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"The Future of Ukrainian-Russian Relations"

Conference Roundtable Transcript

This roundtable was part of a conference entitled "Ukrainian National Security" held on May 8–9, 1997. The conference was sponsored by the Kennan Institute, the Harriman Institute, the RAND Corporation, and the Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University Institute of International Relations.

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This Occasional Paper has been produced with support provided by the Russian, Eurasian, and East European Research and Training Program of the U.S. Department of State (funded by the Soviet and East European Research and Training Act of 1983, or Title VIII). We are most grateful to this sponsor.

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PARTICIPANTS

Chair

Ian Brzezinski
Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator William Roth, U.S. Senate

Speakers

Sherman Garnett
Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Oleksandr Pavliuk
Associate Professor, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

Alexander Rahr
Head of the Russian CIS Unit, German Society for Foreign Affairs, Bonn
(Forschungsinstitut der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswätige Politik)

Roman Solchanyk
Senior Analyst, RAND Corporation

Igor Torbakov
Fellow, Institute of Russian History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

Roundtable: The Future of Ukrainian-Russian Relations

Ian Brzezinski: We will commence the last session of this conference on "Ukrainian National Security." My name is Ian Brzezinski and I am the legislative assistant to Senator Bill Roth of the U.S. Senate. I have had the honor of being asked to chair this very distinguished panel of experts on European security, experts who have a strong interest and have played important roles in Ukrainian security affairs. Over the last day and a half you all have looked at various dimensions of Ukrainian security—the political, economic, and military dimensions.

The panel we have today is going to look at one aspect of Ukraine's relationships with the rest of the world in which each of these dimensions are particularly acute—that is Ukraine's bilateral relationship with Russia. They are acute because in each case you can look at the dimension as being a significant challenge to Ukraine's security. Just to reiterate what you have probably already heard over the last day: in the economic field you have a relationship that is one of perhaps dependence, particularly in the energy sector; in the political you have a relationship in which there are stresses—Ukraine neighbors on a nation that still has difficulty recognizing its independence and refuses to recognize Ukraine's borders, at least on a bilateral basis; you have a security dimension that is very acute, with the stationing of foreign forces on Ukrainian territory and the ongoing difficulties over the negotiation of the future of the Black Sea Fleet. Then there is the broader aspect of having two nations whose own identities are evolving and whose evolutions are deeply intertwined. We have Russia, whose geographic space is far different from what it was in previous history, and who is trying to adjust to that reality; and we have Ukraine—which in many ways is a newly independent state—whose identity is still very much in a phase of consolidation. It is a relationship that is very interactive. We have heard from others and from the members of this panel that the future of Ukraine's independence will very much shape the future of Russia's role in world affairs and vice versa.

Let me introduce our speakers. On my far right we have Dr. Sherman Garnett, Senior Associate from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace where he specializes on the foreign and security policies of Russia, Ukraine, and the other Newly Independent States. He is widely published with articles appearing in *Foreign Policy*, *The Washington Quarterly*, and other leading journals, and has just published a book on Ukraine entitled *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine and the New Political Geography of Central and Eastern Europe*. To his left, we have Oleksandr Pavliuk, who is an Associate Professor at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Kyiv. He is an old friend of the Kennan Institute and was here as a Regional Exchange Scholar three years ago. He has written extensively on Ukraine's security policies. We have to my right Igor Torbakov, who is a fellow at the Institute of Russian History at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow. He has attained numerous and fairly prestigious scholarships. He was an Eastern Research Visitor at the RFE/RL Research Institute in Munich, and two years ago he was a Regional Exchange Scholar at the Kennan Institute. To my left we have Alexander Rahr, who is the Head of the Russian CIS Unit at the German Society for Foreign Affairs. I know of his work through his time at RFE/RL, where he was a Senior Research Analyst. His work has provided him a fair amount of study both in the United States and in Russia in addition, of course, to his

home, Germany. He has written quite extensively on Russian-Ukrainian security relations. To my far left, we have Roman Solchanyk, whom I have known for a number of years through my work in Kyiv and his travels out there. I have turned many times to his work as an important source for the policy activities we have in our office in the U.S. Senate. Roman is a senior analyst at the RAND Corporation and is now working on a book on Ukrainian-Russian relations.

I have asked our speakers to keep their remarks fairly brief—no more than ten minutes—and then we will move to an open discussion. We will start off with Sherm.

Sherman Garnett: I just want to make six points and I will try to do so within the time constraints our chairman has suggested. If you drew up a list of the relationships in Europe that were at once the core relationships for the future of the continent, and you drew up a list of the most unsettled relationships—not necessarily in crisis or unstable, but unsettled—the Ukrainian-Russian relationship would be high on both lists. It might be the only one that is that high on both lists. This conference has certainly talked about Ukraine's importance, location, and size, especially after NATO expansion which makes it a front-line state with NATO. It is the most important and unsettled relationship.

The second point is that the relationship has not broken down. It is not, as many predicted, a relationship of conflict, although it is conflictual at times. Someone on an earlier panel made the point this morning about it being governed by a "perverse stability." I agree with that. I think that there has been an amazing pragmatism when it counted, there have been summits in which both sides have conspired to make progress that they knew would not actually hold for more than a few weeks afterwards, but they understood the need to avoid a breakdown. This pragmatism at the core has been more important than the sort of nutty and irreconcilable chorus on the outskirts. Nationalists in both countries at this point are less critical of the relationship than this pragmatic core. So, the second theme that defines Russian-Ukrainian relations is muddling through. You really have an intricate muddling through. The two sides do not just "luck" through things.

That brings me to my third point, the main obstacle in this relationship. Some call it psychological, but I would call it a crisis of expectations. The main obstacle in my view is that the Ukrainian side believes in the need to normalize this relationship, to make it like any other country. It will not become less important in Europe, but they would like to make it a settled relationship in Europe. They are certainly too weak to impose this on Russia. The Russians want something better from their point of view—what Ryurikov called the "fraternal Slavic compromise." They want an intimate relationship, something better than a normal relationship. The psychology here is very compatible with muddling through. In other words, from the Russian side, they do not want to let the Black Sea crisis get out of hand. But if they settle this thing and sign this treaty, it will obstruct the movement back to some more intimate relationship than normal that will inevitably come two years, four years, or seven years later. I think that is the main issue, because they all play out, if you look at the Black Sea fleet, the VAT, the border issue, anything. I think it is less sinister, less irreconcilable in its nature than the extremes on both sides suggest, but there is a really core obstacle here, a crisis or a differentiation of expectation.

Now here is where I begin to diverge from the panel this morning, and this is my fourth point. The long

term moderate trends suggest that one country is going to be big and powerful and one is going to be at best just a medium power. There is simply going to be a difference in capabilities and potentially of intentions over time. That could be exacerbated by the current situation in which Russia, despite having many of the same problems that Ukraine has, also has a dynamism that I think is absent from Ukrainian political and economic life right now. So it is not that Russia has less corruption than Ukraine. In my view, Russia has more going on around the corruption. You can see that the difference that will exist by nature between the two countries is hugely exacerbated by what Russia is doing right and what Ukraine is doing wrong. I am a big fan of at least the Ukrainian view of this relationship—that it should be regulated and normal—because I do not want to see a crisis of the Black Sea Fleet or of Crimea that really was not maneuvered by Moscow but would become a bilateral issue. I would rather that crisis, if it should come about, take place within the context of settled relationships, regulated treaties, and international recognition of them. That is, if you think there is still a dark side to come in this relationship, even accidentally, it is better if these treaties are here.

My fifth point is that Ukraine's view—and what I would argue the West's view ought to be—of the Ukrainian-Russian relationship is bolstered if it becomes as strong as possible internally and if it has friends. In other words, the West can play a role in normalizing Russian-Ukrainian relations somewhat comparable to the way it played a role in the denuclearization of Ukraine and the way the IMF played a role in the settlement of Ukraine's debt. That is an objective need, I think.

