviet Union.¹¹⁵ But mistrust of Uzbekistan's long-term objectives among her Central Asian neighbors (especially those such as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan with large Uzbek minorities) is even stronger. Nazarbayev's calls for a Euro-asian Union are seen as a ploy to assert Kazakhstani hegemony. According to Jed Snyder, "the desire to replace the CIS with a Central Asian forum clearly exists, but the lack of leadership in the region and the persistent mutual suspicion among the five Central Asian presidents prevents concrete initiatives."¹¹⁶ American support of the development of inclusive market democracies can do much to ease those fears.

The Road Ahead.

The new "Great Game"--jockeying for power and position in Central Asia--will continue. The outcome of the contest for regional influence is unsure. The *status quo* may continue under CIS collective security but with relative freedom of action for the Central Asian states. Moscow may succeed in its gradual reintegration of Central Asia into a Russian sphere of control--although whether in the form of outright absorption or legal independence as formerly experienced by the Warsaw Pact states is unclear. Into "the Chinese Century," Beijing may eventually become the regional hegemon. Or, a state within Central Asia itself, such as Uzbekistan, may exert control, with warlordism in peripheral areas. In a worst case, the region may explode, causing realignment of boundaries and annexations, with civil war spilling over into neighboring states. In a best case, an independent bloc of Central Asian market democracies, based perhaps around Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, would succeed in playing off the United States, Russia, China, and other neighbors to maintain a balance of power on its own terms.

The key to Asian security in the region is economic. A strong, vibrant economy is a prerequisite for political stability. Stable democracies will seek peaceful solutions to common problems. Peace in the region, especially in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir, must be achieved before economic takeoff can occur.

What is most important is the fact that domestic stability of all five states is a policy goal of Central Asia's neighbors and the United States. Each seeks to increase its own influence while denying domination by any one state. No one wants to upset

the Central Asian applecart--rather they want to sell them the apples.

ENDNOTES

1. Boris Z. Rumer, "The Gathering Storm in Central Asia," *Orbis*, Vol. 37, No. 1, Winter 1993, p. 89.

2. The parameters of "Central Asia" fluctuate in the popular press and practical use. Once the old, tsarist province of Turkestan was subdivided in the 1920s, the Soviets coined the phrase "Sredniaia Aziia" (Middle Asia) to refer to the territory covering the present four republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, omitting Kazakhstan (almost half of which included heavily ethnic-Russian areas that Muscovy absorbed into the empire in the 16th century). Western sources coined the phrase "Soviet Central Asia" to include all five republics. When the ECO expanded to "Central Asia," there were six new states--to include Azerbaijan. At a 1992 meeting of the five former Soviet Central Asian states, they adopted the term, "Tsentral'naia Aziia" (Central Asia), to include Kazakhstan. Some contemporary popular periodicals, under the subheading "Central Asia," stretch their coverage from the Bosphorous to Southeast Asia. For the purposes of this study, however, "Central Asia" refers only to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

3. The other player, Turkey, is beyond the scope of this study. See Stephen J. Blank, Stephen C. Pelletiere, and William T. Johnsen, *Turkey's Strategic Position at the Crossroads of World Affairs*, Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, December 1993. Chap 4, "Turkey's Strategic Engagement in the Former USSR and U.S. Interests," is of special interest.

4. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour, "Iran, the Caucasus and Central Asia," in Ali Vanauzizi and Myron Weiner, eds., *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 197.

5. For example, the titular nationality of Uzbekistan is Uzbek, of Kazakhstan is Kazakh, etc. Because ethnic Kazakhs comprise less than half of the population of Kazakhstan, care is taken to use the adjectival form "Kazakhstani" rather than "Kazakh," when referring to that state. Ethnic Uzbeks form over 70 percent of Uzbekistan, so there "Uzbek state" is admissible.

6. Anthony Hyman, "Power and Politics in Central Asia's New Republics," *Conflict Studies* 273, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, August 1994, p. 10.

7. Percentages range from around 40 percent Kazakhs to 70 percent Uzbeks. This creates serious social tension, for example,

when the national legislature announces a shift from Russian to the titular language when, for half of the population (and even many of the Russified titular minority), it is not their native tongue.

