Déjà Vu All Over Again
How End of the Cold War Soviet Views Portended
Putin’s Plans for Dismantling the European Union

by
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Putin and the Project Europe

In a State of the Nation address to the Russian political elite and parliament in April 2005 President Vladimir Putin reminded his audience – according to the English version of the Kremlin’s official transcript – that “the breakup of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the 20th century.” Of the many interpretations of what he may have meant by those words, is that of former U.S. representative to the United Nations John Bolton who considers them as evidence that “Putin wants to expand Russia’s influence to where it was in the Soviet days” (Fox News Interview of March 6, 2014). After all, with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in early 1991 and the Soviet Union 10 months later, Russia had lost most of the Soviet Union’s strategic buffer in the West vis-à-vis NATO. In addition to the three Baltic States that the Soviet Union had annexed in 1940, most of its former satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe are now members of NATO and the European Union (EU). Among others, Ukraine has ambitions to follow them.

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⁴ At the time of the Soviet collapse, it was obvious to most Russian observers that Russia needed to rejoin European political culture and that, to do so, it needed to commit to democracy, the rule of law, and basic human rights such as self-determination of peoples in order to become a normal state. Unfortunately, during the October 1993 Constitutional Crisis the Russian political elite failed to abandon what the deputy speaker of the Estonian legislature, Marju Lauristan, described as “a new package for the same old structures.” See Phillip A. Petersen, “Military Reform and the Struggle to Redefine Security in the Post-Soviet Union,” Jane’s NATO Handbook 1991-92, edited by George Bruce, pp. 360-367.
Putin’s immediate geo-strategic objective appears to be directed at re-establishing Russian hegemony over at least part of the zone the Soviet Union controlled after the end of World War II, if not further. The Russo-Georgian War of 2008, the annexation of the Crimea in 2014, and the ongoing intervention in Eastern Ukraine are undoubtedly steps in that direction. Also, it is safe to assume that Putin regards the vision of an integrated European Union speaking in one voice as incompatible with meeting his long-term strategic goals. Contrary to the majority of European citizens and their governments, Putin is well aware of the potential of such a European Union, the population of which would exceed that of Russia by more than three times, and the GDP by more than eight times.

In order to meet the challenges posed by the EU, Russia hastily initiated the foundation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEC) in May 2014 in the midst of the Ukrainian crisis.5 Nevertheless, Europe’s economic and technological advantage vis-à-vis Russia should grow even more once the US-EU free trade agreement TTIP is in force.6 Therefore, it is expected that Putin will seize any opportunity – including war and the intervention in the 2016 American Presidential Election7 – that he considers helpful in defeating the “Project Europe”.

**Putin’s European Friends: Comintern as a Conservative Role Model?**

With the objective of splitting the EU in mind, Putin has been preparing the ground for some time by supporting financially and through the media, populist anti-immigration and anti-EU parties and movements which have emerged in recent years all over Europe as citizens became increasingly frustrated over the inactivity and self-serving mentality of the traditional political parties and national governments, as well as the failure of the bureaucrats of the

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5 Currently, EEC includes five members: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Kansikas points out that, built on the already existing Eurasian Customs Union, the EEC offers “the countries of the former Soviet Union an alternative integration model”. Contrary to the EU dedicated to improving the wellbeing and providing for the security of its members, the integration policy of the EEC is connected to Russia’s geopolitical and great power aspirations. (Suvi Kansikas, “The Eurasian Economic Union: Russia’s Integration Policy and the EU Challenge”, *Journal of Baltic Security*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2015).


7 “The U.S. Intelligence Community is confident that the Russian Government directed the recent compromises of e-mails from U.S. persons and institutions, including from U.S. political organizations. These thefts and disclosures are intended to interfere with the U.S. elections process.” As quoted in Ellen Nakashima, “U.S. officially condemns Russia over hacking,” *The Washington Post*, October 8, 2016, pp. A1 and A8.
European Commission to address real and perceived problems facing citizens to varying degrees in the EU countries.

Among these movements are the French Front National, the Dutch Party for Freedom, Italy’s Lega Nord, Germany’s Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), the Freedom Party of Austria, Hungary’s Jobbik and others which are represented both in national parliaments and the EU parliament. Of the 751 members of the EU-parliament (MEPs) about 20 percent vote at times in the interests of Putin’s Russia depending on which of the following three groups they belong to: Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL), and Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD). According to Péter Krekó et al, these groups comprising a total of 137 MEPs had, by July 2015, voted in more than two thirds of the EU’s Russia and Ukraine-related decisions in favor of Putin: the far-right ENF (93%); the radical-left GUE/NGL (78%); the populist group EFDD (67%).