My last point would be that I think Ukraine right now is doing everything possible both to make itself weaker internally and to make its claim upon Europe—at a time when it is so vital that Europe recognize it—less credible. I have not joined the group of pessimists. I do not think we are talking about the existence of Ukraine. I do not even believe everything I read about corruption. But I do think that there is a contradiction between Ukraine's current foreign policies and its domestic and internal situation. Ukraine has said that it wants to be a part of the European Union, that it wants to be close to NATO, and has even hinted about joining NATO. They are reaching out to Europe. Europe certainly has not reached back to them. I think it is important that U.S. policy push Europe towards Ukraine. But at exactly the time we should be doing this, we look to Ukraine itself and see this inherent contradiction between their ambitions in foreign policy and their domestic and internal situation. I think the danger here is that Kuchma assumes—although I have never heard him articulate this in a policy—that the situation of "perverse stability" is a permanent thing. I have tried to present an argument in this brief time that it may not be. It may not be both because things in Russia could change or the balance of powers could change, and also because the two countries could be potentially drawn in as a result of some problem such as Crimea. Again, while this is supposed to be on Russian-Ukrainian relations, it seems to me the central paradox to that relationship is probably in Ukraine itself at this point. Ukraine needs a linkage between its political and economic reform and the claim that I think both Ukraine and the United States should be pressing in Europe: that Ukraine and the Ukrainian-Russian relationship matter deeply in the long run.

The current situation that one sees in Ukraine may justify a hands-off position on the part of Europe. But the basic geo-political realities which I began this talk with—its location, its size, simply its potential effect on Europe—make it a

kind of penny-wise, pound-foolish policy not to embrace Ukraine right now and if we think it is going wrong not to take a stick to it. That would be the paradox that I see at the heart of the Ukrainian-Russian relationship.

Ian Brzezinski: Thank you Sherm. Dr. Pavliuk?

Oleksandr Pavliuk: Speaking about the current status of Ukrainian-Russian relations, my first point is that in spite of the experience the two countries have accumulated since they became independent, they still have not developed a mature relationship. Today we can say that Ukraine and Russia continue to be involved in a complex process of negotiations to establish the basic principles and legal norms of bilateral relations. Despite the fact that Ukraine signed more than one hundred bilateral agreements with Russia—more than with any other country in the world—basic agreements like the political treaty on Friendship and Cooperation and the agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of borders have yet to be signed. These are the basic agreements which should shape the whole political context for bilateral agreements.

My second point is that both countries still lack a coherent strategy of their bilateral relations. Speaking about Ukraine, after taking a rather propagandistic anti-Russian stand in 1992–93 and harboring ideas of a strategic partnership with Russia and the Eurasian space in 1994 and the beginning of 1995, official Kyiv seems to have come to the conclusion that its relations with Russia should be, in Kuchma's words, "equal, mutually beneficial, and respective relations of two European states based on the norms of international law." However, aside from this general approach, Kyiv finds it difficult to come up with a coherent Russia strategy. This is not in the least due to the fact that Russia itself has so far failed to elaborate a clear concept of its Ukrainian policy.

It may look very strange, but despite the centuries of mutual history, both countries experience a very strong deficit of knowledge and information about each other. Today, Ukrainians do not know much of what is going on in Russia, although they know more than Russians know about what is going on in Ukraine. Ukrainians still read some Russian newspapers and have access to Russian television. The Russian population does not have this information at all. As a result, there are mutual misperceptions, suspicions, and stereotypes. Some of the most widespread stereotypes in Russia are, for example, that most Ukrainians would like to renew this or that kind of union with Russia, and that if not for the Ukrainian leadership (which is nationalistic and has somehow cheated the population), it would be much easier to reintegrate. My colleague Hryhoriy Nemyria spoke yesterday and gave a number of figures about the changes in perception of the population, at least in Ukraine, about Ukrainian-Russian relations and their identity.

Several serious problems still persist in Ukrainian-Russian relations. A lot has been said about those problems and I do not want be repetitious. However, I would like to say that in my opinion Ukrainian-Russian relations experienced the first systemic crisis last year. There was a serious deterioration of political relations; there were certain economic tensions—I would even call them wars— regarding Ukrainian exports to Russia and new taxes; and there were many examples of actual psychological warfare when both countries published materials presenting the other country in a rather negative light. All this leads me to the conclusion that Ukrainian-Russian relations still remain contradictory and unstable. Today the term "perverse stability" was used. I agree with this term. I would also use

the term "a stability of instability." If we look at the last five years of Ukrainian-Russian relations, they were uncertain, but they were stably uncertain. There were no major changes for the better or the worse. There were certain periods of tension and then periods of more or less normalization. But in general they have remained uncertain.

In estimating today's Ukrainian-Russian relations, I would also like to challenge the assertion of the one-sidedness of Ukraine's economic dependence on Russia that was sometimes presented during our conference. I would point rather to the remaining significant mutual interdependence and complementarity of Russian and Ukrainian economic systems. In this regard, I cannot completely agree with Professor Smolansky, who gave a very interesting presentation on Ukraine's fuel and energy dependence on Russia. Russia also depends on economic cooperation with Ukraine, especially if we take into account the fact that Ukraine is the world's largest consumer and transport route for Russian gas and oil, offering Europe's lowest tariff for this transportation. Ukraine annually consumes 50–55 billion cubic meters of Russian gas, and each year up to 200 billion cubic meters of gas and about 10 million tons of oil are piped through Ukrainian territory. On the whole, Ukraine accounts for more than 50 percent of Russia's trade with the CIS countries. The question here is why Ukraine is largely losing from its "neighborness" with Russia. For example, why can the Baltic countries benefit from their geographic proximity to Russia? Why, despite having the same energy dependence on Russia, can the Baltics profit from trade with Russia and from exporting Russian minerals to the West while Ukraine is a loser in this game? This is, in my opinion, a serious question which should be addressed. Of course, it is clear that Ukraine is still more dependent on Russia.

This dependence on Russia and the size factor in Ukrainian-Russian relations leads to the fact that Ukraine is much more interested in finding quick solutions to the remaining problems in its relations with Russia, while Russia is not in a hurry to finally settle all the issues that we have discussed here. So far Ukrainian-Russian relations have been defined mainly by the position of Russia, given the size factor and the level of dependence of one country on the other. Ukraine's policy has been mostly reactive rather than proactive. Only in the last year has Ukraine tried to be proactive in its relations with Russia. It has tried on certain occasions to use the domestic situation in Russia (first of all connected with the presidential elections) to take the initiative in its relations with Russia. For the most part this has failed.

However, despite its largely reactive Russian policy, Kyiv can still do much more to strengthen its position vis-a-vis Moscow and to improve bilateral relations. First of all, Kyiv itself still has to clearly decide to what extent it can rapproche with Russia, in what areas it can—I do not want to use the word integrate—move closer, and in what areas any kind of rapprochement is completely unacceptable for Kyiv. There is no clarity in this approach, at least in my opinion. Given Russia's size, it seems to me that Ukraine could be much more active in establishing relations with Russian regions (especially with those where Ukraine has specific economic interests), with Russian media, and even creating friends or a lobbying group in the Russian Parliament. So far, Ukraine has done nothing in this regard. Also, it seems to me that what Ukraine needs is to create a special governmental structure which will coordinate all the official relations of Ukraine and various Ukrainian ministries and regions with Russia. There is no positive coordination of Ukraine's Russian policy.

Now for a few words about the future of Ukrainian-Russian relations as I understand it. First of all, given the fact that transformation in both countries is far from being completed and that the process of transformation is very complex for both countries, it is practically impossible to predict all possible scenarios for the future. Some unexpected developments can still take place in Ukrainian-Russian relations. In the short run, Ukrainian-Russian relations will remain uncertain and in this sense unstable, corresponding to their defined status of "perverse stability." Russia still wants to be a great power and wants to assert its great power status. Ukraine is definitely perceived as a key in asserting this status and Russian pressure on Ukraine will continue. The fact that Ukraine is still too weak to withstand that pressure will continue to contribute to the development of Ukrainian-Russian relations. In the long run, I believe there are two major scenarios that are possible. The first scenario is that Ukrainian-Russian relations will remind us more or less of American-Canadian relations. They will develop into stable relations of two sovereign and more or less equal partners. Under the second, less preferable scenario, Ukraine will remain overdependent on Russia and will continue to be a subject of Russian pressure.