8. Anthony Hyman, "Moving Out of Moscow's Orbit: The Outlook for Central Asia," *International Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 2, 1993, pp. 302-303.

@ENDNOTE TXT = 9. According to Martha Brill Olcott, the dispute between the Uzbeks and Tajiks is potentially the most contentious. Central Asia's two main Persian-speaking cities, Samarkand and Bukhara, were included in Uzbekistan, leaving the Tajiks with the backwater town of Dushanbe for their republic capital. For their part, the Uzbeks have periodically staked a claim to all of the Fergana valley, which includes Kyrgyzstan's Osh oblast, and part of the Khojent oblast in Tajikistan. The Uzbeks also argue that part of southern Kazakhstan and eastern Turkmenistan rightly belongs to them as well. The republics of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan disagree not only about where their border should be, but even where it is, and briefly came to blows over this question in the summer of 1989. "Central Asia's Post-empire Politics," *Orbis*, Vol. 36, No. 2, Spring 1992, p. 256.

10. Nuclear test ranges are but the tip of the iceberg. Local authorities often had little, if any, knowledge of specific testing of chemical and biological agents in Soviet research facilities throughout the region. The identification of facilities, the types of tests once conducted, and disposal of test materials is of great interest to republican health authorities--and U.S. Department of Defense officials.

11. Igor Lipovsky, "The Central Asian Cotton Epic," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1995, p. 534.

12. Olcott, "Central Asia's Post-empire Politics," p. 253. See also Gregory Gleason, "The Struggle for Control over Water in Central Asia: Republican Sovereignty and Collective Action," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Report on the USSR*, June 21, 1991, pp. 11-19.

13. Afghanistan is the ninth member.

14. Only Akayev of Kyrgyzstan immediately condemned the August 1991 coup in Moscow. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan waited 36 hours (until the outcome was evident) before protesting. The leaders of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan openly supported the coup from the start and used it as an excuse to crack down on their own dissidents. See Ahmed Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia Islam or Nationalism?*, London: Zed Books, 1994, pp. 39-40.

15. "The War in Tajikistan Three Years On," *Special Report*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, November 1995, pp. 1-16.

16. The bonds of religious faith and ethnic kinsmanship must not be over-exaggerated, however. When one state intervenes in the domestic affairs of another, it all too often is merely a justification for pursuit of *national* interests, e.g. to create weak or dependent neighbors. Such states risk having the tables turned on *them* by their victims--who support dissident minorities within *their* borders *tit-for-tat*. In such cases, religious or ethnic "solidarity" would give way to *Realpolitik*.

17. J. Mohan Malik, "India Copes with the Kremlin's Fall," *Orbis*, Vol. 37, No. 1, Winter 1993, p. 80.

18. Martha Brill Olcott, "Central Asia's Islamic Awakening," *Current History*, Vol. 93, No. 582, April 1994, p. 150.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

20. Andrew Rathmell, "Iran's Rearmament--How Great a Threat?" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 6. No. 7, July 1994, pp. 317-322.

21. Sajjadpour, p. 210.

22. Colin Barraclough, "Iran Moves to Position Itself as Central Asia's Trade Path," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 21, 1995, p. 8.

23. "Niyazov, Iranian Oil Minister Discuss Oil Pipeline," *Teheran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network*, September 5, 1995; and "\$215 million oil deal proposed," *Moscow ITAR-TASS*, September 4, 1995, in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Central Eurasia* (henceforth *FBIS-SOV*)-05-171, September 5, 1995, pp. 80-81.

24. In return, Iran has played a mediatory role in Tajikistan, often acting directly in conjunction with Moscow. For example, Iran's diplomatic efforts led to a second round of talks held in Teheran in June 1994 which produced a three-month ceasefire and POW exchange. Both government and insurgent forces pledged to uphold and respect democratic principles and asked the United Nations Secretary General to expedite the dispatch of peace-keeping forces to the area.

25. Stephen J. Blank, *Energy, Economics and Security in Central Asia: Russia and its Rivals*, Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, May 1995, p. 11.

26. Dietrich Reetz, "Pakistan and the Central Asia Hinterland Option: The Race for Regional Security and Development," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Fall 1993, p. 47.

