

WARNING!

The views expressed in FMSO publications and reports are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

Russian Military Reform: Status and Prospects (Views of a Western Military Historian)

by Dr. Jacob W. Kipp

Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Based upon a paper presented at:

Seminar on Russian Security Prospects (9-11 June 1998)

Department of Strategic and Defence Studies

Finnish National Defence College, Sveaborg, Finland

Introduction

In addressing the current status and prospects for military reform in the Russian Federation, one needs a specific analytical perspective. In the case of this author, it is historical. For three decades he has been studying the Russian military history, especially the problem of military reform in modern Russia. This began with the study of naval reform during the epoch of the Great Reforms and extended into the linkage between military imperatives and economic policy.¹ It has involved study of the naval aspects of Peter I's Westernization.² Studies of the creation and reform of the Red Army followed.³ There followed a continuing interest in the problem of military foresight and forecasting in Russia and the Soviet Union, which included both historical studies and analysis of the contemporary situation. These studies addressed both military-technical and military-political aspects of the problem of "future war" in Imperial Russia, the Soviet Union, and the Russian Federation.⁴ Shaping an armed force to the demands of a future war is by its very nature a political process in which the nature of the state and society, the dominant ideology, and the perception of the anticipated international environment and the probable threats play determining roles. This is a perspective shared by at least one of Russia's current military reformers, A. A. Kokoshin.⁵ Kokoshin has been particularly articulate in his vision of military reform, leading to a smaller, professional, high-tech military able to perform more modest missions in defense of Russian regional interests and representing a reasonable burden for a struggling national economy.⁶

While generalization is always dangerous, some patterns concerning military reform do emerge. In each case military reform proved a protracted process, influenced by larger changes in the Russian state and society and in the international environment and influencing Russian politics, economy, and society. The very vocabulary that contemporaries use to describe the current epoch, i.e., a transition period (*perekhodnyy period*) confirms this point. "Transition period" has, indeed, become an "accursed phrase," implying a complex, deep, and protracted crisis with no end in sight. Indeed, Russia is living through a revolution with all the ambiguity associated with that term. One of the capital aspects of that revolution is the difficult task of demilitarizing the

state, society, and economy. Transition period has become a pseudonym for another Russian term implying protracted crisis, *smutnoe vremya*, or time of troubles.

In his examination of Muscovite Russia's "Time of Troubles" at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the eminent Russian historian, S. F. Platonov, writing in the early twentieth century, saw a powerful parallel between his own time of war and revolution and that of late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Muscovy, when dynastic crisis, social upheaval, and foreign invasion threatened the existence of the state and society. Platonov noted that on Russia's emergence from that Time of Troubles it had gotten a new dynasty that would rule autocratic Russia for the next three centuries, acclaimed the enhanced power of the Church, witnessed the birth of new governmental institutions and the intensification of serfdom, seen the rise of a new elite, the service gentry, and the decline of the boyar aristocracy, and set out on a new foreign policy to regain its "lost" western lands and to recapture access to the sea.⁷ Platonov noted that the great winners of the crisis had been the military forces. By the end of perestroika Russian intellectuals talked of a *smuta* as a short, but intense crisis of state, economy and society.⁸ After 1991 and the break-up of the Soviet Union, the onset of economic crisis, ethno-national conflict, weak statehood, criminalization and corruption, the *smuta* became deep, protracted, and potentially fatal to Russia's experiment with a market economy, privatization, political democracy, and open society. Critics began to link external threats to internal instability and suggest that only an authoritarian solution could resolve the multiple and inter-connected crises.⁹ Andrei Sakharov noted a pattern to the troubles in Russian history and suggested that authoritarianism had gained ground with the end of each crisis, laying the foundation for a new stable order but carrying with it the seeds of a new crisis. Indeed, he identified Communism and Stalin's revolution from above as such a trouble.

After each trouble, Rus', the Muscovite state, [and] Russia settled down for a long time, restoring the broken economic ties, creating new state institutions corresponding to the times and tasks, re-establishing the ruptured foreign policy connections, joining together the regions that had become politically unraveled. At the basis of these processes is the ordinary logic of the nation's self-revival, its self-protection.¹⁰

Sakharov noted a wide range of possible authoritarian solutions to the present troubles, ranging from democratic to neo-Communist. In this time of troubles, unlike that studied by Platonov, the military have so far been a conspicuous loser.