Today, Ukrainian-Russian relations are asymmetrical. This asymmetry in itself has the potential for conflict and tension between Ukraine and Russia. In this regard, two events could help in normalizing Ukrainian-Russian relations: first, if Ukraine becomes stronger economically; and second—and this is very important—if Ukraine becomes part of some larger international entity. Then the country will start feeling more confident and will become a more equal partner in its relations with Russia. To make this possible, a lot will depend on Ukraine's ability to progress with its internal transition process and on the success of its integration into Europe. If Ukraine succeeds in becoming a legitimate part of Central Europe and in strengthening its relationship with the European Union and with NATO, it will be more confident and will be perceived by Russia as a more equal partner. Then relations have a good chance of being normalized.

I want to say a few words about the nature of the Ukrainian-NATO agreement which was discussed here yesterday. There were a few titles used: "special partnership" or "distinctive partnership." In my understanding, it should be neither special nor distinctive. In the long run, the role of this agreement and its importance for Ukraine will depend a lot on whether it will forever fix special status for Ukraine in Europe or whether it will become one more major step towards Ukraine's gradual integration into Europe. If it is the former, this will definitely lead to a weakening of Ukraine's position with Russia. In the latter case, this agreement will really contribute to Ukraine's stability, the stability of all of Europe, and the stability of Ukrainian-Russian relations. Thank you.

Ian Brzezinski: Thank you. Dr. Torbakov?

Igor Torbakov: Thank you. I seem to be the only representative of the Moscow academia here, so I will try to present a Russian angle—naturally in a good neighborly way—and will talk about the perceptions and stereotypes of Ukrainians that Russians have been shaped over the past 200–300 years. I will talk about things that may seem immaterial, but I do believe that these things powerfully affect the current decision-making process in Moscow.

Historical sources testify that at the time of the first contacts between the two peoples in the beginning of the 17th Century, Muscovites viewed Ukrainians not as close, kindred, and intelligible

Slavic brothers, but rather as aliens and strangers. As one Russian observer, Ivan Pereverzev (a resident of my native Kharkiv) noted at the end of the 18th century, as a result of the separation from Northern Rus, Southern Rus—that is Ukraine—had been forced to transform its ancestors' tongue, "to change into foreign dress, to work out new forms of housekeeping, to change its mores and character." In a word, "this fateful separation transformed its inhabitants in such a way that there emerged a foreign nation." True, since the 14th to mid-17th Century, Russians and Ukrainians belonged to different political and cultural worlds. After the "reunification," this extremely important historical fact inevitably resulted in mutual mistrust, suspicion, and misunderstanding. The difference in interpreting the nature of the political alliance concluded in 1654 has led to the emergence of an important component part of a stereotype of Ukrainians, namely an unreliable partner or a traitor. The great Russian historian of the 19th Century, Sergei Solovyov, wrote that the word *cherkashenin*—that is Ukrainian—was synonymous with treason long before 1709. Ivan Mazepa's so-called betrayal has just become a final chord in the shaping of the stereotype.

During the entire 18th Century, the Russian imperial government was more or less successfully struggling with such historical relics as local rites and privileges. The regions with certain internal administrative differences had to be brought to a common denominator. As Empress Catherine the Great had picturesquely put it, they needed "to be russified," "lest they look like wolves in the forest." Provincialization of Ukrainian life as a result of the administrative practices of the central government on the one hand, and of the irresistible appeal of high imperial culture on the other, were slowly but surely making themselves felt. The Cossack *starshina* (the 18th Century Ukrainian elite) merged with Russian nobility, accepted its culture—naturally the Russian one—and itself started actively participating in its further development.

This has, however, led to another very important turn in the evolution of the stereotype of Ukrainians. Since practically the entire Ukrainian representative class became Russian in terms of language and culture, the Little Russian language and more important, the people who spoke it, came to be viewed as something distorted, ugly, and ludicrous. They became the target of snobbish jibes and arrogant mockery. Following the example of contemporary Polish writers, the little Russian vernacular came to be used only in comedies, parody dialogues and scenes, scabbarous satirical songs, etc. As can be seen in the treaties and poetics penned by Mitrofan Dovgalevsky, even a theoretical basis for such literary practice appeared.

During the first half of the 19th Century, the image of Ukraine and Ukrainians in the perception of Russians has undergone some modification. Despite the centralizing efforts of the imperial government, a number of ethnographic differences between Great Russia and Little Russia persisted and arrested the attention of observers. Travelling in Ukraine in 1803, Pavel Sumarokov sees, for instance, "different faces, different manners, different dress, different ways," and hears "a different language." "Does here run the boundary of the empire? Am I entering a foreign land?" he asks. In 1830, Nikolai Polevoi was informing his readers that in case they would like to travel to the south of Moscow beyond the Desna River, they would find themselves "among people completely different from us pure Russians. The language, dress, faces, appearance, way of life, houses, opinions, beliefs look absolutely different." "Moreover," he said, "they still look at us with hostility."

In the first half of the 19th Century, however, Russians were neither afraid of nor even irritated by such an attitude. From their point of view, this was simply the reaction of uneducated plebeians. The Ukrainian nobility, while preserving a certain ethnographic interest in native antiquities, remained politically totally loyal to the Russian crown and in its majority did not express signs of a special—distinct from Great Russians'—national consciousness. In general, Ukraine was perceived by the enlightened Russian public as a certain ideal Rousseauistic world, an idyllic land of plenty. "Little Russia is another Italy!" emotionally exclaimed Prince Shalikov. This seems to be an early corroboration of Ilya Prizel's thesis which he set forth yesterday.

The situation changed by the end of the 1840s. The development of events both inside and outside the Russian empire (suffice it to mention the European Spring of Nations in 1848 and the new stage of Ukrainian national movement connected with the Brotherhood of Cyrill and Methodius) could not fail to put the authorities on guard. These events also affected the attitude of the Russian intellectual class towards the subtly emerged "Ukrainian question" and revived the dormant old stereotypes and prejudices. Within this context, it is easier to understand, for example, the Ukrainophobia of the Russian literary critic Belinsky who compared Ukrainian history with a grotesque style in art. It is no wonder that Belinsky is considered to be the founding father not only of Russian liberalism but also of liberal nationalism, an intellectual trend popular today with the majority of current Russian politicians.

The second half of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century passed in the Russian Empire under signs of administrative and intellectual struggle with the growing Ukrainian national movement. As far as the formation of stereotypes is concerned, it is interesting to look at three famous disputes: first between Mikhail Maksimovich and Mikhail Pogodin; second between Mykola Kostomarov and Mikhail Katkov; and third between Bohdan Kistyakovsky and Peter Struve. Thus to Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov, an influential journalist in the 1860s, an attempt to distinguish Russians and Ukrainians represented "a scandalous and preposterous sophism." Like Vissarion Belinsky, he maintained that "Ukraine has never had a distinctive history, has never been a separate state. The Ukrainian people are a purely Russian people, a primeval Russian people, an essential part of the Russian people, without which the Russian people cannot go on being what they are." From Katkov's point of view, there could be "no rivalry between the southern and the northern part of one and the same nationality, just as there could be no rivalry between the two hands, between the two eyes of one and the same and living organism." It is noteworthy, though, that the representatives of the Russian intelligentsia who were polemicizing with the Ukrainian intellectuals had, as the journal *Ukrainskaya Zhizn* put it in 1912, "an extremely vague idea of Ukrainian national rebirth, its history and current state, the aspirations and needs of Ukrainian people and even Ukrainian literature." The political sympathies of several true experts and genuine Russian Ukrainophiles like Academicians Pypin, Shakhmatov, and Korsh also had their limits. Having learned of the First Universal of the Ukrainian Central Rada, Alexei Shakhmatov irritatingly exclaimed, "Non possemus!" that is, "We will not allow!"

The dramatic events of the Ukrainian *vyzvolni zmahannya* and attempts at building an independent Ukrainian state had further aggravated relations between Russians and Ukrainians. For the two Great Russian

political camps, both Reds and Whites alike, an independent Ukraine was unacceptable. As the future head of the Ukrainian Soviet government, Grigorii Pyatakov stated with a Bolshevik's bluntness, "all talk of independent Ukraine is out of the question because this is a nationalist invention." One may assume that this point of view was readily shared by General Anton Denikin as well. The rapid growth of Ukrainophobia in the course of the hostilities as of 1917–21 was artistically reflected, by the way, in Volodymyr Vynnychenko's play *Between the Two Forces*.