According to a report of the Czech Secret Service, Russia is spinning a network of populist far-right movements in Europe, the structure of which is similar to the concept of the Communist International (Comintern), an international federation of communist parties that Moscow used in Soviet times to maintain contact with communist organizations and sympathizers in the West for influencing publics and governments and recruiting informers and spies. However, in contrast to the leftist Comintern the new network is far-right. Its ideology is

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10 Currently, the European of Nations and Freedom (ENF) group under the joint chair of Marie Le Pen of the French Front National and Marcel de Graaff of the Dutch Party for Freedom includes 39 MEPs of far-right national parties from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, and Romania; the European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) group under the chair of Gabi Zimmer of Germany’s “Die Linke” includes 52 MEPs of far-left national parties from Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom; the populist Eurosceptic Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) group under the joint chairmanship of Britain’s Nigel Farage and Italy’s David Borrelli includes 46 EMPs of populist anti-EU national parties from Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, United Kingdom.
12 The Communist International (Comintern) was an international federation of communist parties worldwide founded in 1919 on the initiative of Lenin to aid in the proletarian world revolution. After the failure of all
based on the expansionist Neo-Eurasianism of Alexander Dugin\textsuperscript{13} who disapproves liberalism, advocates a conservative European revolution\textsuperscript{14} and the establishment of a Eurasian Union from Lisbon to Vladivostok led by Russia as a counterweight to the Atlantic sea powers led by the USA. Dugin is quoted saying “we, conservatives, want a strong, solid state, we want order and healthy family, positive values, the reinforcing of the importance of religion and the Church in society”, adding “we want patriotic radio, TV, patriotic experts, patriotic clubs. We want the media that express national interests”.\textsuperscript{15} By now, Dugin has developed links with far-right and far-left parties in the European Union to influence EU policy on Ukraine and Russia.\textsuperscript{16} This is not surprising since the foreign policy positions of most European right-wing and leftist parties are rather similar.\textsuperscript{17}

It seems that, several governments of EU countries (especially Hungary and Poland\textsuperscript{18}), as well as a sizeable part of the European population considering themselves to be conservative,

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\textsuperscript{13} Alexander Dugin entered the political arena in 1994 as a member of the National Bolshevik Party which he left to support the right-wing, anti-liberal and anti-left National Bolshevik Front. A former Professor of Sociology at Moscow State University (2008-2014) he eventually became an influential political analyst with access to top government circles and the State Duma. “He is seen as the driving conceptual force behind Putin’s initiative for the annexation of Crimea by Russia” (Deanna Newman, “Russian Thinker Dugin sees War in Ukraine”, BBC News, July 10, 2014).

\textsuperscript{14} The term Conservative Revolution subsumes a set of ideological concepts that emerged after World War 1 in Germany’s Weimar republic. Historians consider the movement as forerunner of Hitler’s National Socialism (Richard Farber, “Roma aeterna: Zur Kritik der konservativen Revolution”, Cornelsen Verlag 1991).

\textsuperscript{15} Quoted in Wikipedia from the Russian Original: Дугин (28 September 2012) : Мы должны забрать у либералов как минимум половину медиийного поля! Nakane.ru.

\textsuperscript{16} Financial Times, Jan 28, 2015.

\textsuperscript{17} Meier-Walser of Munich’s Hanns Seidel Foundation just published a requisite analysis and comparison of Germany’s populist right-wing “AfD” and leftist “Die Linke”: both welcome the Brexit as the beginning of the end of the EU, criticize the USA and NATO, reject TTIP and CETA, sympathize with Putin and his policies, and oppose the Western sanctions against Russia over the Ukraine (Reinhold Maier-Walser, “Aussenpolitische Positionen der “AfD” und der Partei “Die Linke”, Argumentation Kompakt, Ausgabe 11/2016, Hanns Seidel Stiftung).

\textsuperscript{18} It seems that both Hungary’s Prime Minister Orban and Jaroslaw Kaczynski, Chairman of Poland’s governing right-wing Law and Justice Party (PiS), have been articulating rhetoric not all that different from Dugin’s “patriotic” ideas by subjecting media and judiciary to state-control claiming that the will of the people as expressed in elections is above the constitution. Only recently has Krzysztof Jurgiel, Poland’s Minister for Agriculture, proposed that Poland organize summer camps like Hungary’s Jobbik to teach its youth conservative, patriotic societal values. (Florian Hasse, “Der Feind sitzt in Brüssel,” Sueddeutsche Zeitung, May 23, 2016).
\end{flushright}
sympathize with Dugin’s ideas of the conservative revolution – apparently unaware that he considers the revolution as an essential prerequisite of forming the Russian-dominated political and strategic Eurasian Union. Vincent Jauvert asserts that Dugin’s radical ideology has become the basis for the internal and foreign policy of Russian authorities. Thus, he suggests that, “Dugin is worth listening to, in order to understand to which fate the Kremlin is leading its country and the whole of Europe.”

