Crimea Threatens To Push Ukraine, Russia Into War
Choice May Become Give In Or Fight

By Jon Sawyer
St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Washington Bureau Chief

SIMEISPOL, Ukraine — In an eerie echo of the past, a history of violence, and a sense of impending doom, a political crisis is unfolding in the Crimea region of Ukraine.

The Crimean peninsula is the source of a new tension, as Russia seeks to assert its influence in the region. The peninsula, with its strategic location on the Black Sea and its large Russian-speaking population, has been a point of contention between Russia and Ukraine.

The United States and its Allies are monitoring the situation closely, and are concerned about the potential for a military conflict. The United Nations has called for a peaceful resolution to the crisis, and has urged all parties to refrain from采取provocative actions.

Russia, on the other hand, has maintained that it has a legitimate interest in the region, and has warned that it will take whatever steps necessary to protect its citizens and interests.

The crisis has escalated in recent days, with reports of clashes between Russian and Ukrainian forces, and the possibility of a full-scale conflict remains a concern. The international community is calling for a peaceful resolution, and is urging all parties to refrain from taking any steps that could escalate the situation.

In the meantime, the situation remains tense, and the future of the Crimean peninsula remains uncertain. The region is a vital strategic asset for both Russia and Ukraine, and any conflict in the area could have significant implications for the region and the world.

For now, the focus is on finding a peaceful solution to the crisis, and avoiding any steps that could lead to a military conflict. The international community is working with all parties to achieve this goal, and is calling for a calm and diplomatic resolution to the crisis.

The United Nations has called for an immediate ceasefire, and has urged all parties to refrain from taking any steps that could escalate the situation. The international community is working with all parties to achieve a peaceful resolution to the crisis, and is calling for a calm and diplomatic approach to the situation.

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Yeltsin's Changing View

In August 1990, Boris Yeltsin led a popular crusade against the Soviet Union's efforts to crush the independence movement in Georgia. In a dramatic display of popular support, Yeltsin and his allies successfully challenged the Soviet Union's authority in Georgia, leading to the ouster of the communist regime. This victory was seen as a significant blow to the Soviet Union's efforts to maintain control over its satellite states. Yeltsin's leadership was hailed as a symbol of resistance against Soviet control, and his popularity soared.

In the years following the fall of the Soviet Union, Yeltsin's role as a leader of the newly independent Russian state was significant. He faced numerous challenges, including economic instability, social unrest, and political opposition. Despite these difficulties, Yeltsin continued to pursue a policy of reform, aiming to establish a stable, democratic republic.

In the first years of his presidency, Yeltsin worked to improve economic conditions in Russia. He sought to attract foreign investment and promote privatization. However, the economic situation in Russia was dire, with high inflation and a struggling economy. Yeltsin's government was criticized for its failure to address these issues effectively.

In foreign policy, Yeltsin took a leadership role in the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which consisted of the former Soviet republics. He sought to strengthen Russia's position in the region and promote cooperation among the new states. Yeltsin's foreign policy was marked by his efforts to improve relations with the United States and Western Europe. He also sought to establish ties with the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union.

In conclusion, Boris Yeltsin's tenure as the first president of the Russian Federation was marked by significant challenges and achievements. His leadership played a crucial role in the transition from Soviet rule to a democratic republic, and his legacy continues to shape the political landscape of Russia.
Why Union Looms

In Ukraine, a country of 52 million people that borders Europe and includes Crimea, the bear has already begun to stir.

Over the past two years, Russia has stepped up its financial and military support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, leading to tensions between Ukraine and Russia.

The separatist movement has been fueled by the desire for independence and the desire to maintain Russian influence in the region.

In Crimea, a peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014, there is a strong anti-Ukrainian sentiment.

Is Russia Destabilizing?

Russia's annexation of Crimea has destabilized the region, with tensions rising between Ukraine and Russia.

The international community has condemned Russia's actions, but has been unable to impose effective sanctions.

The situation in eastern Ukraine remains tense, with frequent clashes between government forces and separatists.

The future of the region is uncertain, with many questions remaining about the status of Crimea and the role of Russia in the region.

The situation in Ukraine is complex and multifaceted, with deep-seated historical, cultural, and political factors at play.
Ukraine’s Straits Put Rosy Glow On Old USSR

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau Chief

Kiev, Ukraine — In the fall of 1991, as Ukraine hurried unceasingly toward independence from the Soviet Union, Valeri Teychenchei, a young economist, was working on Ukrainian history, digging up the country’s forgotten folk music, giving it new life in local politics.

The future appeared limitless, he told a Post-Dispatch reporter in an interview during those heady days, and his own prospects were impossibly bright.

Two and a half years later the future is here. A mean and slabby thing it is, with corrupt Communist holdovers in office, worthless currency and mounting tension with Russia.

Teychenchei, a bald-eyed engineer in Kiev, has paid a high personal toll. His wife left him, the nationalist candidate he helped elect to parliament turned out to be an opportunist, and his best friends, depoliticizing the future in Ukraine, emigrated to Germany. “At the moment, what we have is a society with the hopes dashed,” Teychenchei says.

Nori Manishin, a Canadian-trained lawyer and former analyst with the U.S. Library of Congress, is one of the disillusioned. He returned to his native Ukraine three years ago to work with the government, but left the post six months later, fed up with the President Leonid Kravchuk and other Communists appointing positions for their friends. “They had sullied the rhetoric of nationalism and reform. Manishin said, but were “completely comfortable” with the status quo. He now runs a law program sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Of course Russia is playing games here. Teychenchei agrees. “But from my point of view, that’s secondary,” he said. “The whole reason Ukraine is so weak is that Kravchuk is unwilling to do, or incapable of doing, anything that contradicts his experience from the Communist past.”