"Military reform" has been a watchword since Gorbachev's perestroika, and with peaks of activity and valleys of inertia during Yeltsin's tenure. The very nature of the legacy of militarization that Russia inherited from the Soviet Union has made this task so difficult and frustrating for Russia's reformers. By the final months of the Soviet state, three distinct positions among the military elite were clear: those of the older generation seeking to maintain the Soviet military edifice with its mass army and militarized economy; a group of reformers within and outside the General Staff who saw a need to replace quantity with quality and who saw the results of Desert Storm as confirming this imperative; and those who were veterans of Afghanistan and the regional crises confronting the Soviet Union in the late 1989-1991 and saw these as confirming the need for more emphasis upon mobile forces.¹¹ Military reform was a top priority between August and November 1991, after the unsuccessful coup and before the

dismemberment of the Soviet Union.¹² Dismemberment came before military reform could be articulated, much less executed, leaving to Russia the task of nationalizing the Soviet military edifice that it inherited and reforming that structure to the demands of a new state and society undergoing the most profound changes and operating in new international environment.¹³ The impulse for reform seemed strong in the spring and summer of 1992, when the Russian Ministry of Defense and General Staff were created out of their Soviet predecessors and the Security Council was created to act as the President's coordinating agency in defense and security matters. Military reform, however, quickly became entangled in the political maneuvering of the executive and legislative organs of power where both sides sought to recruit the military to its side of the struggle. This period culminated in the assault on the White House in October 1993 and the President's proclamation of a new military doctrine in November. Thereafter, the fervor for military reform gave way to other priorities, especially after the decision to intervene in Chechnya in December 1994 and the protracted and bloody war that followed. In 1996 Military reform re-emerged as an issue during the presidential campaign with President Yeltsin promising military reform and a professional army by the year 2000. With the end of fighting in Chechnya, the poor performance of Russian forces (MOD's armed forces, MVD's internal troops, Border Guards and the FSB's special forces) in that war, and the deepening crisis within the armed forces combined to make military reform once again a major political topic. Declining morale, falling quality of recruits, poor training, low combat readiness, corruption, and officer disaffection pointed to a military on the verge of collapse, a point made repeatedly by General Igor Rodionov after his appointment as Minister of Defense in the summer of 1996. Institutional innovations within the presidential apparatus -- the creation of the Defense Council and its subsequent abolition and merger with the Security Council -- and rapid personnel turnovers in key leadership positions within the Defense Ministry and other power ministries (three ministers of defense, three chiefs of the general staff, three heads of the Security Council, and two heads of the Defense Council within one year and new heads of the Border Guard Service and Ministry of Internal Affairs) underscore the intense political struggle associated with military reform. Progress, however, has not been a conspicuous product in this process.

Defining Military Reform

Military reform in the contemporary Russian context is a broad term, very distinct from the concept of reform of the armed forces, which refers to the transformation of the military forces belonging to the Russian Ministry of Defense and involves both down-sizing the force and its transformation into a force that will meet the needs and requirements of Russia in the post-Cold War era. Military reform, on the other hand, is a more all-embracing process which encompasses all the military and paramilitary formations of the Russian state and addresses the core political, economic, and social questions attached to raising, sustaining, training, arming, deploying, and employing a military as an element of Russian national power. It is closely tied to the issues of the ability of the national economy to fund national defense and security and issues of Russia's role and place in the international system and the assessment of the dangers and threats to Russian national security. Military reform is a two-part process. The first process is overcoming the Soviet legacy of a militarized state, society, and economy. This requires the creation of an effective system of civilian control over the military to replace that of the Soviet party-state and the transformation of Russia's multiple militaries and defense industry to meet the demands of an open society and a market economy.

The second process involves creating the foundations for a new military that meets the needs of the new state, society and economy. According to Andrei Kokoshin, by 1995 Russia had managed in the process of performing the first task to wreck its military capabilities and had been unable to accomplish the second.¹⁴

The question of determining the optimal place of the Armed Forces and defense industry in the new Russia with a civic society and democratic political system born in suffering has become critical. It must correspond to the real demands of Russia's defense capability and to the maintenance of a balance of forces favorable to Russia in various regions of the world. To find such an optimum in the most difficult economic conditions is difficult and extremely necessary.¹⁵

Kokoshin's emphasis upon difficult economic conditions has unfortunately proven very well taken. Moreover, the issue is inherently political and touches upon the very nature of civil control of the military in Russia, i.e., the respective roles of the civilian organs of power -- presidency, the government, and the parliament -- in formulating the defense budget. As Evgeniy Zelenov, a retired colonel and member of the Duma Defense Committee, has pointed out:

The military department [*voyennoe vedomstvo*] is a sensitive sphere of life. It is directly tied to politics. A limited circle of political leaders are involved in its control. An enduring immunity from control in military structures developed. But in conditions of a democratic variant of development this is an anomaly.¹⁶

Recent legislation has increased legislative oversight, but as Dmitri Trenin of the Moscow Office of the Carnegie Foundation has pointed out, effective leadership in this area still remains in the hands of the executive, the president and the government.¹⁷ All discussions of defense spending take place in the context of triage economy, declining GDP and reduced state revenues.