Although the Bolsheviks had won the civil war, they had to pursue a more or less flexible policy of *ukrainizatsiya* in whose framework they tried somehow to harmonize Moscow's centralizing efforts with the still strong aspirations for independence on the part of the borderland republics. Nevertheless, this inconsistent policy has resulted in an intensive nationalist rebirth in Ukraine and the forming of a sizeable cultural class there. But at the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s this policy was abruptly interrupted and both the ultra-revolutionary and the new Ukrainian elite were mercilessly destroyed. The next, and probably the most destructive wave of provincialization of Ukrainian life and culture began, which lasted until the very end of the 1980s. During this last period, the stereotype of Ukrainian has finally shaped in the consciousness of an overwhelming majority of Russians which has now a direct influence on Russia's current Ukrainian policy.

To sum things up, something truly "strange" can either be acceptable or unacceptable, but its very strangeness and distinctiveness compel one to notice it and regard its claims to independence seriously. What we are dealing with here, however, is two peoples who have lived for quite a long time within the framework of a single state, a state which one of the peoples considered its national state. For the Russians—at least from the end of the 18th Century to the present day—it is psychologically very difficult to view Ukrainians as full-blooded "aliens." Cultural and linguistic kinship on the one hand, and the local existence within the common body politic on the other, had led to a situation where Russians always saw in Ukrainians not so much a genuine "stranger" as a "distorted self." In the circumstances of an overwhelming domination of Russian culture and artificial marginalization of Ukrainian culture similar phenomena were perceived not as "strange," but rather as a parody of "one's own." In politically neutral situations, such a parody prompts one to laugh, but when the "quasi-strange" entity tries to prove its sovereignty and independence the first natural reaction of a psychologically unprepared person is a perplexed irritation and anger. It is exactly these emotions that seem always to have taken the upper hand in Moscow when it has to deal with Kyiv.

How long will such a situation last? A lot depends on the evolution of Ukrainian society itself. So far, one can observe a dramatic contradiction between the Ukrainian elite's words and deeds. Almost from the first days of independence, Ukraine's authorities tried to distance themselves from Moscow and announced a policy ending their country's transformation into a modern European state. These intentions were not, however, supported by either national consensus—which is demonstrated by the results of numerous opinion polls—or a single political will of the elite. Some analysts correctly point out that Ukraine has rather radically civilized its foreign policy, but at the same time remained an outsider in carrying out internal reforms. This prevents Ukraine from moving beyond formal diplomatic successes to strengthen its position in the international community. So,

Ukraine is distancing itself from the Moscow-led Eurasian integration process, and is incapable of realizing the European alternative. Thus, it finds itself in a geopolitically undefined situation. Representatives of the elite proclaim Ukraine is a Central European country whereas in fact, both politically and economically she still remains a typically post-Soviet Eurasian nation. This, of course, provides Moscow with additional trump cards. It makes it easier for Russia's political class to ignore historical and cultural differences between Ukrainians and Russians and strengthen already existing stereotypes of Ukraine and Ukrainians. As long as Ukraine retains its uncertain and precarious status, Moscow—relying on persisting Eurasian similarities—will continue to exert economic and political influence upon Kyiv. Thank you.

Ian Brzezinski: Thank you Igor. We now have Alexander Rahr.

Alexander Rahr: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I start with two possible scenarios in Russian-Ukrainian relations—one positive, one negative.

The positive one, which I hope will materialize, would happen if Russia and Ukraine succeed with economic and democratic reform, with transition to a civilized world. Of course this would happen with Western assistance, which will strengthen Western influence over Russian-Ukrainian affairs, politics, and economics and move both countries closer to the West. Russia and Ukraine, according to this positive scenario, could join the globalization processes and European integration, maybe in 15–20 years. Both countries may become members in the World Trade Organization and in the European Union—probably even Russia in twenty years—and eventually both in NATO or what will remain of NATO.

There is a negative scenario as well. I think we will face a moment of truth in Ukraine in the presidential elections of 1999 and in Russia in the year 2000. Imagine, there will be no improvement in the economics of both countries. It is realistic and possible, then, that in Kyiv and Moscow there will be a change of power. In Russia, a nationalistic leader could still be elected as president. In Ukraine, a pro-Russian, communist-oriented politican may emerge in the eastern parts of the country who would divert Ukrainian politics closer towards Russia and away from the West. That is a negative scenario from the Western point of view. It would mean that the pace of both countries' integration to Europe would slow down. Conflicts may emerge between these two economically suffering countries. In my opinion, neither Russia nor Ukraine could survive outside this globalization process and should seek to realize the first scenario (together and not one by one).

What seems clear is—and here I completely agree with what has been said by my predecessors—we do not foresee any real rapprochement between the Russian and Ukrainian elite at that time. My personal opinion is that the competition and mistrust between the Moscow and Kyiv elites will continue for at least one if not two generations. That is easy to explain. Moscow suspects Kyiv of having a secret agenda with the West—of trying to break up the CIS and isolate Russia from Europe. Kyiv suspects that Moscow wants to rebuild the empire, drive Ukraine into its orbit, and not let Ukraine join the European structures. It may be that after the foreseeable Russian-Belarusian union, which I think will materialize by the year 2000, the conflict and the mistrust between Russian and Ukrainian elites will deepen.

What should our reaction in the West be to developments in Russian-Ukrainian relations? I think the West should engage more strongly in conflict prevention. Many things have already

been done, very positively, very effectively, and other steps are being conducted now. A good move, from my point of view, is the buildup of a special military arrangement between NATO and Russia which is accompanied simultaneously by similar arrangements between NATO and Ukraine. I think this trilateral approach of the West is the key yo stabilization of Russian-Ukrainian relations—not doing anything special with Russia by doing the same with Ukraine. We see this not only in the emerging relations between NATO-Russia and NATO-Ukraine, but also in the partnership which Russia and Ukraine are conducting now with the European Union.

Partnership for Peace activities are also a very important step to stabilize relations with Russia-Ukraine and insure peace on the European continent. But from my point of view, we have to alter the agenda a little bit. So far, NATO has done a lot to strengthen the Partnership for Peace activities with Ukraine—for example, maneuvers around the Black Sea will be conducted this August. I think that we should also direct our attention towards Russia. We should convince Russia that it is in Moscow's interest to participate in and to strengthen Partnership for Peace activities with the West, not at the expense of Russia but for peace and the strengthening of European security on the continent.

In the long run, after the first wave of expansion of NATO, until NATO has been expanded a second or third time, these Partnership for Peace arrangements could provide both Ukraine and Russia with a status very close to NATO membership. Then, through economic pressure from the IMF and the World Bank, the West should try to relieve Ukrainian dependence on Russia. If possible—and this was also mentioned yesterday during the economic session—we should try to find ways for Ukraine to build up alternative energy supplies and thus escape Russia's dominance. At the same time, we should also deal carefully. We should not prevent, from my point of view, a closer Russian-Ukrainian economic integration if both countries want that, because European markets will remain closed to Russia and Ukraine for a couple of years. Speaking from a European perspective, I think it is in the interest of the European Union to try to establish trade relations with Russia and Ukraine as long as they do not meet the conditions to become members of the European Union. Politically, of course, Ukraine should be oriented toward the European Union, toward the West.

Also, recently there has been a lot of pressure by the West on Ukraine to sign the Friendship and Cooperation treaties with Romania and Poland. We welcome that Ukraine and Russia succeeded in signing the Cooperation treaty. What is also clear at this stage is that the West cannot defend Ukraine militarily from Russia. That means—and Sherman has said it quite clearly—that we therefore have to convince Ukraine that it should establish, first of all, a good relationship with Moscow in order to guarantee its sovereignty and economic well-being on the European continent. Kyiv cannot rely on premature Western promises which the West really cannot uphold. That may also lead to wrong conclusions in Kyiv that the more anti-Russian Kyiv's policy becomes, the faster it will be integrated into the West. I think it is exactly the opposite. There is a feeling in the European Union that if there will be trouble between Russia and Ukraine, the Europeans will shrink away from integrating Ukraine into the West. On the other hand, if there is no trouble, then integration will go smoothly.

Sherman has also said that the United States should push the European Union closer to Ukraine, or Ukraine closer to the European Union. I would

like to debate this in a couple of statements. I will also say a few words about German views of Ukraine. In 1991–92 the Ukrainian elite laid many hopes on Germany. There were very high expectations that Germany—in particular after the reunification—would give strong assistance to Ukraine to strengthen its sovereignty and integration into the Western world. They also believed that Germany would need Ukraine as a military partner and as a western ally against Moscow. This expectation did not materialize. This is probably because, first of all, Germany does not regard itself as a big economic power yet. Moreover, in its foreign and economic policy Germany is very much oriented towards the European Union, toward creating and strengthening the new European Union first and only then looking towards the East. That means that Ukraine has probably overestimated Germany's and Europe's capacity.