**Putin’s Military Intervention in Syria: An Opportunity to Dismantle Project Europe?**

One of the lessons learned from the failure of Lenin’s plans for organizing, with the help of the Comintern, the proletarian world revolution through a series of national revolutions in key European countries – they all had failed by the early 1920s – was that a successful revolution requires both sufficiently strong national revolutionary movements and populations sympathizing with the revolutionary agenda. Thus, a plan for defeating the European Union via a conservative revolution as described by Dugin would involve strengthening the populist anti-EU movements in Europe and convincing its publics of their agendas. It is argued that Putin’s military intervention in Syria presented him with a timely opportunity to initiate such a revolution in Europe irrespective of what the primary objectives of the intervention may have been.  

Under the pretext of supporting Syria’s government in its anti-terrorist war, Russia’s military intervention in the then five-year old Syrian war began in September 2015 with massive airstrikes beginning in October mainly against anti-government forces rather than the Islamic State (ISIS) and clearly targeting, like Assad’s forces, civilian hospitals and schools in a deliberate

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20 There is agreement within U.S. policy circles that Putin’s short-term objective was to shore up the faltering regime of Bashar al-Assad. However, there are two interpretations of what his ultimate objective is: 1) Strengthening the Syrian state’s hand at the negotiating table and providing a pathway for Assad to eventually exit Syria as part of a transition that leaves the state intact and the terrorists defeated; 2) Forcing a military victory for Assad setting the stage for Assad to stay in power. Both camps believe that the intervention is meant to raise Russia’s profile in the Middle East and match the intervention of the NATO-led coalition. (Ibrahim al-Assil, Wayne White and Randy Slim, “Debating Russia’s Aims in Syria”, Middle East Institute, November 10, 2015). Russian analysts believe that Russia’s military build-up in Syria was aimed among others at ending the political and diplomatic isolation that the West has imposed on Putin in connection with the situation in Ukraine. (see “An odd way to make friends,” *Economist*, October 10, 2015; and “Putin sees Path to Diplomacy Through Syria,” New York Times, September 16, 2015).
effort to drive from Syria civilians supporting the removal of Assad. The airstrikes in Syria lasted for nearly five and a half months. By the time of the withdrawal of the main part of its forces in mid-March of 2016, Russia had conducted over 9,000 airstrikes, i.e. more than 50 on average per day. They not only saved the Assad regime from being defeated by anti-government forces, they largely destroyed whatever civilian infrastructure had survived the previous five years that the civil war had lasted, thus depriving some five million Syrians who had found refuge in neighboring countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan) of any reasonable perspectives for returning and resuming a more-or-less normal existence in Syria. At the same time, refugee aid had to be reduced. In July 2015, the UN World Food Program (WPF) cut rations and medical care for nearly two million Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan by more than 50 percent because the donations promised by the international community fell considerably short of what was needed for saving the refugees from starvation. Thus, rather than facing starvation, Syrian families by the thousands left the refugee camps, paying human traffickers to smuggle them from Turkey across the Aegean sea to Greece and through the Balkans to Europe.

Amplified by an increasing number of non-Syrian asylum seekers fleeing from conflicts and poverty in the Middle East and Africa, the tide of refugees increased dramatically in 2015. In fact, one month after the Russian airstrikes in Syria began, the number of refugees and migrants arriving in Greece via Turkey reached numbers greater than 200,000 attempting to reach Central and Northern Europe via the Balkan route (Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Austria). According to the EU’s statistics agency (Eurostat), more than half a million refugees applied for asylum in 2015, and half of them in Germany. Accounting for the not yet registered refugees, the total number of arrivals is estimated to be twice this number. Thus, the “European Refugee Crisis” was born that exposed deep divisions within the 28-member European Union over how to address the crisis as anti-immigrant sentiments – incited among local populations by the earlier

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21 As an example of this strategy, in its effort to support Assad’s forces in capturing Aleppo, by early October 2016 “repeated bombings of hospitals had left only six operating medical facilities and 30 doctors to serve a population of a quarter-million civilians.” See Louisa Loveluck and Karen DeYoung, “Kerry urges war-crimes probe into Syrian, Russian bombings,” The Washington Post, October 8, 2016, p A11.


mentioned European friends of Putin\textsuperscript{24} – which are on the rise and Eurosceptic voices became louder.