27. To counter India's perceived military and economic superiority, Pakistan has always sought the patronage of external powers. America extended superpower patronage in the 1950s when John Foster Dulles allied the "northern tier" of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan against the Soviet Union (although Pakistan really was concerned with Indian military power and intended to use the aid to bolster its position against New Delhi, not Moscow). The United States and Pakistan signed a Mutual Defense Agreement in May 1954 and Pakistan joined the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Disillusionment with America set in following arms sales to India in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and American failure to settle the Kashmir dispute in Pakistan's favor.

28. The 1990 Pressler Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act ended all economic and military aid to Pakistan because Congress was convinced Islamabad had "crossed the red line" and assembled a nuclear bomb. The amendment embargoed delivery of weapons systems like the F-16 and P-3C Orion, shifting the balance of conventional and nuclear weapons to India (which was allowed to continue its nuclear program unhindered). It convinced the Pakistani government that the development of nuclear weapons was the only option for Pakistan to safeguard its sovereignty and eliminated any incentive for New Delhi to resolve their nuclear imbroglio because any solution might have led to the resumption of U.S. aid to Pakistan. Ali Abbas Rizvi, "The Nuclear Bomb and Security of South Asia," *Asian Defense*, No. 108/94, April 1995, p. 26. The Pressler Amendment did not forbid aid to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), joint military exercises (if no U.S. funds were used to support Pakistani participation), commercial arms sales, or any service fully paid for by the Government of Pakistan with its own national funds. On January 26, 1996, Congress passed the Brown Amendment to the Fiscal Year 1996 Foreign Operations Appropriation Bill, which modified the Pressler Amendment. The Brown Amendment permitted the U.S. government to deliver \$368 million of non-embargoed F-16 equipment, exempted transfer of "military equipment, technology, or defense services other than F-16 aircraft," extended counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics assistance, authorized some forms of peacekeeping assistance, facilitated humanitarian and civic assistance projects, and allowed military-to-military contact authorized *outside* of the International Military Education Training (IMET) program. The embargoed F-16s were to be sold to a third party and the proceeds given back to Pakistan.

29. "China Sent Nuclear Aid to Pakistan," *Washington Post*, February 7, 1996, p. A1.

30. Kail Ellis, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy: Alternating Policies," in Hafeez Malik, ed., *Dilemmas of National Security and Cooperation in India and Pakistan*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1993, p. 131.

31. Samina Yasmeen, "Pakistan's Cautious Foreign Policy," *Survival*, Vol. 36, No. 2, Summer 1994, pp. 127-128.

32. See Shireen T. Hunter, "Southwest Asian Security Compact: Problems and Prospects," in Hafeez Malik, ed., *Dilemmas of National Security and Cooperation in India and Pakistan*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1993, pp. 258-272.

33. Yasmeen, pp. 127-128.

34. Reetz, p. 36. This "strategic depth" would provide Pakistan access to military supplies over possible Central Asian land routes that were not controlled by the Indian sea or air forces. See also P. Stobdan, "Looking Towards Central Asia," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVI, No. 8, November 1993, pp. 1111-1114, for an Indian perspective.

35. This is a constant refrain during all visits to Central Asia. For example, during Prime Minister Bhutto's August 1995 visit to Almaty, on the airport tarmac following *pro forma* welcoming remarks about peace and stability, she then referred to the "grave situation in occupied Kashmir where a valiant struggle for the right of self-determination by Kashmir is unmatched by brutal use of force, ruthless suppression and violation of human rights by Indian occupation forces." Islamabad Radio, "Bhutto makes statement on arrival," *Pakistan Overseas Service in English*, August 23, 1995, FBIS-SOV-95-193, August 23, 1995, p. 75.

36. Yasmeen, p. 129.

37. Tahir Amin, "Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian States," in Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner, eds., *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia*, Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1994, p. 221.

38. Yasmeen, p. 129.

39. Amin, p. 222.

40. The shortest route is the Karakoram Highway from Rawalpindi through Chinese Xinjiang to Almaty. There are three railheads on the Pakistan side: one each near Peshwar and Quetta

facing Afghanistan and one terminating inside Iranian Baluchistan at Zahidan. Reetz, p. 40.