The Russian GDP after catastrophic declines for seven years enjoyed only marginal growth in 1997 and is expected to decline again this year. Privatization and price liberalization transformed economic relations but did not put an end to the structural militarization of the economy with its emphasis upon enterprise mobilization capacity, a point made by Vitaly Shlykov to the U. S. Senate Intelligence Committee in 1993.¹⁸ Drastic cuts in weapons procurement since 1992 have not addressed the basic structural problem of the militarized economy within heavy industry. Use of monetary instruments could not bring about immediate economic revival precisely because of these structural features of militarization. What they could and did do as a result of efforts to control inflation was create a unique type of national economy driven by an extreme shortage of money in circulation. "Unnoticed by many, the Russian economy over the last years has turned into something very exotic, namely an economy of arrears."¹⁹ In this context the state, private companies, and banks began to use barter and promissory notes in place of cash. "Over the last years most of several hundred thousand enterprises have become insolvent debtors to just four market players: the state treasury (the state budget and government off-budget funds) and three state-run monopolies, namely the Railways Ministry, Unified Energy Systems, and Gazprom [gas industry]."²⁰ Tax revenues in real cash plunged and by 1997 the state budget was unworkable, forcing the government to cut spending and sequester appropriated funds. Wages, public and private, that had to be paid in cash went further and further into arrears.

In the face of this unique economic crisis of the transition economy and the associated fall of state revenues Russian defense budgets have declined sharply over the last several years. For FY 1997 the Ministry of Defense asked for 160 trillion (old) rubles. The Duma appropriated 88.4 trillion (old) rubles. In July, in the face of a shortfall in revenues, the government sequestered funds and reduced the defense budget to 67.2 trillion rubles. In November 1997 Defense Minister Sergeev complained that the ministry had received less than half of the appropriated funds.²¹ Another report put the percentage of funds provided to the MOD at about 67% for 1997.²² The state budget for 1998 allocated 81.8 billion new rubles -- or 2.88% of GDP -- for national defense to the Ministry of Defense and military programs of the Ministry of Atomic Energy. Of that total the Ministry of Defense expected to receive about half that sum or 40.9 billion new rubles with 26.8 billion new rubles for military and civilian salaries and other 4.7 billion rubles for food.²³

The implications of this economic crisis and budget crunch for military reform are severe. Reform, as opposed to downsizing, requires significant new funds. And downsizing the military, according to former Minister of Defense Rodionov would cost in the area of 4 billion (new) rubles for each 100,000 men released from service. Thus, faced with a shortage of funds, Rodionov abandoned his own plans for force reductions in 1996-1997 and found it expedient to retain under-strength units rather than undertake cuts in manpower. His quarrel with Secretary of the Defense Council Baturin over this issue led to his removal in the spring of 1997. Under these economic and budgetary realities it appears that nothing but piecemeal military reform would be possible in the short-to-mid term without significant gains in the national economy. As Minister Sergeev put the issue only two months ago, "To draw up a budget like Mozambique but demand armed forces like the United States is not entirely logical."²⁴ The military reform program calls for gradual increases in spending on research and development and procurement over the next several years, i.e., by 2001, with a significant jump in funding only after 2005.²⁵

The Current Status of Military Reform

At the present time the Russians seem to be climbing out of one of those valleys of military reform. Just a year ago military reform seemed to be a top priority for the Russian government. President Yeltsin, having fired Minister of Defense Rodionov and Chief of the General Staff Samsonov and having appointed Generals Sergeev and Kvashnin to those posts promised speedy progress on military reform. He appointed two commissions to take over direction of military reform, one headed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to address technical issues and another, headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubais, to address the funding of military reform. Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov took over the reform of military procurement and promised significant savings. Minister Sergeev announced the mergers of the Strategic Missile Forces with the Space Forces and of the Air Forces with the Air Defense Forces. The structure of the ground forces was to be revised as well. This impulse for reform went hand-in-hand with the announcement of further cuts in manpower and the release from service of 200,000 officers in 1997. The late Colonel-General Lev Rokhlin, then Chairman of the Duma Defense Committee, challenged the government's initiatives, saying that they involved dismantling the armed forces and not reforming them. Rokhlin went on to organize the All-Russian Movement in Support of the Army, Defense Industry, and Military Science, which set as its objective the removal of President Yeltsin and the election of a new president. The

government responded to this challenge by making a serious effort to pay wage arrears by the end of summer and undercut popular support for Rokhlin's movement. Military reform was a paramount problem, the solution of which seemed a top priority. As Minister Sergeev recently admitted, when the renewed drive for military reform began in the spring of 1997, "there were virtually no units which were combat ready" apart from the Strategic Missile Forces and the Airborne Forces.²⁶ While there were no major breakthroughs on reform issues, political maneuvering continued throughout the winter. It included the firing of the General Nikolaev, C-in-C of the Border Guards Service and a reported enemy of a unified approach to military reform embracing all of the power ministries. He was subsequently elected to an open seat in the State Duma.²⁷

Only a few short months ago, military affairs again seemed a very hot political issue. In January President Yeltsin announced to a meeting of the Defense Council that the government had overcome resistance to further cuts in military manpower (200,000 in 1998 and a total of 500,000 over the next two years) to 1.2 million among "military circles, politicians, and even the opposition." Praising Minister Sergeev, Yeltsin went on to say that the government now had a real idea of military spending and property and that "Military reform is proceeding and we must increase its speed."²⁸ The defense budget for 1998, according to this source, came to 43.2 billion rubles (\$7 billion) of which 33 billion rubles were to go to maintenance of personnel.²⁹ The government expressed its commitment to finding new sources of funds to support military reform via privatization of state enterprises and to seek funding from the regions.³⁰