Finding a common European solution of the crisis beyond the controversial agreement between the EU and Turkey\textsuperscript{25} seems rather unlikely at this time given different interests and priorities of EU members and the rejection, especially by some of the new members as well as UK\textsuperscript{26}, of a fair burden sharing rule for the distribution of registered refugees among EU member states.\textsuperscript{27} Together with many of the other problems currently plaguing the EU, not to speak of the Brexit, the unsolved refugee crisis alone has the potential to eventually break-up the Union into various more or less coherent blocs of members that share similar views and interests as recently described by political analyst Fleming-Williams.\textsuperscript{28} Arguably, such an outcome would be a significant step in Putin’s revisionist strategy for “expanding Russia’s influence to where it was in the Soviet days” or even beyond as suggested by Alexander Dugin. Referring to the Panama Papers as an information attack on his person engineered by the United States, Putin remarked

\textsuperscript{24} Even though Hungary’s Prime Minister Viktor Orban, despite spending “tens of millions of dollars on a blatantly racist campaign describing all refugees as potential terrorists,” lost his referendum to reject a European Union plan for distributing the refugees, “the prime minister vowed to press on anyway with new anti-migrant laws or a constitutional amendment.” See “Unpopular populism: Hungarians and Poles rebuke right-wing governments on immigration and abortion,” The Washington Post, October 8, 2016, p. A16.

\textsuperscript{25} According to the deal struck between the European Union and Turkey on March 18, 2016, Ankara agreed to keep migrants from passing through its borders and into the Continent and to take back any migrants who travelled to Europe after the deals implementation on March 20. In turn, Brussels will give Ankara an extra three billion US Dollars in aid, accelerate Turkey’s EU membership talks and ease visa restrictions for Turkish citizens by the end of June 2016, provided that Ankara meets 72 requirements related to document security; migration management; order and security; fundamental rights and re-admission of irregular migrants. To discourage illegal immigration from Syria, the parties finally agreed that the EU would resettle one legal Syrian refugee from Turkey for each Syrian non-refugee deported back from Greece.

\textsuperscript{26} An anti-immigrant tone characterized the UK Independence Party’s campaign over the referendum on Britain’s membership in the European Union. On a campaign poster showing a mass of refugees trying to overrun a border somewhere in the Balkans its chairman Nigel Farage demands “We must break free of the EU and take back the control of our borders”.

\textsuperscript{27} The number of refugees arriving each month in Greece from Turkey has fallen from tens of thousands to a few thousand after the EU-Turkey deal was implemented on March 20. Thus, it is expected Syrian refugee routes to Europe may change from the Aegean Sea to the Central Mediterranean (from Egypt and Libya to Italy) which so far have been used mainly by African migrants, if the EU-Turkey deal survives at all. The main controversy over the deal is President Erdogan’s rejection to modify Turkey’s anti-terror legislation which is one of the EU’s 72 requirements for easing visa restrictions for Turkish citizens that Turkey has demanded as a conditio sine qua non. Turkey’s anti-terror laws define the term “terror” rather broadly to include, for example, academic and journalistic publications disagreeing with Erdogan’s policy as “terror propaganda”. In this context, by the end of March 2016 more than 1,800 cases had been opened against people for insulting Erdogan since he became President in 2014 (FRANCE 24, May 13, 2016).

\textsuperscript{28} Mark Fleming-Williams, “Europe Without the Union”, Stratfor Geopolitical Weekly, Austin, TX, March 1, 2016.
at a recent media forum in Saint Petersburg that “the past events in Syria have shown that Russia is in a position to and capable of solving geopolitical problems”.

**The Issue of Sanctions**

While the air campaign in Syria offered Putin the opportunity for further fragmenting the EU by fueling the European refugee crisis, its partial termination provided him with an opportunity to divide Europeans over the sanctions which the EU had imposed on Russia in connection with Russia’s violation of Ukrainian sovereignty. On 14 March 2016, the day when peace talks on Syria resumed in Geneva, Putin used the opportunity to announce that the Russian military had accomplished its mission in Syria and would return to Russia, leaving only forces sufficient for monitoring the cease fire regime and operating Russian bases in Syria in a “routine mode”. This timing left him four months to convince Western publics and governments of Russia’s co-operative stance for organizing, together with the United States, negotiations for ending hostilities, and eventually the civil war in Syria altogether, assuming that extending the EU sanctions over the Ukraine would not be justified any more irrespective of the lack of progress in implementing the terms of the Minsk peace agreement. This view was, and still is, shared by publics, politicians and even heads of governments of several EU member states, the economies of which are hurt by Russia’s response to the sanctions. However, as the Geneva peace talks over Syria stalled and no significant progress in the Ukraine was on the horizon, the EU-members unanimously decided, on July 1, 2016, to extend the sanctions for another six months. However, because of the unexpected outcome of the UK’s Brexit referendum six days before, Putin’s interest in meeting the terms of the Minsk agreement by the end of the year is very likely limited as he may well assume that the Brexit offers a better chance of breaking EU