This brings me to the relations of Ukraine with the European Union. Ukraine could be disappointed with the European Union and Germany's approach. But at the same time, it may also be that some European states are disappointed with Ukraine's relations with Europe as well. If Ukraine says that it wants to join the West, it means that it wants close cooperation with the United States. That is important for Kyiv. Ukraine has not yet developed a real sense of European identity. It has not joined the debate on the creation of a common European foreign and security policy without the United States. In Germany, of course, the question is whether Ukraine will contribute more to the European unification or to the strengthening of the European transatlantic alliance. Will Ukraine be a very close ally of the United States in Europe or will Ukraine in a couple of years join the family of European nations? That is a question which has not yet been answered. But efforts are being made and should be made to move Ukraine closer to the European Union. There is no question about that. A European Union action plan on Ukraine was adopted in December 1996. It is a very ambitious plan, but it shows that the European Union is eager to help Ukraine. Chernobyl remains a stumbling block on the path to this cooperation. Although they are probably hardly seen in the United States, environmental issues are very high on the agenda of the European Union and Ukraine. The second stumbling block is criminality, also felt in Europe—drug trafficking, mafia activities, racketeering—coming not only from Russia, but from the entire CIS territory. European states, especially Germany, feel threatened by this criminality and have to find a common means to address that challenge. Third, failure to establish a legal basis in the economic system prevents German investments from reaching Ukrainian markets.

I think I will stop here with some food for thought.

Ian Brzezinski: Thank you Alexander. Our last speaker is Roman.

Roman Solchanyk: Thank you Ian. Let me begin by making some excuses, which lately I find myself doing all the time. Part one of the excuse: As Dr. Pavliuk mentioned earlier, all of us who have been here for the past two days have heard about Ukrainian-Russian relations in one way or another. It seems to be injecting itself into all kinds of discussions about Ukraine. On the one hand, that is to be expected. On the other hand, I think it makes it very difficult when you have a special panel that deals with Ukrainian-Russian relations. We are talking about essentially the same kinds of problems, perhaps in different kinds of ways, that people mentioned earlier. So here we are, people's patience is wearing thin and we are at the end of the line. That is a sort of general problem.

The second part of my excuse is very personal. Within, I think, the last three to four months I have been in Washington about three or four times. I recognize quite a number of faces here who have already heard my sermon before. So this puts me in a position that my professor used to call *avtoplagiat*, sort of self-plagiarism—trying to find ways of saying the same thing in different ways. I told this story to Professor Bilinsky and Professor Smolansky. It is not the first time this is happening to me. I remember talking to my professor once saying "I had some problems in trying to formulate these things. It seems that I am repeating myself. I cannot come up with any new ideas." He said, "Well, you are not the only one who has this problem. There are very few people who really have anything original to say. There were some people who had new ideas all the time, but they all died several hundred years ago." So, this is where I am and I sincerely apologize to the familiar faces who have probably heard parts of this in some different way in December, again in February, and then again three weeks ago at CSIS.

In any case, after all my excuses, I am going to make some very simple statements. Number one, during the past 5–5 1/2 years, it seems to me one has every right to say that relations between Ukraine and Russia since December 1991 have been largely strained, largely conflictual. They remain fundamentally unstable, and most important, I think they remain abnormal. The term "abnormal" needs to be dealt with a little. It is obviously very important to talk about specific problems, whether it is the Black Sea fleet, the former Soviet Union's assets and debts, what is going to be the status of Sevastopol, or energy dependency and pipelines. These are the kinds of things with which most countries have problems in one form or another. But those problems, it seems to me, are either resolved or not resolved, or they can probably be negotiated. I think under the conditions of abnormality, you have a pretty difficult problem resolving normal issues. If you begin with that kind of perspective, then it becomes difficult to deal with things once certain assumptions are made between two states.

Obviously, relations between Ukraine and Russia may be moving in the direction of normality, but it seems to me that there is a fair amount of evidence that this will probably take a long time. This is because of what Sherm referred to as psychological layers, From Dmitrii Ryurikov's concept of special relations, and so on, all of these are codewords for really an abnormal situation. Again, I am not saying anything new here, although I would like to think that because I was writing about some of these things back in Munich five, six, maybe seven years ago, I am happy to see that other people are also looking at it this way. There is a new publication that Chatham House put out very recently on Ukraine by a Norwegian author called Tor Bukkvoll. He devotes about 75 percent of his treatment of Ukrainian security problems to Ukrainian-Russian relations, and he begins precisely with this problem of abnormality. So maybe in spite of my excuses today, maybe I did do something a bit original back in 1988–89.

In any case, the problem, I think, is really quite fundamental. That does not mean we should not look at how to resolve the Black Sea Fleet, how to deal with assets and debts, or how to deal with energy dependency, but my argument has been that the relationship is historically shaped and molded. By that very fact, because it is a product of history, it is not something that is going to be negotiated away between Mr. Lazarenko and Mr. Chernomyrdin or their successors. I think from a historical perspective, what Igor told us basically contributes to what I am saying.

Let me put the abnormality this way: What makes the Ukrainian-Russian relationship unique? Let us think of it in the following terms: whether we refer to it as neo-imperialism—I do not like to use the terms neo-imperialism or expansionism, since these are all loaded terms—what makes the Ukrainians *and* the Belarusians different (I think we tend to forget about the Belarusians) is that from the Russian standpoint, Ukrainians and Belarusians are different than other former Soviet nationalities. Russians may have designs on Armenia, or on northern Kazakhstan or Kazakhstan as a whole. They may have security interests in Transdniester, or specific views about how to handle Abkhazia, but this is all power politics. What makes Ukraine and Russia different is while Russians have little problem agreeing with the fact that yes, Armenians are Armenians, Georgians are Georgians, Latvians are Latvians, that is not the status of Ukrainians and Belarusians. I cannot put it any more simply. Armenians are Armenians, there is no problem with that. Mr. Ryurikov or Mr. Yeltsin or Mr. Chernomyrdin will not tell you that "Armenians are part of our soul," which is how Mr. Chernomyrdin talks about Ukraine. "It is difficult, we love them so much, we love how they sing and dance. They are part of our soul. What would we be without these people?" These are some of the things that Igor was talking about. They do not talk about Georgians like that. "Georgians may be lazy, they may be this, they may be that. Central Asians, they drink too much tea and do not want to work." Their essential identity is clear. This is not the case with Ukrainians and Belarusians. That is my point of departure. That is what makes the situation abnormal.; that explains what Mr. Ryurikov means by "special relationship." Why should Mr. Ryurikov want a special relationship with Ukraine? Why can they not have a normal relationship with Ukraine? Mr. Ryurikov is genuinely perplexed and confused about why Ukrainians approach Russia in their negotiations on the basis of some sort of laws. "Why do we need laws when we are so close?"

So the second logical thing, I think, is not something you can put your finger on, it is not empirical evidence, but it is there. What this leads to in concrete terms is that—and if I had to, I could produce public opinion polls—certainly as far as the political and cultural elites in Russia are concerned, they face a difficult problem with coming to terms with the fact that this place called Ukraine really exists. They understand that it is there—there is even a Ukrainian Embassy in Moscow. I am sure that really was quite something for the person who is walking to the subway to go to work everyday to see a blue and yellow flag in Moscow. In real terms, how can this state really be? It is anti-historical. It is not *zakonomerno*, if you want to put it that way. So that is problem number one.