Kravchuk did go to Washington Friday, for a meeting with President Bill Clinton aimed at showing up the U.S.-Ukranian relationship. He came away with the promise of an extra $50 million in U.S. aid and rhetoric on both sides about a “historic” new partnership. He comes home to the same economic mess he left, however, and no guarantee of even his own political survival beyond the election this June.

How bad is Ukraine’s economic management? AWFUL, according to outside studies and the gut impression of people.

Consider the travails of Sergei Barlaska, former duc jazzie and aspiring Klyan businessman.

Barlaska committed himself last summer to buy a radical full of Walkman-type recorders and other electronics from a Hong Kong firm, payment cash-on-delivery — in dollars. To get the dollars, Barlaska stopped by Ukraine’s central bank and deposited 600 million karbovanets — the equivalent of the $200,000 he needed at the rate in effect then. But in Ukraine the bank completes a currency transaction in its own good time. Three weeks later, the bank completed the transaction — at the rate in effect then. The karbovanets were worth just $28,000, a disaster of cold drop.

Barlaska proceeded to Hong Kong suppliers to deliver anyway, on consignment instead of COD. But he was so far in the hole that he had to sell half the shipment to a Russian firm.

It could have been worse. “If I had tried to borrow the money instead, the state bank would have charged me interest of 400 percent a month,” he said. “And if you don’t pay back on time, they double the percentage.”

Ukraine’s economic mess makes many residents — and not just ethnic Russians — look back wistfully at the old Soviet Union. The CIA, in a January report, warned that the country was in danger of splitting in two or three, along ethnic lines, jeopardizing Ukraine’s claim to dismantle its nuclear weapons.

At the local, local analysts fear, the economic and political tensions could stifle the pro-Reform, anti-reform block for quorum in parliament. Elections are March 25.

“We are pessimistic about the elections,” said Ira J. Brownstein, a member of the Council of Advisors to the Ukrainian parliament. The independent advisory group is funded by the American Jewish Joint Distribution.

“The people have endured a lot of pain these past two years — and they associate that with capitalism and democracy, which they think they have here,” Brownstein said.

“In fact, of course, what they have is street barriers and central command and control. But people are increasingly tired of political disorder and economic crush, and many of them think the solution is returning to the old methods.”

Jan Brazinski, the son of Zbigniew Kazinski, who served as chief security adviser to former President Jimmy Carter, Jan Brazinski shares his father’s chauvinistic views, and when it comes to Russia he’s an unabashed Russian.”

American policy makers have put their finger on Russia’s foreign policy situation, on the theory that a country building democratic and market-oriented institutions would have no interest in Imperial ways. But whether the theory can actually produce a democratically oriented Russia remains a question. Witness the rise of ultranationalist Vladimir Zhigarev.

Another way to limit Russian aggression, Brazinski said, would be to support stable institutions and western ties in Ukraine and the other shaky former republics of the Soviet Union’s collapse.

“By shaping the states on the periphery we would deny Russia both the opportunities and the impetus to exercise hegemony,” he said. “We haven’t done nearly enough of that.”
‘Nightmare’ Under Yeltsin Appalls Ex-Ally

By Jon Sawyer

Moscow — Is Russia headed toward a new era of authoritarian rule at home and expansionist designs abroad?

To Yuri Afanaseyev, the historian who helped Boris Yeltsin engineer the peaceful collapse of the old Soviet Union, the question raises the point.

"These kind of people," he says, "have power already."

Yet Yeltsin’s government has imposed its will, military or economically, in almost every former Soviet republic, Afanaseyev notes, from Moldova in the far southeast through the Caucasus to Central Asia. Russia has blocked eastern European countries from membership in NATO.

At home, Russia has pursued sham economic reforms, creating a facade of privatization and free prices. Real power remains, as always, in the hands of Moscow bureaucrats, army generals and the "red directors" of the big state enterprises.

The only mystery, to Afanaseyev, is why U.S. officials and most of Western Europe don’t understand what has happened. "The West is trying to describe the situation they would like, not the real situation as it is," he said.

Afanaseyev, a stoic, square-jawed specialist in French historiography, is president of the Russian State University for the Humanities. Five years ago he was one of the three leaders of the pro-democracy faction in the first Congress of People’s Deputies that preceded Mikhail S. Gorbachev’s perestroika to speed political reforms. His co-leaders, Boris Yeltsin and Nikolai Kukachev, Andrei Sakharov.

"No Yeltsin is left," Sakharov died in December 1989, too soon to witness the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yeltsin’s ascent to the presidency of Russia.

Afanaseyev abandoned politics and returned to the university — unwillingly, he says, "to participate in this nightmare of what Yeltsin and the so-called democrats have done."

By "nightmare," Afanaseyev means, first, the charade of economic reform.

Despite some steps toward privatization in 1992, the big enterprises still depend on Russia’s central bank for operating credits. Monopolists with close government ties control most of the banks and private shops that have sprung up in Moscow and other big cities, he said.

"Of the whole, it’s the same planned economy as before — its essence in the same because it remains an operation in the hands of the state."

The second point in Afanaseyev’s indictment is that, in many ways, the old legal system persists.

He cites the ongoing trial of Vii Mirzayanov, a chemist accused of revealing state secrets in an article he wrote alleging that Russia was testing chemical weapons.