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29 See Süddeutsche Zeitung, Number 81, Friday, 8 April 2016, p. 5.
30 The full implementation of all terms of the Minsk agreement is the precondition for lifting the EU embargo.
31 In fact, Putin’s strategy in the Ukraine, of having either his proxies or his own military forces violating or provoking the violation of ceasefire agreements in order to improve, in piecemeal fashion, the status quo in their favor as a basis for another round of negotiations, suggests that Putin is not interested in a permanent solution that would not support his long-term strategic goals. Therefore, he presents himself as mediator – no peace without him – while profiting from the pressure which the opposing parties generate. This strategy can also be observed in Syria when, for example, President Obama called Putin, in the night to July 6, 2016, asking him to urge Syrian President Assad to comply with the terms of the agreed armistice. In return, Washington agreed to a better coordination of their military operations in Syria including both, Washington stopping the delivery of more weapons to the US-supported Syrian rebels and Moscow ending the air attacks on them and reminding Assad to quit his air attacks on civilians. Two weeks later Assad’s forces had surrounded Aleppo, then a stronghold of anti-Assad forces, while Syrian and
unity on the issue of lifting sanctions toward the end of the year when the EU will re-focus its political agenda and the UK, the strongest defender of the sanctions, will not be heard in the EU.

Only history will tell whether and to what degree the Brexit was instrumental in fragmenting the EU beyond what Russia has accomplished by fueling the European refugee crisis in the course of its intervention in Syria. After all, by portraying the refugee crisis as a model for the decisive immigration issue in the Brexit campaign, the so-called “Leave Camp” has, perhaps inadvertently, supported Putin’s revisionist strategy vis-à-vis Europe along the lines of Soviet views at the end of the Cold War that may portend Putin’s plan for dismantling the European Union in favor of an economic and political architecture in Europe more amenable to Putin’s interests.32

Putin’s Plan for Europe: A Soviet Blueprint from 1990?

By the end of the 1980s it had been obvious to most open-minded intellectuals in Moscow that “the European Union train was about to pull out of the station and the Soviet Union either needed to find a way to get on that train or be forever left behind.”33 A paper had already been prepared for Gorbachev arguing that Germany be reunited – within NATO as a means by which to prevent it from dominating Europe – as the price Moscow pay to integrate into the global economy. This paper was shared with the Federal Republic of Germany in preparation for Mikhail Gorbachev’s first visit to the FRG, and delivered into Phil Petersen’s hands by a German intelligence officer. It was this paper that prompted his trip to Moscow to

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Russian air attacks destroyed four of the town’s eight hospitals that have to provide for 250,000 inhabitants. The UN’s special envoy for Syria estimates that negotiations between the Syrian government and the opposition may be resumed by the end of August 2016, when the co-ordination agreements between Russia and the USA will be implemented (Süddeutsche Zeitung, No 156, July 8, 2016, p.4).  

32 Nigel Farage, the former Head of the U.K. Independence Party and the foremost proponent of the Brexit, might have been aware of these long-term implications from his associations with Putin friend Marine Le Pen and others in the so-called pro-Putin coalition in the European Parliament. His resignation as head of UKIP notwithstanding, he told reporters that he would retain his seat in the European Parliament to see out the negotiations for Britain’s exit and having Britain’s voice being heard (The Telegraph, July 4, 2016) and, one may add, encourage exit campaigns of other anti-EU figures in the European Parliament.  