Shortly thereafter, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs Anatoliy Kulikov, a former commander of the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [VVMVD] and former C-in-C of Russian forces during the War in Chechnya, openly attacked the government's military reform program, calling into question the goal of abandoning conscription to raise the force and questioning the lack of attention to conventional war-fighting capabilities.³¹ President Yeltsin recast the national security apparatus of the presidency, merging the Defense and Security Councils and put it in the hands of the newly appointed head of the Security Council and State Military Inspectorate, Andrei Kokoshin. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was tasked with drafting a plan for military reform. According to the announcement of Kokoshin's appointment, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and Kokoshin were given one month to submit proposals "on military development and army reform."³² In the meantime the level of funding for the Ministry of Defense fell further 3.6 billion rubles in January to 3.4 billion rubles in March.³³ By the beginning of April the government was once again one month in arrears on military salaries.³⁴

Before that month was over the Russian government entered a period of political and economic crises. The political crisis began on March 28 when Yeltsin fired Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubais, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs Anatoliy Kulikov, and nominally the rest of the government. This crisis ended on April 24 after a protracted political struggle between the President and State Duma with the confirmation of Yeltsin's nominee for Prime Minister, Sergei Kiriyenko. In effect, Yeltsin sought to reassert his command of Russian state apparatus for the rest of his second term by removing Chernomyrdin as heir apparent. Kiriyenko, a 35-year-old technocrat from Nizhniy Novgorod with ties to the oil industry and, until his recent appointment, Minister of Fuel and Energy, has

no independent political base and is the agent of the President. The new Prime Minister enjoyed no honeymoon in his new post. By late May his government faced a new economic crisis. A crippling strike of coal miners demanding payment of wage arrears that effectively closed the vital Trans-Siberian Railroad. An infection of the "Asian financial flu" in Russia's case became pneumonia and brought with it the collapse of the Russian stock market, called into question the value of the ruble, and moved the Russian Central Bank to raise interest rates to 150%. With fresh support from international financial institutions, Kiriyenko's government responded with new austerity measures to reduce state spending and pledges of renewed efforts to improve tax collection.³⁵

In this context military reform has received little attention and the deepening financial crisis makes it even more unlikely that the Russian government will find the resources to engage in military reform. The only positive development was the announcement in early April that the new Prime Minister would provide leadership for the military reform effort.³⁶ Kiriyenko did move bureaucratically to centralize the direction of military reform by abolishing the commission on financing military reform.³⁷

On May 27, the same day the Russian stock market collapsed, President Yeltsin issued a new decree creating the State Commission on Military Development, chaired by Prime Minister Kiriyenko and charged it with the task of drafting decrees on military reform. The other members of the Commission were Security Council Secretary Kokoshin, Finance Minister Zadornov, Foreign Minister Primakov, Economics Minister Urinson, Deputy Prime Minister Nemtsov, the heads of the "power ministries" -- Defense, Internal Affairs, Federal Security Service, Foreign Intelligence Service, Federal Border Guards, Federal Agency of Government Communications and Information, and Civil Defense and Emergency Situations. The chief of the General Staff was also included in its membership.³⁸ This was an important move because it placed the General Staff in a position to provide inter-agency leadership to the reform process.

There was immediate speculation that this new body represented a dilution of the power that Kokoshin had gained when the Defense Council was abolished and he assumed direction of the Security Council. Subsequent reports stated that the new commission was only a recasting of the Chernomyrdin Commission and Kiriyenko's chairmanship would strengthen the "drive chain" of reform. It was even reported that Kokoshin had requested the creation of the commission as a necessary linkage between the presidential administration, the government, and the various military and security agencies.³⁹ At best this bureaucratic action restored the situation that existed in mid-March under Chernomyrdin. However, Kiriyenko lacks experience in this area and will need time to master the issues.

Prospects for Military Reform

What is most sorely missing in the current circumstances are sufficient funds for reform and dynamic, effective leadership with a compelling vision that will engage Russia's political elite and military elite. More austerity means further delays in meaningful reform beyond manpower cutbacks. Minister Sergeev is neither a Dmitri Miliutin nor a Mikhail Frunze with a compelling plan and the broad support to provide anything beyond technical direction of the reform process. Andrei Kokoshin seems to have the vision for successful reform but lacks the political leverage

to press his program. He must depend on the continued support of President Yeltsin, and that is conditional at best. Moreover, he needs strong executive leadership from the new Prime Minister who is dealing with the problem of military reform for the first time in the context of protracted crises that weaken the government's authority and reduce the resources that it can devote to military reform. Yet, as Aleksei Arbatov has pointed out, it is precisely weak civil control of the military that has been the most serious stumbling block to military reform in the past. "The inability of the top political and military leaders to make difficult choices from a number of competing priorities has led to spreading limited resources much too thinly, and thereby undermining our overall defense capabilities."⁴⁰ The importance of effective civilian control of the military was recently reaffirmed by Colonel-General Eduard Vorob'ev, a member of the State Duma Committee on Defense. The draft legislation on civilian control stipulates three goals.