41. P. Stobdan argues that finding a solution to Afghanistan's problems became Pakistan's first priority when it realized that although "balkanization" of Afghanistan might lead to annexation of the south-eastern Pushtun region, it also could affect Pakistan's own territorial integrity. A peaceful, stable Afghanistan was necessary if Pakistan was to obtain a land route necessary for economic penetration. P. Stobdan, "International Aspects of the Conflict Situation in Central Asia (An Indian Perspective)," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVI, No. 3, June 1993, pp. 275-276.

42. Amin, p. 225.

43. Russian civil and military trade continue, but India can no longer count on a Russian veto in the Security Council on issues such as Kashmir; its old ally now demands payment in hard currency, and the 1971 Mutual Defense Treaty has been replaced by an agreement on defense planning and cooperation. Raju C. C. Thomas, "Indian Security Policy in the 1990's: New Risks and Opportunities," in Hafeez Malik, ed., *Dilemmas of National Security and Cooperation in India and Pakistan*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1993, p. 109.

44. According to P. Stobdan, "the phenomena of opium cultivation, narcotics trafficking and its related crimes and mafia politics are not only posing a threat to the Central Asian states themselves, but also to India. Central Asia is emerging as the world's largest opium producer. . . . Central Asia plus Afghanistan on one side, and Myanmar on the other, will make India most vulnerable to the narcotics trade, bringing with it a host of other social and political problems." P. Stobdan, "Central Asia: India's Strategic Approach," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVIII, No. 6, September 1995, p. 749.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 742.

46. New relations with Central Asia are a part of a larger realignment following the end of the Cold War, although Pakistan remains the immediate threat. India has improved relations with Iran, which in turn helped persuade Pakistan to drop a United Nations motion to censure India for its human rights record in Kashmir. Relations with the U.S. have improved since India opened refueling facilities to American military aircraft during the Gulf War; the recent U.S.-India Memorandum of Understanding includes armed forces joint exercises and training, visits between senior civilian officials for policy planning and joint research, and development projects. Russia is now more an economic than a political partner. Cash-strapped Kremlin

officials have willingly sold equipment and spare parts; over 70 percent of India's military equipment comes from factories in the Former Soviet Union. Russia now supports a nuclear free zone in South Asia. China remains the long-term threat to India's regional ascendancy. China still occupies 12,000 square miles of Indian territory, and remains neutral on the Kashmir controversy, supporting a peaceful resolution under the framework of the Simla Agreement. China has established new agreements with Pakistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka which Indian analysts view as encirclement to contain India.

47. Shekhar Gupta, *India Redefines its Role, Adelphi Papers* 293, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies/Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 58. He was actually talking about China, but the principle is the same.

48. Anita Singh, "India's Relations with Russia and Central Asia," *International Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 1, 1995, p. 79.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

52. Stobdan, "International aspects," p. 281.

53. These resulted from the September 1993 Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility.

54. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*, 5th ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 24.

55. R. Zaripov, in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, noted, "Russia, which had gotten carried away with establishing ties with the West, clearly missed the moment at which the destruction of the 'Asian wall,' began. Evidently it did so not by chance but because it lacks a conception for relations with the Moslem world. . . . The activity of Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Kozyrev is confirmation that Russia wants to correct the mistake and shift its foreign-policy emphasis to the East." *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLIV, No. 19, June 10, 1991, p. 4.

56. Moscow, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, in Russian, September 23, 1995, *FBIS-SOV-95-188*, September 28, 1995, p. 19. The edict also introduced new provisions for a customs union, economic integration, common standards of international economic legislation, a payments union, integration of the defense industry, and a common capital market.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid*, p. 21.

59. A March 1992 agreement divided up the Caspian Flotilla among Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan.

60. Under this agreement over 25,000 Russian troops are stationed in Tajikistan (which exists as a state at their sufferance). Peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan include the Russian 201st Motorized Rifle Division and an increasingly ethnic-Tajik "Russian" border guard force, supplemented by small numbers of Uzbek, Kazakhstani, and Kyrgyz forces and a small Tajik Army.

61. Within Central Asia, only Uzbekistan refused to sign the treaty on joint protection of the Commonwealth's external borders. Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Komilov stated, "We are able to reliably monitor the 156-km border with Afghanistan with our own forces without involving foreign troops from other countries, primarily Russia." Nikolay Musiyenko, "Fearing Even a Hint about USSR," Moscow, *PRAVDA*, in Russian, February 22, 1996, p. 2, in *FBIS-SOV-96-037*, February 23, 1996, p. 51.