33 Although the collapse of the post-Second World War security structure is taken for granted by the current generation, it is important to understand that these events had a history. Mikhail Gorbachev and perestroika didn’t just drop out of the sky. For a brief summary of the domestic efforts to end the isolation of the Soviet Union/Russia and the failed attempt to firmly anchor Russia to Europe, see Phillip A. Petersen, “The Challenge to Soviet Strategic Development: An Emerging Vision of European Security,” in Jane’s NATO Handbook 1990-91, edited by Bruce George, pp. 323-334.
discuss the paper with its author – Vyacheslav Dashichev, then Chief of the International Relations Division in the International Economics and International Relations Institute and one of the Soviet Union’s main policy analysts on Germany. The results from this trip was the preparation of a compendium of Soviet views on an alternative European security future for the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, but his military assistant buried the report because he didn’t agree with it. After sitting in the Undersecretary’s office and unread by him for more than a month, the report was discussed in the pages of The Washington Times and, subsequently, in the papers of most of NATO capitals (See Appendix A). At the prompting of his Assistant for Central and Eastern Europe, Christopher Donnelly, the NATO Secretary General requested that the research be briefed at NATO Headquarters, and the briefing was again leaked to the press – appearing in The International Herald Tribune, and yet again discussed in the papers of most NATO capitals. (See Appendix B)

Petersen’s report described a number of Soviet views regarding a non-confrontational security architecture for the reorganization of Europe on the basis of regional economic interests. The Muscovites were seeking a model of regional economic relationships that would not isolate the Soviet Union, and even anticipated the likelihood of the collapse of the Soviet empire, and the subsequent effort by Putin to divide Ukraine. The paper attempted to convey that the Soviet Union was already undergoing economic collapse and that, as a result, Moscow was offering alternative security options in exchange for economic integration with the West. The paper offered two maps to visually assist in understanding the alternative futures that Moscow envisioned: one indicating what it was willing to accept regarding the devolution of the Soviet state (see Figure 1), and a second indicating what it expected the political structure of

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35 Petersen’s work on this subject in the USSR was facilitated by Prof. Andrei Piontkovsky of the Soviet Academy of Science. Petersen and Piontkovsky had met first in October 1989 at an international symposium at the Bundeswehr University in Munich organized by the first named author of this paper, Prof. Reiner Huber, to kick-off a research project on “Conventional Stability in Europe” funded by the VW Foundation. It was at this meeting, four weeks before the Berlin Wall came down that, when asked about the future of the Soviet Union, Piontkovsky briefly sketched a vision that came close to what happened two years later. At the time, Piontkovsky’s vision was regarded as wishful thinking by most of the Western analysts present. However, it was published five years later in the introductory notes of the proceedings of a follow-on symposium (see Huber and Avenhaus, “Models for Security Policy in the Post-Cold War Era”, Baden-Baden, Nomos 1996, p. 13).
Europe to look as a desirable alternative to continued confrontation with the West (see Figure 2).

Peter Almond of the *Washington Times* summarized Petersen’s compendium as follows:

- All nations of Eastern Europe will join or become associates of the European Community (EC).
- Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia will not only be independent, but will also join the EC. The Soviet Union will be an associate member of the EC, as will be Turkey.

*Figure 1: Map as it appeared in The Washington Times*
• Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia will be members of an expanded Nordic Council\textsuperscript{36} inside the EC. This would partially balance the political power of reunited Germany.

• Austria and Hungary will become one economic entity and join Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in an Italy-dominated “Middle Europe Group” of the EC.

• Britain, Portugal and Switzerland will be outside a “Western European Confederation” of Germany, France, Spain, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands in the EC. Britain may join a North Atlantic Group to include the U.S. and Canada.

• The United States and Canada were seen by the Soviets’ as important and legitimate in the security of Europe and could be expected to retain a military presence in Britain, Italy and Portugal, even with all Soviet troops out of Eastern Europe.

• Reunited Germany would stay in NATO, but only British and American troops need withdraw from there as Soviet troops also withdraw from East Germany. Belgian, Dutch and French soldiers could stay in Germany, with the German Army dissolved and initially placed under a non-German commander.

\textsuperscript{36} The Nordic Council was founded in 1952 as the official inter-parliamentary body for cooperation in the Nordic Region. In addition to the Scandinavian countries, the Nordic Council today includes the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Åland.
• Internally the Soviet Union would devolve, with only Byelorussia and the Russian
Republic counted on remaining in the U.S.S.R. The Ukraine and Kazakhstan may end up
split. Christian Armenia will be isolated if Georgia becomes independent, and a secular
barrier to Islamic fundamentalism may be promoted with the union of Soviet Azeris,
Iranian Azeris and Turkey. The Kuril Islands will be returned to Japan.

Thus, in addition to balancing them economically, the Soviet’s primary reason behind forming
three supranational groups within the EC was to contain German influence. The states in Russia’s
immediate abroad (Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece) were not considered for joining a
supranational group for economic or security reasons.