The law Mirzayanov supposedly violated has never been published. Yeltsin’s advisers have hinted they may drop the charges in response to international pressure. But Afanaseyev is not reassured.

"So it’s a trial for violating an unpublished law, in a closed courtroom, with the release of the prisoner at the caprice of unarmed officials," he said. "Is that democracy? That is justice? And how does it differ from the system we had before?"

Looking beyond Russia, Afanaseyev sees more trouble in Russia’s heavy-handed military and economic intervention in the neighboring republics of the former Soviet Union.

"What the western media tend to miss," Afanaseyev said, "is the similarity in position between Zhirinovsky and Kucyrov — the former Andrei Kuznetsov, Yeltsin’s foreign minister, and Vladimir Putin, the rising ultra-nationalist whose success in December’s parliamentary elections stunned the West.

"When Zhirinovsky says he will squeeze all the former republics, making them beg for readmission to the old Soviet Union, it’s treated as some kind of wild exaggeration," Afanaseyev said. "Yet the government itself has stated, in its new military doctrine and elsewhere, that the whole territory of the former Soviet Union is Russia’s sphere of influence."

"These statements don’t represent just some rhetorical threat. They are the basis for the whole of Russia’s foreign policy."

Afanaseyev doesn’t think Russia will turn back to communism. But he predicts a final journey of decades before western-style institutions are established.

"As a historian, I know how long it took to build the infrastructure of the weak: the roads, the power, the railways, law enforcement, education, everything," he said. "There are 10,000 different elements of this infrastructure which you have in the west and which we do not.

From the 15th century on, Afanaseyev contends, Russia has been the victim of its own
Loving Lenin: Saransk Clings To Past

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau Chief

SARANSK, Russia

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NA RUSSIA that appears hell-bent on returning to its past, this industrial city 400 miles east of Moscow is a place that never really left.

Communist Party members swell four-fourth of the seats elected in Russia's referendum elections on December 12, and managers and workers control local administrative posts and every factory. No private business can steal the thrill of Lenin.

Just a month ago the local parliament agreed reluctantly to keep "Soviet society" from the official title of the autonomous Republic of Mordovia, which includes Saransk.

A portrait of Vladimir Lenin stands prominently in the office of Nikolai Krylov, chairman of the local parliament and Saransk's dominant political figure. In the painting Lenin sits on a table, surrounded by a delegation of workers from the Russian hierarchy.

Prominent, as he stands, he appears to be photographed with Lenin.

"I understand your real concern in wanting this picture," the mayor of the city, Krylov, tells his audience to the every syllable of the Communist Party in August. "But I don't mind. Lenin is everywhere here in Saransk. And even in Moscow, in the offices of the highest officials, you will find Lenin, too."

And the most important thing is that everyone — everyone — carries Lenin, still, in their hearts.

Saransk — a city closed to westerners before last year, reflects the change. Soviet structure, economically and politically. Residents fiercely resist Moscow's timid reforms, and they defend the self-reliant traditions of the Soviet Union.

Many here would like to rise in the people, not for Lenin but for Great Patriotic Russia.

If you wonder why Russian president Boris Yeltsin has turned to the right — why he talks tough on every issue from crime to Russia's military preparations — consider that he is speaking to the angry people of Saransk.

Saransk.

Local Communist 'Purge':

Ask officials here how things have changed since 1991, and the answers often sound like the caricature. Take the local Communist party and its "purge" of old-time leaders.

"Aiming for leadership now, there is not one honest leader from the highest level of the Communist party," deputy party secretary Ivan Dorog, a former journalist who wears a velvet coat and a laurel wreath, tells former state workers.

"Amirals, generals were pushed out, and we have to take their place. We must have our own people in power."

And the latest purge includes the heads of the 500 factories in the local party's program. Several others have traded the party memberships for positions in private business.

"Some of these officials are playing games now based on the rules that Yeltsin has set," Dorog says. "But now they don't need the Communist party anymore."

"A craftsman stands between society and reality," at Saratovsk, the sprawling electronics factory in Saransk that employs 70 percent of the workforce during the entire Soviet Union.

And the local equivalent of General Electric is a city of small business, from country enterprises to the tiny factories. A new generation of managers looks to the future. Across the street from the factory, the new leaders of the扎治 shipping enterprise have set up a new plant.

General manager Vladimir Lebedev, a veteran Communist, has a beady face and speaks in a low voice, but he is as tough as the Russian army. As he speaks, the firm's successful innovations — only 20 percent of the workforce is lost from government orders — he boasts.

But when asked for a list of management changes now that the central government has no longer controls Saratovsk and Saratovsk, Lebedev turns up short.

"For the workers, a contribution in setting up an assembly."

"Of course," he replies.

And how much does he make?

"This is a commercial enterprise, known only to our shareholders," he replies. "They want to keep it secret."

"No secret, however, is the healthy rivalry in the cross-country industrial circuitry that Moscow's nightly newspapers once controlled."

The film industry for Saratovskoleskii's movie is made from one factory in the Ural Mountains. But the factories in the area are not far from Moscow. Both sources have disappeared — Saratovsk became a profit-making enterprise."

"And the factories in Saratovsk are not far from Moscow."

Economic lines like those used to connect the regions of Russia and the republic of the former Soviet Union.

No more.

"We've destroyed all these lines."

"You can't think of this country as a big factory. You can't produce everything."

But when you break a line that connects the plants, the white enterprise starts to waver.

Here at Saratovskoleskii, an arm of supply and distribution has been set up. A new factory is under construction. New workers are being trained."