The other half of the problem has not been mentioned here as much. I call the Ukrainian-Russian relationship a two way street. That is, Ukraine is not just the consumer of this relationship. The nature of the relationship not only defines and tells us things about Russia, but its outcome—let us call it the normalization of the relationship (and this may be a kind of loaded term as well)—will lead to the normalization of Russia itself. We can find any number of phrases for this: the normalization of Russia, the successful solution to its identity problem. Basically Ukraine impacts on Russia not in empirical terms (although this is the case as well, as a consumer of oil and gas or as a supplier of sugar), but in how Russians actually perceive themselves. This is admittedly quite a crucial problem if you are not quite sure who you are and where Russia is. I remember years ago during the *perestroika* period when Ivan Drach, who was a major political figure in Rukh, was talking about Ukrainian-

Russian relations. I do not know if this is a real story or not, but he told a story about a Russian tourist from Tambov comes to Kyiv for the first time and sees all the sights—St. Sophia's, and this and that. He turns to the tour guide and says, "Excuse me, could you please tell me, when did the Ukrainians steal all this from us?" It is the same as what Igor, in one of the recent articles he wrote in a Kyiv newspaper, remarks about many Russians who look at Ukraine and do not really see Ukrainians, but rather a funny, distorted image of Russians. These Ukrainians are really Russians, they just do not know it yet. So, the second part is this sort of two way street.

I do not want to bore you with long quotations, that is not really necessary. Sort of by accident right before I left California I made a photocopy of the journal *SShA,* which is published by a very reputable institution, namely the Institute for the USA and Canada. It has an article here in the March issue about certain American stereotypes with regard to Ukraine. It is a criticism of an article that was co-authored by one of our panelists here, Dr. Pavliuk, together with John Mroz in *Foreign Affairs*. To make a long story short, let me just read you one quick quote. Not only does this remind one of the Soviet Union, but I think it emphasizes the degree to which things have not changed. This is 1997, not 1907:

> "So, the conclusion presents itself, that in spite of the American stereotypes that have held on since Cold War times neither ethnic Ukrainians as such nor the multinational population of contemporary Ukraine as a whole have ever been and are not now a nation in the contemporary Western understanding of that term." 1

This is 1997, March, I want to repeat. What he means is that in spite of the United States' policy in trying to drive a wedge between the forever united Russian and Ukrainian peoples, the facts show that Ukraine and Ukrainians are a fiction, perhaps even a conspiracy.

Ian Brzezinski: Thank you very much. We have had some, I think, very colorful, very substantive presentations on why we have a "perverse" or "abnormal" relationship between Ukraine and Russia. I would like to start out with a very basic question. We have talked about the history of the relationship, we have talked about its current status, and Alexander talked about steps that the West should be taking to add stability to the relationship. I would be interested in the panelists' insight into how exactly NATO enlargement is likely to affect that relationship.

Particularly, what is most likely to occur at the Madrid Summit in July when the alliance will extend invitations to some central European states of which Ukraine will not be a part? Is it going to make it more difficult for Ukrainians or is it something that is going to somehow enhance Ukraine's relationship vis-á-vis Russia?

Sherman Garnett: I think my colleague set it up best by saying the test of this is going to be whether it perpetuates a sense of distinctiveness about Ukraine or whether it is a step towards Europe. I

1 "Таким образом, получается, что вопреки устоявщемуся со времен холодной войны американском стереотипу подлинное принудительное создание украинской нации с появлением многочисленной национальной интеллигенции и элитые создаие устойчивое хотя и ограниченной украинской государственности началось как раз в рамках «коммунистической России»." S. M. Samuilov, "O nekotorykh amerikanskikh stereotipakh v otnoshenii Ukrainy" *SShA: ekonomika, politika, ideologiya*, (March 1997), p. 90.

think we are going to have a number of issues to deal with. I will just list a couple of them and we can talk about them in discussion.

There is a need for Ukraine to nestle itself in Europe in total and not just in the security area. In fact, I think there is a danger of a NATO-Ukrainian partnership being seen by others who do not want to do very much on economics or politics (whether in Ukraine, the United States, or in Europe) as an excuse: "Here it is. We have already done something in NATO. We do not need to do anything else." But NATO does not solve Ukraine's security problem, nor will it.

The other thing is it perpetuates a security relationship between the United States and Ukraine that is not well defined. I gather if you took a poll of people about what we committed to in defense of Ukraine, there would be a rather wide degree of answers. And in fact, it is a classic sort of ambiguous relationship where some of us are trying to suggest there is more to it than there in fact is. Or, maybe there is more to it than many of us think and we will wake up one day and discover "Holy moly, we have to do this and not this." I am not sure that is good or bad. I am just saying that the key to it is really how far Europe extends. This is my point that Sasha took on earlier. I think Europe needs to extend quite far and it cannot just be NATO. The European Union needs to catch up. If I took the subtext of what Sasha said—that Ukraine has to become more European and less dependent on the U.S.—I think the difference in international relations on our side as opposed to that part of the world is that I am quite happy with that. I do not see Ukraine becoming a European state as a zero sum thing and that we lose influence there. The key in the long run is for them to be healthy, wealthy, and wise, so this is not a problem for me. The permanent extension of both the unsettled nature of the Russian-Ukrainian relationship and the very ambiguous Ukrainian-U.S. security relationship has some instabilities to it that I do not like very much. I think the hole there has to be filled by Europe. It has to be filled by a willing Europe and it has to be filled by a Ukraine that wants to be European. But NATO enlargement is to me, just the first step. Whether it is a wise thing for Ukraine or not depends on how we all use it afterwards.

Oleksandr Pavliuk: I would like to expand a little bit on the issue of the role of Ukraine's integration into Europe. I want to emphasize that, as of today, it is clear that Ukraine is not ready to be a full participant in European integration economically, politically, or psychologically. This is clear. Nobody says today that Ukraine should be admitted to the European Union and to NATO. The problem is, however, that in fact there exists a certain conceptual dividing line, which pre-supposes that Europe could be united and integrated up to a certain border in the east, and some countries (Ukraine is among them) will never join this new integrated Europe. Consequently, Ukraine may find itself in a situation where it will not be encouraged to do much in terms of internal reforms. Today Ukraine is in a situation where society is not structured; where there is corruption; where very often interests of various clans dominate the political and economic decisions in the country; and where, due to the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, both the president and parliament are hesitant to take any radical steps in terms of economic transformation so as not to undermine their popularity. At this particular moment the only force which I personally see that can push the Ukrainian leadership toward further internal reforms is Western pressure on the one hand, and, on the other, the realization that if Ukraine fulfills certain conditions, it can be a legitimate part of the larger integrated Europe. Europe

should say "It is up to you. If you do this, we perceive you as a potential full participant in the European integration process, but you have to fulfill certain conditions." If this is made clear, it would be to the benefit of everybody in Europe and Ukraine and to the benefit of Ukrainian-Russian relations.

Ian Brzezinski: Before I pass the microphone on, the focus of my question was "What is the likely impact on the relationship?" as opposed to "What would we like it to be?" Are there any responses we should be anticipating—perhaps on the part of Russia—to NATO enlargement? Alexander?

Alexander Rahr: Well I think that the problems for us will only start after the first wave of expansion. If Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic will become members of NATO, of course the pressure on the West will increase from those countries which will not be part of the first wave. One of the biggest challenges for future European security issues will be Ukrainian pressure, pressure from Kyiv and Moscow on NATO to do something in the new situation.

It is clear that Russia has no military means to threaten the West, Ukraine, or even the Baltic states in the next 4–5 years. But the question which we have to ask ourselves is "Do we want to cooperate with Russia or not?" I am not sure what the West really wants. There are a lot of forces in Europe who are saying "Let the Russians be out of Europe. They are not a threat anymore, not a challenge. Let them sort out their differences and then in ten years, we will start talking again." I do not think that this will stabilize the European situation. The West has so far put only one priority on its agenda, namely the stabilization of the East European continent. It is not looking so much towards the problem of Russia and Ukraine, which is, of course, a big challenge for Europe in the future. I think this priority agenda is now changing, and we in the West are understanding more and more that the stabilization of Central Eastern Europe is important, but equally important is finding a solution that would incorporate Russia and Ukraine in a unilateral agreement (about which I spoke in my short presentation) in the European security system. I think it is very important to increase Partnership for Peace activities, as I said, parallel with Ukraine and Russia. And similarly important is to give a concrete perspective to both countries that they will be part of a common European security system, not now, but in ten, fifteen, or twenty years.

Of course it will also depend on the Ukrainian elite. There is a split in the Ukrainian elite. On the one hand there is Horbulyn, Tarasiuk, and Khryshchenko, who want to join NATO in the next three to four years. On the other, there is the faction of Udovenko and Kuchma who do not want to join at the present time. So it will have to be seen how far the political elite of Ukraine itself will sort out this difference and define a course towards NATO.