The first is to create conditions under which the army and the other power structures shall not be used for other than stipulated purposes. The second is to control the implementation of the military budget so as to assure its rational disposal and preclude embezzlement. An the third is to ensure compliance with the norms of law on the status of servicemen and their families. The latter is extremely important for the social and legal protection of servicemen.⁴¹

In this government of men and not laws, the only prospect for meaningful reform seems to lie in the emergence of a charismatic figure with sufficient political appeal and military understanding to provide leadership, and that seems unlikely before the next presidential election. General Lebed's recent victory in the gubernatorial election in Krasnoyarsk Oblast' has once again placed his political star in the ascension. Lebed has a soldier's instinct for beginning reform at the very base of the military system, building good companies, battalions, and regiments. In the epoch of the Revolution in Military Affairs this may seem anachronistic, but the restoration of troop morale will only come from such a policy, and low morale is certainly at the center of many of the armed forces' problems today. Moreover, he has excellent credentials as a Russian nationalist with ties to the people.⁴² There is no shortage of military reform plans among Russia's other opposition parties.

Aleksei Arbatov, Deputy Chairman of the Duma Defense Committee and a leader of Georgiy Yavlinsky's Yabolko Party, has written extensively on military reform and the smaller, professional armed force that would be its outcome. Arbatov sees Russia enjoying a window of security, which would make possible a protracted process of reform under a stable nuclear umbrella. This "window of security" should guide Russian military reform with regard to its conventional forces. Over the near term, Russian conventional forces can limit their preparations for local conflicts on the southern axis of instability; over the mid-term, which Arbatov describes as the next 10-15 years, those forces should be prepared to deal with larger regional conflicts in the south; and in the long-term, or 15-20 years, those forces should prepare for "regional or large-scale conflicts in the south and/or east."⁴³ During this "window of security" Russia should use the opportunity to carry out "economic reform, military reform, optimal conversion, limiting itself in the intermediate period to a minimal reserve of general-purpose armed forces and powerful cover in the form of nuclear deterrence and modern frontal aviation capable of providing air superiority over a secondary enemy and a victory even with ground forces that are inferior in numbers."⁴⁴ While accepting the fact that Russia has lost super-power status, Arbatov sees Russia retaining the role of a great power with interests in many adjoining regions --

"Europe, the Near and Far East, Asia Minor and South Asia." At the same time internal reform, political stability, and economic development will have to take first priority for the further development of a democratic Russia that has broken with the traditions of "imperial expansion on the basis of messianic authoritarianism well into the future."⁴⁵ But as the leader of Arbatov's own party, *Yabloko*, Grigory Yavlinsky, has pointed out, military reform that will serve a democratic Russia will require a fundamental break with "Russia's Phony Capitalism" of robber barons, criminalization, and corruption that permeates state and society. New policies should lead to the birth of a Russian middle class in a state under law.⁴⁶

Among the nationalist-communist opposition, Gennadiy Zyuganov's Communist Party has been the most articulate on its program from military reform. A. I. Podberezkin, a member of the Duma and the head of the "Spiritual Heritage" movement, has used the RAU Corporation to publish many studies on military issues. One of the most recent works, edited by Zyuganov himself and written by Podberezkin, Yu. V. Lebedev and A. V. Surikov, is devoted to military reform and addresses both threats to Russian National Security and specific measures to be undertaken as part of military reform.⁴⁷ While considerably more concerned about the military implications of NATO expansion and opposing START II ratification, Zyuganov uses the language of threat, i.e., that of the geopolitics of the continental "heartland" against the threatening encroachment of the West, led by the US and NATO.⁴⁸ The signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act in May 1997 was nothing short of an act of capitulation by the Yeltsin government. The authors, however, place the greatest immediate military danger in the unstable south and the threat of local wars there. They go on to state: "Today the country does not have enough resources to conduct even one local war of high intensity. Therefore, priority in the resolution of problems in the post-Soviet space must go to diplomats and special services, anticipating the use of small military units only in an emergency situation and only on the smallest scale."⁴⁹ The end product of the military reform process would be an army with the combat power equal to Russia's geopolitical situation and role in the world as one of the great powers.⁵⁰ Addressing the problem of financing military reform, the authors propose the issuance of "military bonds" as loans to the state to pay for the costs of reform. These would be like the war bonds of the tsarist government or the defense bonds issued for sale by the United States during World War II.⁵¹

At present Russia does not have a deficit of concepts of military reform. What has been lacking is effective leadership and economic resources. Those are capital requirements for the exercise of military-political foresight, a point made by General V. N. Lobov in his introduction to a new edition of Clausewitz' *On War*.⁵² That is not likely to improve in the short run and may have to wait for the parliamentary elections of 1999 and the presidential elections of 2000. The current economic crisis is likely to move the Kiriyenko government towards a continuation of downsizing as a substitute for meaningful reform. As Mark Galeotti recently pointed out, the continued decay of the Russian military into something like a territorial militia seems likely to continue.⁵³ This outcome cannot be excluded, but it need not lead to any explosions, provided the government does not order this military to engage in any ill-conceived military adventures, as it did in Chechnya, or try to use it as the instrument of last resort in high politics as it did in 1993. At this time the former prospect, given the instability in Dagestan and across the north Caucasus, remains a distinct possibility.