The factory's 20,000 employees have been working reduced shifts since the first of January. They face formidable challenges if Moscow doesn't start flowing again soon.

For the 400,000 workers in the region as a whole, official unemployment rates still at less than 3 percent. But one worker in eight gets paid for less than a full week's work.

Moscow's Heavy Hand

The old system of central economic control of old work. In a fashion, to
Communist Promotes ‘Moral Values’

Theater Official Embraces Religion

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau Chief

SARANSK, Russia

T’SS ENOUGH to drive a Communist to think — or to church.

At the October Cinema, just up the street from the eternal flame commemorating the Great Patriotic War and a still-honored statue of Vladimir Lenin, a sexy poster promotes Madamina’s “Body of Evidence.” It competes with the bas-relief of Lenin and Marx.

Meanwhile, over at the Mordovian State Theater, a marquee performance of Oscar Wilde’s “Lady Windermere’s Fan” draws only a few dozen patrons. Factories that once brought blizzards of tickets for workers are going belly up, and the theater soon may follow suit.

In the drab old theater’s administrative offices upstairs, beneath a poster for the play “Paris Is A Dangerous City,” deputy director Alexander Lubimov frets that Russia is on the slippery slope to moral ruin.

“Everyone in Saransk now have Mercedes cars that cost 10 million rubles,” he sputters, “when thousands of Russian workers are not able to buy their own tickets and buy bread that is sold in the country, there is no future.”

A poster for Madame’s “Body of Evidence” hangs under the bar at the October Cinema in Saransk.

“They live under the principles of the jungle.”

Alexander Lubimov
Deputy Director Mordovian State Theater

But factories are shutting down in this central Russian city, and values are under assault.

Lubimov isn’t about to give up the old truth. He’s a career Communist official who used to work in the local department of art and propaganda. But he’s formed a new truth, too, in the Christian church.

Just over two years ago, in the hustle of Soviet communism’s final months, Lubimov sat on one of the front benches at a Moscow outdoor stadium, transfixed by the preaching of American evangelical Billy Graham. The encounter changed Lubimov’s life.

He went home to Saransk and threw himself into work for another American institution, the Salvation Army. Last year, with the help of a visiting team of missionaries from Illinois, the new convert helped establish the first evangelical church in Saransk. Yes, all through his spiritual odyssey, Lubimov kept the facts with communism, too.

“I believe that people have to be religious; they have to believe in God,” he said. “It doesn’t matter which party you belong to. Communist or Democrat, you have to be ruled by moral values.”

The new Communist party is the only political organization in Russia that has put those values to work.

Lubimov asserts, “In the other party, I haven’t found here the same kind of moral principles. They live under the principles of the jungle — the survival of the fittest.”

Lubimov’s crusade has had some tangible results. Saransk Pravda, the local party newspaper, now features a religion page. And in the party’s old house of propaganda, Lubimov arranged lectures on Christianity three times a week.

Attendance is high, he says, roughly a hundred people a night. The great majority are in their 20s and 30s and hungry for spiritual help.
allocate raw materials and goods. But for communities like Saransk the past 22 years has been a "stabilization initiative of people," says Alexander Sokharov, former president of the local university and now head of an institute that studies the post-Soviet trauma of Russia's regions.

Moscow's heavy hand "meant that the leaders of the regions never sought to find their own ways to development," he said. "Everyone thought Moscow would decide. We'd take what they give us and leave the worry to them."

Sokharov speaks with authority; he once chaired the university's department of scientific communism. When Yeltsin ousted the Communist Party in the fall of 1991, Sokharov stepped down as university president, the post he had held for 22 years. He did it for the good of the school, he said, to avoid making his office a lightning rod for protest against "the so-called democrats."

But the rise of the Communist party proved short-lived, and the party quickly re-emerged as a dominant force in Saransk. Sokharov bounced back too, with support from Moscow that promises to make his new institute the most important center in Russia for studying the complicated regional relationships.

One tangible here in Mordovia, the province that includes Saransk, Mordovia has considerable natural resources — agriculture, minerals, timber and potentially large reserves of oil. But none was exploited under communism.

Mordovia, like many regions, was simply expected to supply the work force for the state enterprises directed from Moscow. Now, regions like Mordovia must learn to match local workers with local resources.

"The transition cannot succeed," Sokharov warns, unless Moscow gets beyond the idea that market reforms merely speculative trades in cigarette vouchers or other consumer goods.

"Sokharov speaks for many — including most of Yeltsin's current government — who warn against going too far with economic reforms, some sectors demand government support and control," Sokharov said. Topping his list, defense, agriculture and energy — the very sectors that Russian reformers sought to unleash from government control.

That approach was profoundly wrong, critics like Sokharov believe. They consider it an error in "market rationalism" that ignored the state's legitimate role in propping up key industries.

They cite Gorbachev's "conversion" as an example of Moscow's heedless determination to its military-industrial base.

"We have factories that have gone from making toilet fittings for kitchen appliances," Sokharov said. "They've gone from the highest technology to the lowest, most primitive technology. This is not 'conversion.' It's destruction."

Entertaining an American visitor in his apartment, Sokharov hosts a dinner that includes both homemade stuffed dumplings. Another treat, sliced pears from a can, brings a sarcastic quip from Sokharov's wife, 54-year-old Alina, a retired teacher of mathematics:

"This comes from a local factory," she says. "They used to make juicy food but now they grow apples. It's part of conversion."

**Voters Favor Zhirinovsky**

Amid this economic turmoil, Communists won all the parliamentary seats decided here last December. But they didn't win the popular vote. That distinction went to Vladimir Zhirinovsky's ultra-nationalist Liberal Democrats, with 36 percent.