For the briefing at NATO Headquarters the emerging Soviet views on European Security
were presented as shown in Fig. 3. It visualizes that the basic idea underlying the Soviet views
was to arrive at stable military and economic balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact by
each contributing, together with the neutral states in the North and South East, to the
establishment of two supranational groups (Nordic Council and Adriatic Danube respectively)
and to contain United Germany embedded in the Western European Confederation. Once
again, a system of “entangling” political, economic and security structures were proposed to
replace an existing architecture that locked Russia out of the emerging global economy.
After the presentation was delivered a NATO Headquarters, the briefing was leaked by a senior State Department official who wanted to “debunk” any notion that the Soviet views that had been presented reflected reality – at least a reality that would be acceptable to a triumphant West. The Soviet Union was on its heels, and this official (later promoted to ambassador) wanted to make sure that it was clear that “the Russians” were in no position to “bargain” for a more benign West without making fundamental political changes. While the Muscovites were naïve about their leverage as the Soviet Union collapsed, the idea of reducing Europe’s power vis-à-vis Moscow continues to be a policy objective of the Kremlin.

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37 Note that some of the Greek islands were inadvertently colored green rather than blue, which set off a diplomatic fray before the incident was resolved with a piece of tape covering the islands.
Europe did not evolve as security theorists and Soviet leaders had hoped in 1990: In addition to countries of the Western European Group proposed by the Soviet plan, the European Community of 1990 included Italy, Denmark, Greece, Ireland and Britain. Its scope was widened in 1993 when the European Union (EU) was established by the Treaty of Maastricht. Since then, the EU has enlarged by accepting the applications of Austria, Sweden, Finland, and members of the former Eastern Bloc and Yugoslavia. By 2005 when Putin made the initially mentioned state of the nation address, the three Baltic countries and all of the countries of the former Warsaw Pact (except for Bulgaria and Rumania which followed in 2007) had become members of the EU. As of today, the EU still is a coherent, albeit somewhat divisive, bloc of 28 member countries from Portugal and Ireland in the West to Romania in the East, and from Finland in the North to Greece in the South. However, the problems currently facing the EU, in particular the Brexit, suggest that the European Union may have passed its zenith.

The Brexit: Beginning of the EU’s End?

There seems to be widespread agreement, in Britain perhaps more than on the Continent, that the uncertainty about the consequences of the Brexit will damage both UK and EU. For one thing, any aspirations of further countries joining the European bloc anytime soon, such as Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, will be deferred, if not shattered, by the Brexit vote as the European Union will be preoccupied for at least two years negotiating with Britain the terms of the Brexit, as well as solving its internal problems to prevent fragmentation and further exits that would eventually unravel the EU altogether. Thus, to use the terminology of President Erdogan in commenting on the recent attempted military coup in Turkey, the Brexit is a “Godsent” opportunity for Putin to further shorten the EU’s lifetime and possibly damage the United

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38 It actually was named the European Economic Community (EEC) created by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and known as the Common Market in the English-speaking countries.
39 The Treaty of Maastricht (Treaty on European Union) opens the way to the political integration of Europe creating a European Union consisting of the three pillars: the European Communities (EC) which replaced the ECC; Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP); police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (JHA). It introduces the concept of European citizenship, reinforces the powers of the European Parliament and launches economic and monetary union (EMU).
40 Except for Finland, Ireland, Malta, and Sweden all of the EU countries are also members of NATO.
41 This would definitely be the case if the “Frexit” referendum were successful that Marine Le Pen promised to organize in case she wins in the French presidential election next year.
Kingdom’s unity as well.\textsuperscript{42} While the Kremlin’s reaction to the outcome of the British referendum was somewhat subdued, the state media and the public welcomed it sometimes enthusiastically.\textsuperscript{43}

With the help of the European network of neo-conservative and far right anti-EU movements and parties nourished by Russia, Putin may succeed sooner or later in disintegrating the EU and begin to update the Soviet hopes of 1990 in order to meet the long-term goals of his revisionist strategy. Whether he will go as far as to pursue Alexander Dugin’s vision of an Eurasian Empire from Lisbon to Vladivostok under the leadership of Moscow will depend, among others, on the response of the EU and its partners. First of all, the EU and its member countries need to think about what motivates their citizens to vote for far-right parties which Dugin considers as catalysts for the “conservative revolutions” necessary to make the Eurasian Union a reality. Thus, rather than providing Putin further options for fragmenting the EU by letting Brexit run its course, the EU should consider the Brexit vote as an opportunity to recover its lost attraction by requisite reforms,\textsuperscript{44} especially with a view to which areas and to what depth integration is not necessary for the member nations’ governance, security and economic survival in a future of “Europe without the Union”.\textsuperscript{45} By this title, Marc Fleming-Williams describes possible shapes of things to come as “The Union” gradually fragments into several supranational blocs of European nations similar to what the Soviets had proposed in 1999/90 for the political reorganization of