The Russian government has, however, undertaken certain recent steps to realize military reform. After three months of internal debate and coordination among ministries and agencies, President Yeltsin signed "The Foundations (Concept) of the State Policy on Military Development for the Period Until 2005." According to Andrei Kokoshin, the Secretary of the Security Council, the document: 1) posits that Russia's nuclear capabilities reduce the risk of general war; 2) identifies local wars as the most immediate military threat to Russian security; 3) provides for a reduced size and role for Border Guards and Internal Troops; 4) commits the armed forces of the Ministry of Defense to supporting those forces in internal crises; 5) grants to the General Staff the coordination of all militaries; 6) demilitarizes the Border Guards Service and makes its recruitment based on contract; 7) provides for a ground force of ten, high-readiness divisions -- one of them peacekeeping - to respond to local conflicts and crises, and 8) looks to the replacement of the existing military districts with six military-administrative zones.⁵⁴ Kokoshin reported that the "Foundations" document would be followed by another document, "The Military Doctrine of Russia," which will replace that of November 1993 and be ready "presumably" in the fall of this year.⁵⁵ Kokoshin also tied the "Foundations" to lessons learned from the military debacle in Chechnya and called attention to the joint command and staff exercise conducted last week by the Armed Forces, Internal Troops, Federal Security Service, and other security services in Stavropol Krai, Dagestan and North Ossetia, which "reflected the concepts spelled out in the new defense documents."⁵⁶

This command and staff exercise, which involved 15,000 men, was coordinated by Colonel-General Leonty Shevtsov, current coordinator of Russian Internal forces in the North Caucasus.⁵⁷ Shevtsov served as the first Russian Deputy to SACEUR during IFOR/SFOR operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and upon his return to Russia became commander of Internal Troops. He is an experienced military planner, having served as Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff during the War in Chechnya. Minister of Internal Affairs Sergei Stepashin stated that the current exercise was not a prelude to the launching of military operations, but stressed the exercise's joint character: "the situation in the North Caucasus makes it imperative that narrow departmental interests do not impede practical work."⁵⁸ By linking concept and actual staff training, these recent developments do suggest some progress in military reform. The issue is whether these action will provide sufficient momentum to move military reform forward in a timely and sustained manner. Funding remains the Achilles heel of progress toward military reform.

Further delays in military reform can only make the process more protracted and difficult. This is especially true in those areas most affecting morale and discipline: officer benefits, recruitment and education, and the reconstruction of the relationship between officers and enlisted personnel: conscript/enlistment pool, professionalization of the non-commissioned officer corps, and the ending of barrack abuse of young soldiers. Without funds for training and exercises the armed forces cannot sustain either their professionalism or their combat capabilities.

More delays in military reform will also deepen the problem of weapon obsolescence, which will be acute by 2003. Before weapons procurement can begin in earnest, however, there is the pressing "need," as Economics Minister Yakov Urinson recently pointed out, "to clear up the mess in the defense industry."⁵⁹ This means verifying and paying off defense plants' debts to federal and local authorities as a result of the government's own under-funding of arms contracts,

mobilization capacities, and conversion programs. Under the government's new austerity program the payment of these debts has proven impossible. Recent reports suggest that the government has no funds to pay off the 27 billion rubles of arrears from 1997 that are owed to defense enterprises and their workers. One official from the defense industry department of the Economic Ministry put the situation in stark terms: "'It is going to be a virtual payment for a virtual (1998) defense procurement.'⁶⁰ The likely outcome are mass protests by defense workers this fall.

Military reform is an integral part of state reform and in the final analysis depends upon the government's ability to provide effective leadership and mobilize the necessary public support and financial resources to execute a sustained and systematic program. There is evidence of progress in key areas -- coordinating Russian multiple militaries, reducing the size of forces outside the MOD, reducing the size of the ground forces and tailoring them for local wars, strengthening the role of the General Staff, and getting effective sustained leadership from the Security Council. But the current crisis of state finances and the continued decline in the national economy pose serious limits on the resources that can be found to transform downsizing into a serious, sustained, and systematic, military reform process.