Roman Solchanyk: If Ian is demanding a direct response to a pretty direct question, I think I can say something. I see two things that are quite possible in terms of the consequences of NATO expansion. One is on the negative side of the balance sheet and one is hypothetically positive. On the negative side—and again, this is not anything particularly profound, except that maybe the way that I perceive it is somehow different—it is not just a question of Russia possibly exercising some sort of levers with regard to Ukraine as a result of NATO expansion.

I think that people have forgotten—or maybe never even realized—that in two weeks' time the Tashkent Collective Security Treaty expires. It was a

five-year treaty, signed on May 15, 1992. In the meantime, Uzbekistan has passed a law declaring non-bloc status. I am waiting to see whether Uzbekistan will violate its own legislation and sign on to the treaty in Tashkent. Why do I bring up the Tashkent treaty? The usual argument is that since Ukraine is trying to integrate with the West, of course Russia will try to strengthen up some kind of security structure—Russian politicians have said this. Lots of things can be said about that, but we do not have the time. First of all, there are many people who quite rightly wonder whether the Tashkent Treaty is actually a real organization to begin with. And second, if one follows trends in the CIS, one can see that there is an increasingly rapid away-from-Russia movement, even in places like Kazakhstan, which cannot really afford to do that. Look at the policies; at the recent visits of Shevardnadze and Aliev in February and March to Ukraine; at the idea of a joint Ukrainian-Georgian-Azeri peacekeeping battalion; at developments in Central Asia themselves, especially Uzbekistan, and even Kazakhstan and even in little Kirghizia. I think if I were in Moscow, I would be saying the same thing the chairman of the Defense Committee of the State Duma, General Lev Rokhlin is saying: "Russia does not know how to make friends or it knows how to lose friends."

Why that long introduction? First of all, it is not just a question of using leverage against Ukraine. I think that what NATO expansion and what the stated policy of Ukraine to integrate into Western structures (including security structures) means is that now Ukraine is not only refusing, as it has from the very start, to integrate into the CIS. Now Ukraine is stating "We are rejecting Russia. We are leaving you—if we were ever actually with you from our standpoint. We did not want to integrate into your structures because we knew they were run by you." It is one thing to refuse to integrate into or take part in meetings of foreign ministers or defense ministers. It is another thing to say "*Aufwiedersehen*, good bye, we have made our choice." Whether they can implement it or not is something that Sherm would be very good at questioning. But I am talking about fundamental things. "We have said good bye to you. Figure out your own identity problems. Do your peacekeeping in Ossetia and Chechnya. Leave us alone." So that is a fundamental problem. It is a question of identity.

On the positive side—and this is highly speculative—I see a positive development not necessarily with NATO expansion, but with the charters or treaties that are in the process of being negotiated right now. It seems to me that if Ukrainians and Russians cannot—or have thus far proven unable to—successfully resolve their problems on a bilateral basis or within the framework of the CIS, special relationships with NATO may create a certain *spielraum* totally different from the post-Soviet space where Ukraine and Russia might be able to resolve some problems. This would not necessarily be a trilateral or formal arrangement such as Sherm would like to see, like the formal trilateral agreement where the January 1994 denuclearization occurred. Clearly that is highly optimistic because—as Sherm himself will tell you—then Russia and the United States had overriding interests to have a trilateral organization. As I asked Ms. Davis [Lynn E. Davis, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs] yesterday, it takes three to tango in this case. If Russia does not want to dance and the United States is not all that happy about it, then it will fall apart. But the NATO atmosphere in Brussels creates (hypothetically) a new *spielplatz* for Ukraine and Russia with the presence of a third partner without trilateralism.

Igor Torbakov: Just a couple of words. I completely agree with Oleksandr Pavliuk in that it is not the enlargement itself that matters but how far NATO will go to the east. Because, it seems to me, the Moscow political class has somehow reconciled itself to the idea that its "outer empire"—Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, etc.—has gone for good. But its "inner empire", that is the post-Soviet space, is an absolutely different story. Russia's official position is that no former republic of the USSR should ever become a member of the Alliance. The Kremlin reacts in an extremely nervous way to the "Atlantic aspirations" of the Baltic countries, who view themselves as the frontrunners of the second wave of enlargement. But even the potential possibility of Ukraine's membership in NATO— however distant it might be—is a sheer nightmare for Russian politicians. Such a possibility would ruin all plans of Eurasian integration, political or otherwise, which are being worked out in Moscow.

One of the senior Russian historians, Yurii Polyakov, has recently stated that the Ukrainian factor has a paramount importance, because "without Ukraine all integrationist attempts will be illusory." Speculating in his programmatic article on centripetal and centrifugal trends in Russian history, he asserted that the question of what trends are stronger would be resolved between Konotop and Bryansk, where the Russo-Ukrainian border runs. That is why I think that after the Madrid summit Moscow will go out of its way, using a stick-and-carrot policy, to bully and cajole Ukraine back into its Eurasian fold.

Ian Brzezinski: I have a ton of questions for the panel, but let us open it up to the audience.

Question: This is a question for Sherman. Your last thought was about the fundamental ambiguity in U.S.-Ukrainian relations. I would like you to elaborate a little bit on that.

Sherman Garnett: I think they are ambiguous on two levels. One is, it is a classic ambiguous security relationship. I think it is fair to say that we have gone the farthest of any of our allies in understanding the importance of Ukraine in the coming European structure, the importance of its failure or its stumbling, and the importance of the Russian-Ukrainian relationship. We have defined with Ukraine a set of assurances backed by a process which is not at all the same as a treaty relationship. So when you look around and you say, "Is Ukraine Kuwait? If something happens do we have a fundamental interest there?" Or is Ukraine some other country where we stroll in and talk about brotherhood and friendship, and then stroll out if the weather is bad? That is a real problem for me—and I do not think the answer is to make it more explicit. This is why the other part of the ambiguity is that our policy requires us to beat up on our allies or gently persuade them so that we come to some kind of consensus on Ukraine. Therefore it is particularly unfortunate right now that at the time we should be in Europe saying "You Europeans are all completely crazy about Ukraine" (and I do not mean to suggest that all Europe is the same) "You Europeans are slower than we are. We are smart on this one," they can point to a number of things that are going on in Ukraine now that suggest that we are not so smart.

The fundamental ambiguity for me is that we are creating certain obligations, yet on another level, these obligations are not clear, and the enthusiasm for them over time could be strained if Ukraine does not put its domestic house in order. If they fail on reform that does not mean Ukraine is less important. The problem is that Ukraine is simply going to be a major front-line state for NATO. It is going to be a major determinant in the Russian-Ukrainian relationship and

of stability in that part of the world, so we are stuck. The only way I see of getting out of this ambiguity is to try to push our allies ahead, push Ukraine, and (as Sasha said) help to normalize the Russian-Ukrainian relationship.

One can understand by looking at the really knotty problems in Western Europe that do not exist anymore that it is possible to transform the situation. I think it is too early to give up. With this pessimism on corruption and everything, I think it is wrong to conclude, "Okay, let's shut the door." Right now, we have to be very honest about the ambiguities, the problems, and the lack of a finished solution to this. And I think in this context Ukraine and the region of NATO expansion becomes more important, not less.

Question: Well, this is sort of a simplistic question. There has been so much hype about NATO expansion that when it actually happens we are a little bit on the other side of a mountain. Granted, there are a lot of other states that want to join, but let us assume that the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland do join NATO. Let us assume that they become more integrated in economic, political, and security arrangements in the West and that these additions have demonstrated as serving absolutely no threat to Russia. Do we begin to see a different attitude taking place in Moscow concerning NATO expansion? Could this lead then to, of course, the integration of other countries?

Igor Torbakov: Well, I can just repeat that even if—as you said—Russia will see that nothing threatens it on that part, it will reconcile itself to expansion and will idly look at how NATO might proceed going eastward. Because, I remember just recently, Mr. Chernomyrdin was on his visit to the U.S. (if I am not mistaken) when he said privately that the Russian elite does not perceive NATO as a threat and does not believe NATO has any aggressive designs. So, again, it comes down to the geopolitical problem, to where the border between the Western world, the European world, and the Eurasian world runs.