62. These include the Treaty on Military Cooperation, the Agreement on the Basic Principles and Terms of Use of the Baikonur Cosmodrome, the Treaty on the Furtherance of Integration and Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, and the Agreement on the Strategic Nuclear Forces Temporarily Deployed on the Territory of Kazakhstan.

63. Dimitry Vertkin, "Prospects for Stability--The View from Kazakhstan," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 6, No. 6, June 1994, p. 287.

64. Douglas Clarke, "Russia's Military Presence in the 'Near Abroad'," *Transition*, Vol. 1, No. 19, October 26, 1995, p. 8-9.

65. *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3, February 15, 1995, p. 27.

66. Vitaly Portnikov, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, May 20, 1992, in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLIV, No. 19, June 10, 1992, p. 2.

67. Mikhail Konarovsky, "Russia and the Emerging Geopolitical Order in Central Asia," in Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner, eds., *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and its Borderlands*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 235.

68. Martha Brill Olcott, "Sovereignty and the 'Near Abroad'," *Orbis*, Vol. 39, No. 3, Summer 1995, p. 359. She identifies Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as the most cautious, while the dependency of a Warsaw Pact-style arrangement appeals to leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

@ENDNOTE TXT = 69. Jed Snyder, "Russian Security Interests on the Southern Periphery," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 6, No. 12, December 1994, p. 551.

70. Steve LaVine, "Moscow Pressures its Neighbors to Share their Oil, Gas Revenues," *Washington Post*, March 18, 1994, p. A24.

71. Blank, *Energy, Economics and Security in Central Asia: Russia and its Rivals*, pp. 12-14.

72. LaVine, "Moscow Pressures its Neighbors," p. A24.

73. Blank, *Energy, Economics and Security in Central Asia: Russia and its Rivals*, pp. 12-13.

74. Snyder, p. 551.

75. *INTERFAX*, "Government Seeks Higher Oil Transit Quotas," in Russian, August 3, 1994, *FBIS-SOV-94-151*, August 5, 1994, p. 36-37.

76. Stephen Blank argues that the Central Asians did not flee the rouble zone, but rather Russia ousted them into a market-dominated system, thus giving Russia substantial control over their economies. Blank, *Energy, Economics and Security in Central Asia: Russia and its Rivals*, p. 9. See, also, Ilya Prizel, "The United States and a Resurgent Russia: A New Cold War or a Balance of Power Recast?," in Stephen Blank and Earl Tilford, eds., *Does Russian Democracy Have a Future?* Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 1994, pp. 142-143.

77. Moscow *ITAR-TASS* in English, February 7, 1996, *FBIS-SOV-96-027*, February 8, 1996, p. 12. Fifteen states attended to include Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, China, Russia, India, Iran, and Pakistan. Observers from ten other Asian states, the United Nations, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also attended.

78. When the CIS was created, the republics assumed that the so-called "rouble zone" would be similar to the European Economic Community with tariff-free borders, free movement of goods, and a common currency. But Russian leaders were unwilling to give up control of the rouble and excluded other CIS leaders from

financial policy formation; instead, they responded to their own rising prices and budget deficit by printing more roubles. The republics did not help matters by demanding (and receiving) enormous quantities of roubles to cover their own economic expenses. The Central Asian states fell victim to currency-transfer and debt clearing mechanisms (that could take up to 6 months to execute), while having to honor contracts to sell resources to Moscow at old, pre-inflationary prices. The move to establish national currencies began only after Russia's surprise decision to remove all pre-1993 roubles from circulation in July 1993. This forced the cash-short republics, not issued the new roubles and used as dumping grounds for the defunct roubles, to use the now-worthless older bills. Concomitant termination of some artificially low price controls and unregulated subsidies caused inflation to skyrocket--in Kazakhstan by 2500 percent--even as trade deficits with Moscow mushroomed. Moscow's demand (November 1993) that states remaining in the rouble zone keep all their gold and hard currency reserves on deposit in Russia, while subordinating their monetary policies to Moscow's, provoked their adoption of national currencies. Martha Brill Olcott, "The Myth of 'Tsentral'naia Aziia'," *Orbis*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Fall 1994, pp. 555-558. Lynda Maillet, "New States Initiate New Currencies," *Transition*, Vol 1. No. 9, June 9, 1993, pp. 44-49, 56.