Endnotes

1. Jacob W. Kipp, **"Consequences of Defeat: Modernizing the Russian Navy, 1856-1963,"** *Jahrbuecher fuer Geschichte Osteuropas*, XX, (June 1972), 210-225; and **"M. Kh. Reutern on the Russian State and Economy: A Liberal Bureaucrat during the Crimean Era,"** *Journal of Modern History*, XLVII, No. 3, (September 1975), 437-459.
2. Jacob W. Kipp, **"Peter the Great, Soldier-Statesman of the Age of Enlightenment: A Naval Perspective,"** Abigail T. Siddall, ed., *Acta No. 7* (Washington, DC, 25-30 July 1982), International Commission for Military History, Manhattan, Kansas: Sunflower University Press, 1984, 113-139.
3. Jacob W. Kipp, **"Mass and Maneuver and the Origins of Soviet Operational Art"** in Karl Reddel, ed., *Transformation in Russian and Soviet Military History: Proceedings of the Twelfth Military History Symposium*, USAF Academy, 1986 (Washington, DC: United States Air Force Office of Air Force History, 1990), 87-116; **"Lenin and Clausewitz: The Militarization of Marxism,"** and **"Soviet Military Doctrine and the Origins of Operational Art, 1917-1936,"** in Philip S. Gillette and Willard C. Frank, Jr., eds., *Soviet Military Doctrine* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 63-84 and 85-133; **"General-Major A. A. Svechin and Modern War: Military History and Military Theory,"** Introductory essay for: Kent Lee, editor, A. A. Svechin, *Strategy* (Minneapolis: East view Publications, 1992), 21-60; V. K. Triandafillov's **"The Nature of the Operations of Contemporary Armies,"** [editor and author of foreword] (London: Frank Cass, 1994), and **"Two Views of Warsaw: The Russian civil War and Soviet Operational Art, 1920-1930,"** in B. J. C. McKercher and Michael A. Hennessey, eds., *The Operational Art: Developments in the Theories of War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996), 51-86.
4. Jacob W. Kipp, *Foresight and Forecasting: The Russian and Soviet Military Experience* (College Station, TX: Center for Strategic Technology Stratech Studies, 1988); **"The Soviet**

General Staff Looks at 'Desert Storm': Through the Prism of Contemporary Politics" in *The Soviet Military and the Future*, edited by Steven Blank and Jacob W. Kipp (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 115-144; **"Soviet Military Foresight and Forecasting in an Era of Restructuring"** in Derek Leebaert and Timothy Dickinson, eds., *Soviet Strategy and New Military Thinking* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 248-275; **"The Soviet Military and the Future: Politico-Military Alternatives"** in John Hemsley, *The Lost Empire* (London: Brassey's/Pergamon, 1992), 67-90; **"The Nature of Future War: Russian Military Forecasting and the Revolution in Military Affairs, A Case of the Oracle of Delphi or Cassandra?,"** *The Journal of Soviet Military Studies*, 9, No. 1 (March 1996), 1-45; **"Soldiers and Civilians Confronting Future War: Lev Tolstoy, Jan Bloch and Their Russian Military Critics"** in Stephen D. Chiabotti, ed., *Tooling for War: Military Transformation in the Industrial Age* (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 1996), 189-230; and **"Introduction"** in M. A. Gareev's *If War Comes Tomorrow? The Contours of Future Armed Conflict* [edited by Jacob No. 6, (November-December 1996), pp. 5-11. W. Kipp] (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1998).

5. A. A. Kokoshin, *Armiya i politika: Sovetskaya voyenno-politicheskaya i voyenno-strategicheskaya mysl', 1918-1991 gody* (Moscow: "Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya," 1955), pp. 3-15.

6. Andrei Kokoshin, **"Voyenn-politicheskie i ekonomicheskie aspekty reformy Vooruzhennykh Sil Rossii,"** *Voyennaya mysl'*,

7. S. F. Platonov, *The Time of Troubles: A Historical Study of the Internal Crisis and Social Struggle in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Muscovy*, translated by John T. Alexander (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1971), pp. 164-176.

8. In a discussion with Dr. Andrei Piontkovsky at a round table held at King's College, Cambridge, in January 1991, the author raised the question of whether the Soviet Union had not entered a new "time of troubles" with all its complexity and duration. Dr. Piontkovsky answered that it was a "trouble" [*smuta*] but thought that it would be of short duration.

9. For an excellent treatment of this critique and its political implications, see: Aleksandr Yanov, *Posle El'tsina: "Veymarskaya" Rossiya* (Moscow: Izdatel'skaya firma "Kruk," 1995), pp. 244-257.

10. Andrei Sakharov, **"Smuty i avtoritarizm v Rossii, polemicheskie zametki"** [Troubles and Authoritarianism in Russia, Polemical Comments], *Svobodnaya mysl'*, No. 9 (September 1996), p. 92.

11. Jacob W. Kipp, **"The Soviet Ground Forces between Repression and Reform: The Dialectics of Change in Soviet Military Doctrine,"** *Defense Analysis*, 7, Nos. 2/3 (June-September 1991), pp. 209-234.

12. Sergei Rogov, **"Military Reform: Now or Never,"** *European Security*, I, No. 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 5-12.