From making missiles to making toilet fittings, Zhirinovsky's failure to field well-known candidates cost him seats in districts he might otherwise have won. Yet on most key issues, Communists and the Liberal Democrats see eye to eye.

"I'm the local parliament's biggest critic of so-called economic reform," he said. "I oppose the privatization of economic life," he added. "Without any financial aid from the West. We don't want to convert our people into petty traders, extending an open arm to the West for aid."

"We have to have common agreement with Zhirinovsky," he said. Communists also approve of Zhirinovsky's advice to get on with a referendum that took place in March 1991. Three-quarters voted to keep the union whole.

"This shows that it's not the idea of Zhirinovsky that is wrong," he says. "It's his timing."

Biryukov, a one-time real estate tycoon in a peasant family, says he knows what equality means, and work, he says, is more than just a job. "When I see that right now my own government is trying to outrage ordinary people, to oppress them, I cannot understand the motives."

Ivan Kelin, Biryukov's ally, edits The Moscow, a weekly newspaper here. He places the blame squarely on Yeltsin and his "so-called democrats."

Kalin does not favor Zhirinovsky. His choice for Russia's next president is Alexander Rutskoi, Yeltsin's former vice president, who led parliament in its bloody showdown with Yeltsin last October.

Rutskoi and other leaders of the would-be coup, locked up in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison in the past four months, are free again. The new parliament overwhelmingly voted a general amnesty, and Yeltsin's government promised pardons in exchange.

Why support Rutskoi, Kelin is asked.

"Because he's a patriot of Russia, not of the Soviet Union in the Afghan war," Kelin says. "And because he tried to fight the people trying to sell the country out — and did all this not in his private interest, but in the interest of Russia alone."

And what is the interest of Russia?

"The Russian nation is a great nation in the world," Kelin says. "I know for sure that we will see the restoration of the union. It doesn't matter whether we call it the Soviet Union, the Russian Empire, or nothing.

"It will be Russia, Patriotic Russia."

**Potisk** — The former Soviet republic of Moldova gets a lesson in Russian industrialization.
The Molding Of Obedience In Moldova
Russian-Made Rebels Force Republic Back Into Fold

by Jon Sawyer
Washington Bureau Chief

The commander of Russia's army garrison in this former Soviet republic works in an office filled with automatic weapons, sniper rifles and a portrait of Jesus Christ.

Within moments of the visitor's arrival, Col. Mikhail Bergman and his crew turned up to visit, giving the impression of a hard-hitting, no-nonsense police force. The documents on the desk, complete with a sign that said "No Trespassing," were typical of the prevalent Russian style.

"We are here to protect the Russian borders," Bergman assured the visitor. "And we are not afraid to use force if necessary."

In the first days of this conflict, the military could help, he said. The lesson applies to Moldova today, he believes.

Here, in other republics of the former Soviet Union, Russia has tried to impose its rule as a "peacekeeper." Russia has talked about "stabilizing" new countries and making them secure for Russian interests.

"That's the theory of Russia's new role in its nearest abroad," Bergman said.

The reality is that Bergman and his Russian army of occupation. In Moldova, they've created a textbook example of how to bring a rebellious satellite to heel.

During the last two weeks, Moldovan voters were the latest chapter.

They overwhelmingly elected pro-Russian candidates to the local parliament and approved the name of Moldova as "a country that had been called just two years ago." Only a minority, the signing of papers, remain to prevent Moldova from joining the Commonwealth of Independent States under Moscow's firm control.

How Moldova got from there to here is a lesson in Russian intimidation.

Moldova's Troubled Past

Moldova, a nation about the size of Maryland, lies in the southwestern corner of the former Soviet Union, between Ukraine and Romania. Moldova's gently rolling hills and open plains are fertile, producing a fifth of the wine and bran oil sold in the former Soviet Union, and a third of the tobacco.

And they're vulnerable. Moldova has suffered repeatedly from its location between Russia and the Black Sea.

In the 18th century, Russia seized this territory from Turkey on five separate occasions, losing it each time. In 1812, Russia again annexed a beachhead that lasted until 1818 and the Russian Revolution. Then the Romanians claimed the territory and held it, briefly, until the Soviets poured into it during World War II.

Still, cultural ties to Romania remain strong. Ethnic Romanians comprise one-third of Moldova's 4.5 million people. Ukrainians account for about 14 percent and ethnic Russians 13 percent.

Moldova declared independence in August 1991 and turned to Moscow in 1992. Local Communist officials, following the pattern of other eastern European republics, embraced nationalism. In Moldova, that meant making Romanian the official language and preserving a fraternity with Romania.

Moldova's government did join the Commonwealth of Independent States, the umbrella organization formed in December 1991 as a successor to the Soviet Union. But Moldova refused the CIS collective security agreement, declaring that it would chart an independent course at home and abroad.

Thus, the lesson to be learned from the Moldova conflict is that force is the only answer. The lesson applies to Russia today, he believes.

The future of Moldova is likely to be shaped by Russia, its former master.

And the lesson applies to Russia.
Russia

For at least a year, Russia has clearly signaled that it intends to maintain influence in areas like Moldova.

In February 1995, Yeltsin declared that Russia had a vital interest in the resolution of armed conflicts on the territory of the former USSR.

"I believe the time has come for international organizations, including the United Nations, to send special observers to guarantee peace and stability in the region," he said.

Russian officials pooh-poohed criticism that this opened the door to Russian neo-imperialism. They insisted that Russia was not an aggressor.