79. Yuriy Gallimov, "Aspiration to Integration," *Delovoy Mir*, in Russian, Moscow, January 17, 1996, in *FBIS-SOV-96-018-S*, January 26, 1996, p. 1.

80. "Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz Heads Discuss Economic Integration," *Narodnoye Slovo*, Tashkent, in Russian, January 13, 1996, in *FBIS-SOV-96-010*, January 16, 1996, p. 4.

81. The new Russian military doctrine pays special attention to regional threats and the Near Abroad, with special focus on those elements which endangered the rights, freedom, and lawful interests of Russian citizens in foreign states. See also, Elizabeth Teague, "Russians Outside Russia and Russian Security Policy," in Leon Aron and Kenneth M. Jensen, eds, *The Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994, pp. 81-105. For a short synopsis of the Russian view, see "Plight of Russians in 'Near Abroad' Debated," *TRUD*, Moscow, in Russian, July 9, 1994, in *FBIS-SOV-94-135*, July 14, 1994, pp. 10-12.

82. Most ethnic Germans have emigrated directly to Germany.

83. *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3, February 15, 1995, p. 27.

84. Cited by Peter Frank, *Stability and Instability in Eastern Europe*, *Adelphi Paper 285*, London: International

Institute for Strategic Studies/Oxford University Press, February 1994, p. 9.

85. Lilliam Craig Harris, "Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in the Islamic World," *The China Quarterly*, No. 133, March 1993, pp. 112.

86. The history of this province, so distant from Beijing, mirrors the chaos in Moscow's borderlands during this century. During the early Soviet period, the Red Army exploited local revolts to gain control of the region. In 1933, 1944, and 1946, the Soviets tried to establish an "independent" Kazakh-Uighur East Turkestan Republic. Thousands of Kazakhs fled to the XUAR following the suppression the Basmachi Revolt and Stalinist collectivization. In return, following a mass revolt in 1962 and the chaos of the Cultural Revolution, the People's Liberation Army halted cross border transit from the XUAR into Kazakhstan only after up to 70,000 Uighurs had fled.

87. Muslims make up approximately 60 percent of the population; they comprise Uighurs (about 47 percent), Hui, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Tatars. See Dru Gladney, "The Muslim Face of China," *Current History*, Vol. 92, No. 575, September 1993, pp. 275-280.

88. Approximately 38 percent Han, 48 percent Uighur, 7 percent Kazakh, 1 percent Kyrgyz and 1 percent Mongols.

89. J. Richard Walsh, "China and the New Geopolitics of Central Asia," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, March 1993, p. 274.

90. Harris, p. 116.

91. Gladney, pp. 278-279.

92. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Karimov of Uzbekistan, and Niyazov of Turkmenistan were all former Party Chiefs; even Akayev of Kyrgyzstan had served as a junior party functionary. Rakhmanov of Tajikistan was installed by the Russians in 1992.

93. Ross H. Munro, "China's Waxing Spheres of Influence," *Orbis*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Fall 1994, p. 601.

94. Gladney, p. 278.

95. Munro, pp. 603-604.

96. Harris, p. 123.

97. Munro, p. 600.

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 586-587.

99. *Ibid.*, pp. 602-603.

100. See Valentin Shishlevskiy, "China's Defense Policy: Redefining Security Interests and Rewriting Military Doctrine," *Asian Defense Journal*, No. 108/10/94, February 1995, pp. 30-33. With war unlikely in the next 10-20 years in the minds of Chinese strategists, the only threats they perceive are those of local military conflicts prompted by political stability and over territory disputes. China also claims its right to economically advantageous "living space" within "strategic borders," which do not necessarily coincide with state borders. "Strategic borders," they contend, should be extended in relation to the state's economic and military needs.