\textsuperscript{42} After all, in Scotland and Northern Ireland, two countries in the UK, the majority of voters opted to remain in the European Union.
\textsuperscript{43} Andrew Roth, “10 Years until a United Eurasia,” The Washington Post, June 14, 2016.
\textsuperscript{44} Frederico Fabrini, “How Brexit Opens a Window of Opportunity For Treaty Reforms in the EU,” Spotlight, Number 2016/01, Bertelsmann Stiftung.
\textsuperscript{45} “In fact, only a day after the Brexit vote, the leader of Poland’s ruling Law and Justice Party, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, said that “Poland would work on a new EU treaty that would reduce the powers exercised by Brussels and give them back to national parliaments” (Eugene Chausovsky, “Central Europe: Taking Up Where the U.K. Left Off”, Stratfor Analysis, July, 27, 2016). Thereafter, the prime ministers of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (known as the Visegrad group that had formed already in 1991 when the Warsaw pact dissolved to establish a format of joint economic and political cooperation needed to integrate with Europe) have met twice, on June 29 and July 22, to call for major changes in the EU. Chausovsky concludes that the Visegrad countries want the European Union to continue working as a protective umbrella and as a source of funding, but they do not want it to interfere in their domestic affairs. Thus, in addition to democratic principles and the rules to enforce them, it will be the delineation of domestic from supranational affairs that, given their mutual interactions in an increasingly networked world, will likely characterize a complex and controversial debate over the changes that the EU and its member countries may consider.
Europe in case the Soviet Union fell apart.\textsuperscript{46} What the future Europe will eventually look like, and how long it will take to emerge will, among others, depend on how the EU responds to the Brexit and how Brexit will affect the UK. The faster the United Kingdom recovers from the Brexit, the greater is the risk that it finds imitators and the project Europe fades away. However, the opposite is also true and probably more likely: the longer it takes the United Kingdom to recover, if ever, the greater the chance that a reformed EU will survive.

\textsuperscript{46} Marc Fleming-Williams, “Europe Without the Union”, Stratfor-Geopolitical Weekly, March 1, 2016
APPENDIX A: The Washington Times

Soviet empire will fall, Pentagon expert predicts

By Peter Arnett

A new study by the Pentagon's chief Soviet expert concludes that the empire is on the downgrade, and the Kremlin knows it.

"There is little ability in the Communist society to accommodate the increased tensions," according to the report by Philip A. Petersen, a former Pentagon intelligence officer and a senior arms control official since 1983.

"In response to this increasing tendency to violence, the ability to employ the Soviet armed forces to maintain the federation is rapidly evaporating in the face of the growing desire for safety and security for the people, and for the United States." Mr. Petersen wrote.

The Soviet's apparent acceptance of a new unconditional order may not be limited to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact but also on the continent's developing economic groupings, the report said.

The United States will be the principal beneficiary of the increased American and NATO military presence in Europe, and the study added.

More significantly coming from within the Pentagons, the Petersen study appears to contain the first detailed examination of the potential economic impact and political implications of the Soviet empire collapse.

In a report prepared for the United States and NATO by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Petersen predicts that the U.S. military's role in the region may be reduced.
APPENDIX B: International Herald-Tribune

Europe: A U.S. Map Of Moscow’s Hopes

By Joseph Fishel, associate editorial page editor, International Herald-Tribune

Europe: A U.S. Map Of Moscow’s Hopes

The article, “Europe: A U.S. Map Of Moscow’s Hopes,” published in the International Herald-Tribune on March 26, 1990, discusses the geopolitical and strategic considerations of the European Union and its relationship with the United States. The article analyzes the implications of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union on European politics and security. It highlights the importance of the European Union in shaping future policies and the role of the United States in maintaining stability and security in Europe.


The article points out the shifting power dynamics in Europe and the need for the United States to adapt its strategies accordingly. It stresses the importance of maintaining a strong presence in Europe to prevent any potential vacuum of power that could lead to instability.

The article also touches on the role of Germany in European integration, emphasizing the importance of the German reunification and its impact on the European Union. It discusses the challenges facing Germany as it integrates into the European Union and the implications for the larger European community.

The article concludes by emphasizing the need for continued cooperation between the United States and Europe to ensure stability and prosperity in the region.

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