Last summer, Prime Minister Yeltsin announced plans to send peacekeepers only with the consent of all parties in a conflict.

In Moldova, in other parts of the former Soviet Union, Moscow has given its commanders virtually free rein in political and diplomatic matters.

"There are differences from one area to the other," he said. "But what unites them is the lack of division between political and military authority.

"In the Asian republics, in contrast to here, we have thousands of Russian soldiers. They are preparing for war. In the Baltic states, where the army was based in a bit of a funk, the Russian forces have been preparing for war. The Trans-Dniester Republic is somewhere in the middle," he said. "The Russian commander has stepped up in Moldova. He has a long way to go before accepting diplomatic standards. We have stopped military exercises."

"They have a long way to go before accepting diplomatic standards. We have stopped military exercises," he said. "They have a long way to go before accepting diplomatic standards. We have stopped military exercises."
RUSSIA: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Shattered with Moldova's authorities exiled to the spring of 1992, with the Russian openly supplying arms and soldiers to the Trans-Dniester rebels. That June, at the death toll mounted to the hundreds. Russia intervened formally. Moscow, a country which standing away of its own, sued for peace.

A joint military commission— with representatives from Kishinev, Tirapsol and the 14th Army — is supposed to monitor the peace and reviews the formal agreement by the Conference, a 55-state group that includes members from both Eastern and Western Europe, has been barred from the Trans-Dniester River security zone since June.

The Trans-Dniester delegation and it was too dangerous, that they couldn't guarantee our safety,” said Dr. Catrina Wiedrich, head of the conference's military observer mission in Kishinev. “I'm still trying to investigate the military situation."

Talks between Moscow and Kishinev on withdrawing the fourteenth Armies have gone nowhere. As a result, the Russian forces in Trans-Dniester set up their own television station and newspaper ("Soldier of the Fatherland"). The commandant general was elected in the Trans-Dniester parliament.

New recruits were switched from the local population, with the presence of bounders. And Russian soldiers, many of their lifelong years, have been assured they won't have to leave.

“Not our fault that I'm a Russian but lives here,” said Maj. Valery Litvasky, second in command of the Tirapsol barracks. “My grandaunts were sent here after World War II, to help rebuild a broken economy. And now, I'm not going to be moved.”

When Moldova's government confirmed its independence a year ago, Russia stepped up the pressure. First it staged military exercises, choosing a region of Trans-Dniester where some of the residents were ethnic Russians. Then it threatened to turn over the 14th Army and its considerable equipment to communists in Tirapsol.

Last June, Russian President Boris Yeltsin named Moldovan first prime minister of former Soviet republics where Moscow wants a permanent military base.

Moldovan talked again, and Moscow tightened the economic screws by imposing new tariffs on Moldovan goods and steep taxes on transit services and fuel. The squeeze brought Moldova to its knees. A rich harvest rotted in the fields for want of fertilizer, and city dwellers starved through one of the coldest November on record.

Moldova's president, Nicolae Manolescu, then moved to break the impasse, dissolving parliament and calling the first free election in five years. The votes got the message, too: 65 percent chose the nationalist and socialist parties, the two forces committed to restoring economic and political ties with Moscow.

Significantly, every stop Kishinev has taken toward Russia has cooled Moscow's ardor for its restless friends in Trans-Dniester. Should Moldova make the final move — agreeing to permanent housing rights for the Russian army — the temporary republic of Trans-Dniester may have to exist.

A Short-lived Republic?

Valery Litvasky, foreign minister of Trans-Dniester, speaks with the anxious, twittering of a lover about to be burned.

His spokesman in Tirapsol holds permanent enough, if gradual, before people rush across the border unhindered by his watch. This political deal is bare, with the odd exception of 14 percent and food lines up in a legible form a minute to the hour.

Litvasky a plump and jolly career Communist who got his start teaching Spanish, wearing black glasses and red-and-blue suspenders under his diplomat's pinstripes. He jams up with pleasure when a reporter removes a map of Europe, taken from Germany's Die Presse magazine, pinned to the wall behind his desk.

"Now it's true,” Litvasky once said happily. "The map shows Trans-Dniester as a country.

No one in the world has followed suit, but perhaps Die Presse has inside knowledge. The headline on its map reads "Europe's Future Horizon."

For Litvasky, the concern couldn't be better. "Out of all the flashpoints of the former Soviet Union, we have the greatest degree of official recognition," he notes proudly.

There's a telephone machine in the reception room out front, an impressive array of personal computers down the hall. In the downstairs lobby, office workers mingle with the republic's new flag, a green stripe across a red background — with the traditional hammer and sickle in the corner.

Outside, Tirapsol has the look of a city where time has stopped. Lenin still stands guard at major squares and intersections. Giant slabs of factory walls still harbor workers. "Cold War, to Socialism!"

And at the town's entrance, an obelisk still bears the emblem of the Soviet Union. The legend, written in Russian and Russian, reads: "Our strength is in unity."

Behind the facade, trouble lingers in the streets. Lines to make illegal currency transactions, in the desperate faces you see at every turn.

Just across the river, at the market in Bender, several dozen people crowd an empty stand in an unlocked pavilion, waiting for a promised delivery of meat.

"It's not even meat," an old woman says. "It's just bones. We've forgotten how to eat meat, already. We just eat bones."

Adding to the turmoil is Col. Bergman's crusade.