101. Russian and Chinese leaders have not only engaged in serious "fence-mending," but have agreed (in principle) to move the fence itself by creating a 100 meter-wide demilitarized zone the entire length of the Sino-Russian border. Swaran Singh, "China's Post-Cold War National Security Doctrine," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, April 1995, p. 49. The two countries also declared that they no longer view each other as a "threat," and have initiated a series of confidence-building measures such as military visits and port calls. Shishlevskiy, p. 31.

102. Singh, p. 50.

103. For example, its claim to sovereignty over three million square kilometers of maritime territory by extending its 320 kilometer Exclusive Economic Zone out 1600 kilometers to include the entire Spratly chain (and its potential oil wealth).

104. Singh, p. 56.

105. See Gregory Gleason, "The Struggle for Control over Water in Central Asia: Republican Sovereignty and Collective Action," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Report on the USSR*, Vol. 3, No. 25, June 21, 1991, pp. 11-17. *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLV, No. 1, February 3, 1993, p. 7. He argues that the "feud" between the presidents of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan dates back to a 1989 dispute over the division of irrigation water between the Isfara District of Tajikistan and the Batken district of Kyrgyzstan.

106. Munro, p. 602.

107. Harris, p. 117.

108. *FBIS-SOV-95-162*, August 22, 1995, p. 67. Kazakhstani

demonstrators protested the August test outside the Chinese embassy in Almaty. Activists of "Attan," the People's Center for the Elimination of Nuclear Ranges, demanded an end to nuclear testing and the closure of the Chinese range at Lop Nor. Japan, Australia, and Kazakhstan have strongly criticized China for its continuing underground test program which is to continue into 1996. For example, *New York Times*, "Chinese conduct nuclear bomb test," May 16, 1995, p. 13, for protests against a 15 May test.

109. Graham Fuller, "Central Asia: The Quest for Identity," *Current History*, Vol. 93, No. 582, April 1994, pp. 148-149.

110. At a 1992 meeting the Russian Foreign Minister noted, "Central Asia should remain a CIS sphere of influence, and not a sphere of extremist forces, and in particular, of Islamic fundamentalism." The Chinese Foreign Minister replied that Russia and China "have common interests in preserving stability in the Central Asian region," and that Chinese policy toward Central Asia would take into account the close ties that had been established over time between Russia and the region. *ITAR-TASS World Service*, in Russian, November 25, 1992, *FBIS-SOV-229-95*, November 27, 1992, p. 9.

111. Fuller, p. 149.

112. Strobe Talbott, "Terms of Engagement," *New York Times*, February 4, 1996, Section 4, p. 13. During the March 1996 visit of Department of State and Department of Defense officials to Kazakhstan, American delegates stressed that the United States has no intention whatsoever of interfering in Russian-Kazakh issues relating to the deployment of Russian military bases on the territory of Kazakhstan. The United States would support the process of CIS integration, but wanted these processes to be carried out, taking into account the national interests of all countries involved, which would allow each country in the area to feel itself a proper participant in the world community and world economic system. "Kazakhstan: U.S. Ambassador Discusses Defense Conversion Program," Almaty, *Kazakh Television First Program Network*, in Russian, March 11, 1996, in *FBIS-SOV-96-049*, March 12, 1996, p. 50.

113. Rajan Menon, "In the Shadow of the Bear: Security in Post-Soviet Central Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 1, Summer 1995, p. 158.

114. During the March 1996 visit of Ambassador James Collins, chief coordinator for relations with CIS countries for the U.S. State Department, Turkmenistan agreed to send officers to study at U.S. military schools. In his departing remarks Collins stressed the importance of creating favorable conditions for foreign investment and Turkmenistan's execution of economic

reforms in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund.
INTERFAX, Moscow, in English, February 10, 1996, *FBIS-SOV-96-048*,
March 11, 1996, p. 60.

115. S. Frederick Starr, "Making Eurasia Stable," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 1, January/February 1996, pp. 80-92. Martha Brill Olcott argues that if Kazakhstan should split up, the Uzbeks may claim part or all of Kazakhstan's three southern oblasts, could also choose to move into southern Kyrgyzstan (Osh oblast which is nearly half Uzbek) and could also claim the western part of Turkmenistan which once were the Khivan outlands. Martha Brill Olcott, "The Myth of Tsentral'naia Aziia," *Orbis*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Fall 1994, p. 563.

116. Snyder, p. 549.

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