13. Jacob W. Kipp, "The Uncertain Future of the Soviet Military, from Coup to Commonwealth: The Antecedents of National Armies," *European Security*, I, No. 2 (Summer 1992), 207-238.
14. Kokoshin, *Armiya i politika*, p. 10.
15. Ibid.
16. Evgeniy Zelenov, "Problemy grazhdanskogo kontrolya nad voyennym byudzhedom v demokraticeskom obshchestve," in V. V. Naumkin, ed., *Formirovanie voyennogo byudzheta: Materialy seminara* (Moskva, 14-15 sentyabrya 1997) (Moscow: Rossiyskiy Tsentr Strategicheskikh i Mezhdunarodnykh Issledovaniy, 1997), p. 9.
17. Naumkin, ed., *Formirovanie voyennogo byudzheta: Materialy seminara* (Moskva, 14-15 sentyabrya 1997), p. 42.
18. *Congressional Record*, 139, No. 140 (18 October 1993), p. S13580.
19. Vitaly V. Shlykov, "The Real Defense Burden in Russia," a paper delivered at Swedish Defense Research Establishment's Conference: Russian Military Prospects, March 12, 1998, Stockholm, Sweden, p. 22.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 20.
22. Sergey Oznobistchev, "The Situation in Russia Today," *Center for Naval Analysis* (Alexandria, VA: May 1998), p. 8.
23. Vitaly V. Shlykov, "Paradoksy Rossiyskoy demilitarizatsii," *Voyennyy vestnik*, No. 1 (April 1998), pp. 4-5.
24. Martin Nesirsky, "Russian Armed Force in Critical Shape," *Johnson's Russia List #2168* (8 May 1998), davidjohnson@erols.com.
25. Vladislav Putilin, "Optimize the Strength of the Armed Forces," *Military New Bulletin*, VII, No. 6 (78) (June 1998), p. 2.
26. Ibid., and "Defense Chief Says Army was Unable to Fight," Agence France Press (8 April 1998).
27. Aleksandr Gol'ts, "Vo vlast'--shagom marsh!," *Itogi* (13 July 1998), pp. 33-34.
28. Greg Myre, "Russian Soldiers Support Job Cuts," *Johnson's Russia List #2024* (21 January 1998), davidjohnson@erols.com.

29. Shylkov, **"The Real Defense Burden in Russia,"** p. 21, and *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 6, 1998.
30. *Krasnaya zvezda* (February 6, 1996).
31. RIA Novosti, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (10 February 1998).
32. Interfax, Moscow, 1145 GMT, 3 March 1998, in English.
33. Shylkov, **"Paradoksy Rossiyskoy demilitarizatsii,"** *Voyennyy vestnik*, No. 1 (April 1998), pp. 4-5.
34. *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (4 April 1998).
35. Owen Matthews and Bill Powell, **"What Really Ails Russia,"** *Newsweek* (June 8, 1998), p. 38; and Sergey Markov, **"Is a Russian Storm on the Horizon?"** *Intellectual Capital.com* (June 4, 1998). Markov concludes that current political and economic crises are symptomatic of "the long-term illness of modern Russia that periodically becomes more acute or gets slightly better." Russia faces "not an explosive development, but a continuation of slow-burning crises."
36. **"Acting Prime Minister Pushes for Military Reform,"** *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* (7 April 1998).
37. Ibid.
38. **"Yeltsin Decrees New Defense Commission,"** *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* (29 May 1998).
39. **"Security Council Secretary Strengthened?"** *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* (3 June 1998).
40. Aleksei Arbatov, *The Russian Military in the 21st Century* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 1997), p. 2.
41. Eduard Vorob'ev, **"Specific Features of Russian Military Reform,"** *Military News Bulletin*, VII, No. 6, (78) (22 June 1998), p. 5.
42. Jacob W. Kipp, **"The Political Ballet of General Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed: Implications for Russia's Presidential Elections,"** *Problems of Post-Communism* (July-August 1996), 43-53, and Benjamin S. Lambeth, *The Warrior Who Would Rule Russia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996).
43. Arbatov, *The Russian Military in the 21st Century*, p. 10.
44. Ibid.

45. Aleksei Arbatov, "**Natsional'naya ideya i natsional'naya bezopasnost'**," *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya*, No. 6 (June 1998), pp. 5-19.
46. Grigory Yavlinsky, "**Russia's Phony Capitalism**," *Foreign Affairs* (May-June 1998), pp. 67-79.
47. G. Zyuganov, ed., *Voyennaya reforma: Vooruzhennyye sily Rossiyskoy Federatsii* (Moscow: "Dukhovnoe nasledie," 1998).
48. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
49. Ibid., p. 15.
50. Ibid., p. 38.
51. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
52. V. N. Lobov, "**Karl Klauzevits. Zhizn'. Idei. Sovremennoe znachenie**," in K. Klauzevits, *O voyne* (Moscow: LKOS/NAUKA [1998]), pp. 21-22.
53. Mark Galeotti, "**Crisis Continues for Russia's Army**," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (June 1998).
54. "**Kremlin Approves Major Defense Policy Document**," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor*, IV, No. 149 (4 August 1998) on Daniela@Jamestown.org.
55. *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (4 August 1998).
56. "**Kremlin Approves Major Defense Policy Document**," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor*, IV, No. 149 (4 August 1998) on Daniela@Jamestown.org.
57. *Kommersant-Daily* (30 July 1998).
58. Itar-Tass, RTR (27 July 1998).
59. Yakov Urinson, "**Defence Industry on the Most Efficient Enterprises**," *Military News Bulletin*, VII, No. 6 (78) (22 June 1998), p. 6.
60. Simon Saradzhian, "**Russian Budget Cuts Inflamm Industry Workers**," *Defense News* (July 20-26, 1998), p. 50.