He and other army officials have accused Trans-Dniester authorities of stealing millions of dollars in Russian aid, of running a " Mafia" regime.
Moldova At A Glance

Population:
- Total population = 4.6 million
- Romanian: 65%
- Ukrainian: 14%
- Russian: 13%
- Other: 8%

Russian Troops:
- 7,000 troops of Russia's 14th Army are stationed in Tiraspol.

Chronology:
- 1704: The Ottoman Empire loses the area to Russia and then recaptures it five times.
- 1812: In the wake of Napoleon's retreat, Russia seizes control of the region.
- 1856: Following the Crimean War the Treaty ofParis awards the region to Romania.
- 1918: The area is re-taken by Russia.
- 1919: Romania claims the region in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution.
- 1940: Non-aggression pact with Hitler allows the Soviet Union to annex the territory as the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic.
- WWII: Romania reoccupies the area during the war, but it again becomes part of the Soviet Union in 1945.
- 1991: Moldova declares independence as the Soviet Union collapses. It joins the Commonwealth of Independent States but refuses to sign a collective security agreement.
- 1992: Ethnic-Russian secessionists form Trans-Dniester republic and try to join Russian Federation.
- 1992: Civil war leaves hundreds dead and leads to intervention by Russian “peacekeepers.”
- 1994: Economic pressure on Moldova leads to new parliamentary elections. Parties committed to restoring economic and political ties with Russia receive 63% of the vote.

Residents of Tiraspol queue up for bread, one of many signs of problems in the former Soviet republic of Moldova.
RUSSIA: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Siberia Gets Squeezed By New, Old; West, Moscow

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Discant View Washington Bureau Chief
Krasnoyarsk, Russia

I
N THE FROZEN HEART OF SIBERIA, four time zones east of Moscow, an American soap-opera plot plays on the television in the support lounge. Big as life, faked as Russia, it’s "Seven Minutes."

Arriving downtown at midnight with a hot lunch, a Post-Dispatch reporter finds the lights of the Yenisei, a third-rate correspondent hotel where pro-Russian delegates of the Siberian Dance Ensemble mist the room long before.

The exhilaration of moving so swiftly in a city long closed to Westerners proves shortlived. The KGB, fdik, that is the KGB, took an "unspecified" note, summoning the reporter two days later for a dressing down. And it is given in Krasnoyarsk, a Siberian crossroads poised between Russia’s past and its future, between communism and capitalism, between Moscow and the West.

This city of 1 million people is an industrial powerhouse where Russia’s best-trained scientists extract platinum for nuclear warheads and fax machines from商空

Yet it’s also a monarchic, bendable woman's stand on frozen streets corners to sell processed ice cream cornets of a cardboard box. Families sip up to 400 hard water from the village pump. Huge piles of unneeded leaves layer dry in traditional wood houses that look central heating.

Krasnoyarsk, a territory a region twice the size of Texas, stretches from the Mongolian to the Arctic Circle and contains some of the most untapped natural resources left on Earth: vast forests, salty rivers, oil and coal, lead, copper and rubber.

The politicians and business men who wield power here know full well what the potential is. But they feel argued by Moscow’s rigid reforms and by what they view as political indifference from the West. Increasingly, it is Siberia and Vietnam, their federation trends too regional.

Trailers And Combines

Two Krasnoyarsk businessmen, who run two of its industrial enterprises, were recently different stories: one up, one down. The future is bright at Z许可证 and one of Moscow and the West.

Vladimir Bogochorov, general manager of the Krasnoyarsk trailer factory, would thrive in the white-collar culture of the Old IBM. He came up with the idea of taking this company private when he read Russia’s new law on privatization.

"I was long on the beach with my wife, on a Black Sea vacation, and had something better to do," he explains.

Bogochorov began an interview with a self-endowed working lunch, then continued the hard discussion until it was cut short by a visiting delegation from Moscow.

He keeps a laptop computer on his desk. On the wall behind hangs a brightly painted pop-art poster. Asked why, he points to the adjacent bookstore, where Vladimir Lenin’s book on communism occupy one full auct.

"When I read these books," he says, "It gives me what I know."

Lyn Loghov, the self-styled "Lion of Siberia," couldn’t be more different. He runs the aging Krasnoyarsk flour mill combine factory with the retrograde self-sufficiency of the long-time party apparatus.

Loghov, the entire business to sit on the middle of a six course feast with the mayor, three business officers and the rest, indeed he’s trendy in the love of my life." The party works through a bottle of vodka at a private downtown restaurant and then, at the office, two more bottles of Stolichnaya.

His associate offers a lift back in his Jeep Cherokee. They talk of investments in western Germany, and deals in Michigan, the cola of Loghov is building a rapidly growing town at a cost of millions. One would scarcely know that Loghov’s state-owned combine plant, like Bogochorov’s private venture (for instance), is on the verge of shutting down.

"Yesterday you met with Lev Loghov, the manager of a state enterprise," Bogochorov says. "Right now we are arguing in a non-state property."

This factory was partially privatized off. We don’t get any subsidies from the state.

"But those very different officials, Loghov and mine, have come to the same place with the same goal."

So what did Moscow’s future for Loghov, lacking purchase orders and cut off from state credit, has no cash for his payroll.

Loghov argued that a shortage of

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MARCH 6: Crimea: On the Black Sea coast of Ukraine, moves toward a new Russian empire
MARCH 5: Saratov: In Central Russia, the Communist past lives on
MARCH 11: Moscow: In a former Soviet republic, a lesson in economic reform

TODAY
PART FOUR: Krasnoyarsk, in Siberia, still uncertain about both Moscow and the West

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RUSSIA: BACK TO THE FUTURE

From p. 1

“Krasnoyarsk

The impression we have is that the Americans are waiting for the whole economy to collapse.”

Valery Zubov
Governor of Krasnoyarsk

Aid to the regions in Russia is a joke. We don’t see it in our budgets here.”

Vladimir Bogocharov
General manager of Rostov meat-miller factory

Empty Promises Of Aid

Yeltsin’s reformers justified their policies by saying they were necessary to attract aid from Western governments. But to factory managers like Lognov and Bogocharov, Western aid seems at best a mirage, at worst a trap.

U.S. officials have made grand promises with talk of modeling as much as $33 billion in unrestricted aid for Russia. Reality has proved more modest — about $1.6 billion in U.S. aid, much of it going for U.S. goods and services.

“Just a mirage,” Lognov said. “Unfortunately, we are living in a different kind of society. . . . You are very naive and truthful people, but you do not understand the realities of our history and our life.”

On a trip to America last year, Bogocharov toured Malling, Ill., where equipment problems were, by U.S. standards, severe.

“I thought, I would like to pray for such a ‘bad’ situation here,” he said. “The two words ‘happiness’ and ‘satisfaction’ have a different meaning in your language than they do in ours.”

Valery Zubov, the American-trained economist who was elected governor of Krasnoyarsk territory last year, spends much of his time promoting foreign investment. He’s had some success: a German joint venture making citrulline (a French refrigeration plant), a joint-venture agreement with the Swedish outfit IKLA.

“Don’t give you an example of ever-one joint venture with an American firm,” he says. “We sit down, we discuss. But there’s no real investment, no real movement of capital or workers.”

“The impression we have is that see RUSSIA P. 3
the Americans are waiting for the whole economy to collapse," Zubov added. "This is just right. It is working in such a way. You have no commitments, no obligations at all. But rather we committed to take a chance here."

Zubov cited U.S. indifference as one of the factors that fueled the rise of nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Zhlinovskiy's Liberal Democratic party captured a quarter of the votes in December's parliamentary elections nationally and nearly a third in Krasnoyarsk.

Feliks Patshenichk, a member of the moderate Democratic Party of Russia who was elected to parliament from Krasnoyarsk, suggests that America had an even more direct hand in Zhirinovskiy's success.

"It's all in this book," he says, referring to a Russian-language election campaign guide, "How to Win as an Election." It was prepared by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs with the help of U.S. tax dollars.

"Zhirinovskiy made better use of this book than anyone else," Patshenichk said, adding that Zhirinovskiy used it particularly well in advertising, "he was the American-style campaign slogan to manipulate television coverage.

Zhirinovsky On The Stump

Zhirinovsky was also the only person in national politics who promoted to recreate the former Soviet Union. Patshenichk said. That had enormous appeal — even in Krasnoyarsk, the heart of Siberia.

If you wonder why, consider the personal tax breaks Siberia and the now-eliminated

Patshenichk, an engineer by training, spent 10 years working on a coal mine in Moldova. He believes the Russian army should stay in the放心, it is not unhealthy in that region and play a "stabilizing" role.

Logan's daughter lives in the Baltic republic of Latvia. She's learning to be a pilot — and discovering Latvia's determination against ethnic Russian, her father says.

Bogdanov, before joining the cross-country travel group, worked at the tailors factory in 1989. He lived all his life in the Central Asian republic of Kyrgyzstan.

Chernobyl, the nuclear power plant, is just outside the village. His research team still has no idea from her family by the suddenly extraordinary costs of travel.

And Zubov, the governor, counts close relatives in Kazakhstan, Ukraine and the Caucasus.

These ties underline Russia's resurgent nationalism and give it a special tone. It's a movement dominated not by the claim that Russians are a

"master race," but instead by the conviction that Russians must restore their multicultural home. They took the vast common territory for granted until December 1990, when, for reasons no one quite understands, it all came crashing down.

"They're not looking for empire, they're not in it. They're on a quest. If that means restoring the empire, then so be it."

"Certain dangers do exist," Zubov said, "but the source of these dangers is inside Russia."

The dangers he sees lie in the Baltics, where Russians are denied citizenship and jobs. In Ukraine and Belarus, where economic mismanagement and corruption threaten Russian prosperity, and in the West, where ignoring these points of tension only make the tension worse.

Loganov notes that 15 million ethnic Russians live outside the Russian Federation. They should be kept in the world's largest buffer zone. Every Russian is a potential point of crisis.

"If one American anywhere in the world is the victim of an attack, the U.S. will go in shooting," he said. "That's acceptable all over the world. A country should protect its citizens.

So if there is genocide against the Russian people in Ukraine, the Russian army must go in to protect Russians there."

Loganov is reminded that many ethnic Russians are no longer Russian citizens. They are citizens of Ukraine, of Kazakhstan, of all the other republics now struggling for independence.

"Sometimes they're not, he reports, citing the economic requirements in Estonia and Latvia that have made citizenship unattainable for many Russians. And even where Pashinian has citizenship, he says, it's a far cry from the equal standing they anticipated when independence first came.

"The Russians favored independence in the beginning," he said, "but after independence they feared for the future, and independence meant a hard life."

Loganov presents his visitor with a parking permit for his apartment and a bottle of vodka. If he comes early this year to Boris Yeltsin.

The vodka comes from a well-head, the other bottle a gift from the former KGB agent who now rules Russia. Yeltsin has made a ritual of stopping at this roadblock.

On Loganov's watch, the imperial shield remains.

A girl helps her family draw water from a well in the outskirts of the city of Krasnoyarsk, Russia, where modern scientific work contrasts with crude living conditions.