Alexander Rahr: I think a remarkable change has taken place in the Kremlin in the past couple of months, following Yeltsin's reelection. We see that the priorities in Russia's foreign policy are already changing. In the three years before 1996 (1993–1996) the Russian elite wanted to reestablish superpower status. That was the primary goal, and everything else was subordinated to that goal. There was also the appointment of Primakov, whose aim was to see Russia again as a great power state. I think this has remarkably changed. We have a new government now in Russia that has set other priorities, namely not to become a super power at any cost, but to join the world globalization process. We see Chubais, Berezovsky, even General Lebed talking about the need to join the globalization process and not to rebuild the empire. I think this is a change that has not been noticed in the West. It is very encouraging for our future relations with Russia and I hope that after the signing of the agreement in Paris we will see a Russia with which we will become more cooperative.

Ian Brzezinski: Next? Dr. Bilinsky.

Question: This is a question directed to Dr. Torbakov but also Dr. Solchanyk, or anybody who would like to answer it. There was a remarkable policy paper on "Will the Soviet Union be Resurrected?" of 26 April 1996. One of the factors listed as facilitating a possible reintegration of a greater Russia is the ethnic and cultural-historical identity of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. First of all, what do you think about the idea and how weighty is that Council of Karaganov? Thank you.

Igor Torbakov: Well, my answer will be rather brief because I think other

people will talk about this. I am not a political scientist, I am a historian. I do not know much about the Karaganov Council, but I do believe it is a fairly influential think tank, because from time to time it issues certain memos and papers which are then used in the decision making process. Moreover, we can see parts of these documents included in some important governmental and strategic documents. As for this particular issue, it strengthens my point. Despite the current shift in foreign policy priorities, about which Sasha Rahr was speaking, I agree that something now is changing, but this is a principled issue. I do not think that this change pertains to Ukraine. Of course, it is not that some kind of raw force will be implemented to integrate Ukraine and to incorporate it into the body of a new empire. But some mechanisms of "soft empire" tactics can be used.

Question: My first question is for Sherm Garnett. You pointed at the gap between, if I understood you correctly, Ukrainian foreign policy issues—leaving Russia aside—and its economic development, and then went on to say that maybe Kuchma assumes that this trend for stability will continue. I am wondering if it is that he assumes that this stability will continue or that he cannot do much more about it. What can he do? How can he accelerate the process in the economic sphere? My second question goes back to what Ian said. Is anybody anticipating what Russia will do or how it will respond to NATO expansion? What about economic pressure, what about a media campaign—is this realistic? Here we get back to Sherm's argument about the gap between objectives and means in Russia.

Sherman Garnett: I think Kuchma is at a crossroads as a politician. He either decides that he wants to be the next president or he wants to be remembered as the true founder of a European Ukraine. Those may be harsh words, but I think they are true. In fact, if he becomes the true founder of a European Ukraine he probably will be the next president. The scenario that I see most likely right now—and for which I would blame everyone in Ukraine—is that the next two years are going to be eaten up in politics among a group of people in the center that ought to be working together. I can only conclude that they must be under the assumption that there is no fundamental danger for Ukraine right now from Russia or from anywhere else. So despite the fact that they say that after NATO enlargement Russia could do this, that, or the other, there is really a lot of complacency. If they were really afraid that the day after NATO Russia will turn off the gas or invade, they would not be behaving this way.

I have been a very big fan of Kuchma, but I think the regime has lost its momentum. What I hear now is "in 1999 we will regain it." I do not think they can wait until 1999. And I do not want to be misunderstood; I am not saying that Ukraine is about to fall into the Black Sea or lose its independence. Let me compare it to this: recently there has emerged in Europe—especially among the Christian Democrats—a very different view of Turkey. Or, at least a view of Turkey has come out in public discussion that Turkey could be a member of Europe, but that it had to do the following twenty-three hard things: no torture, etc. In a way it was not European but it could be European. Recently you heard Christian Democrats saying that Turkey cannot be European because its people are Muslim. Now that is something that is unlikely to change, unless the Mormons are more effective. Ukraine is in the same boat, and I would argue that Russia is too in a sense. And this is why it is important for U.S. and European policy to say this is wrong. The question is, fundamentally is Ukraine capable of being in Europe at some point? Can it demonstrate that quickly—not that it is fully European

but that it is reasonable to think about it in those terms? Or is it like the Christian Democratic view of Turkey; is it just never going to happen? I do not believe in historical determinism or in being simply enshackled by history or psychology. I think it is up to people of responsibility right now.

My reading of the constitution is that Kuchma's power is pretty extensive. If it is not, then he ought to admit it. He ought to admit that there is a kind of fecklessness to the system. I compare him to Yeltsin in only half of it. He has figured out the Yeltsin political strategy of finding a prime minister to blame, but he has not figured out the Yeltsin political strategy that every once in a while you have to move—you have to do something, you have to decree something, you have to force something. Whether Lazarenko is the world's most corrupt politician or not, he either has to make Lazarenko his prime minister or fire him. Why does he not threaten the parliament with its dissolution in some practical way? Why does he not push for reform? Either they decided that it is not that important—that they can exist in this state for a long time and that he has too many things to do when he wakes up in the day—or he has lost momentum.

To me, we are at a defining point in Ukraine. I do not mean in the next three weeks. I mean that if they wait until 1999 (just like the Christian Democratic view of Turkey) the view will be entrenched in Europe that Ukraine is not Poland and cannot be part of Europe. And that would change forever the geopolitical possibilities. So I think that this is an extremely serious moment in Ukrainian history.

Alexander Rahr: I will answer your second question on the Russian threat. Very shortly, three points why Russia is not threatening anyone anymore. First, they could not even reunite with Belarus. There is a very strong faction in the Kremlin that was completely against this reunification. That is a remarkable moment, that even the reunification with the so-called weaker Belarus could not materialize.

Second, I think that Roman is completely right—neither the Tashkent pact nor the CIS will exist in a couple of months. NATO General Secretary Solana's trip through Central Asia and Transcaucasia has shown that the leaders or the elites of these countries do not regard Russia as a military partner anymore. They all seek NATO assistance. The Central Asians want to rebuild their armies with the help of NATO, with the help of Americans and Germans. Uzbek officers are now coming to Germany to study in military schools there. There is a big process going on. The only ones who do not understand that the CIS is breaking apart and that the members are diverting away from Russia are the people in Moscow.

Third, Russia was trying to escape this situation by trying to build an alliance with China that is also failing. The Chinese do not want to be the younger brother of Moscow. At the last Russian-Chinese summit, the Central Asian leaders joined the table in order to mediate between these two countries. Nothing can be done. Russia is too weak even to negotiate an alliance with China, and the Chinese do not know why they should build such an alliance with Russia against the West. So even at that point Russia's policy in Asia seems to fail.

Our hope is that Yeltsin will stay alive until the year 2000. While he is there I think there is a certain stability in Moscow. And we will face then an elite that is more or less Western-oriented, an elite which would like to cooperate with the West (under certain conditions of course), which is more interested in joining the world economy than starting wars with its neighbors.

Ian Brzezinski: One of those factors certainly is not worth betting on—Yeltsin's health. Any other questions?

Question: There is one issue which you did not touch upon, and that is that in a sense Ukraine is very much a European country in that its intelligentsia tries to be very theoretical instead of being practical. Part of the problems that Ukraine is having is precisely that the middle parties do not cooperate with each other. They do not cooperate with each other because they have to go through *litkrit* before they start cooperating with each other. I think that one of the issues where you people could be successful is by focusing on the need for political activity aimed at a focused understanding of the problem rather than these long sausage-type dispositions of what democracy is. I think that is an issue that should be addressed at a conference like this.

Ian Brzezinski: Comments about the theoretical and the practical sound like the budget negotiations on the Hill. Does anyone want to take a hit at that?

Question: This question is primarily for Professor Torbakov. I agree with Professor Solchanyk that Russians seem to be pretty good at producing trends; and I agreed with what someone said yesterday which was that it is the Russians, not the Americans, who are driving the wedge in Russian-Ukrainian relations. It would seem to me that in order to remove this wedge and regain these "trends," bringing all the CIS countries back closer to Moscow, the most effective policy would really be to build relations on an equal basis. The question then is: why does this line of reasoning seem to be rejected? Is it just because a psychological aspect is discussed?

Igor Torbakov: My very brief answer will be that I do believe that psychological problems underlie the political behavior and the decision making process. So that is a priority.

Sherman Garnett: Could I just say that—and every time I say this, I get disinvited from homes in Moscow—I do not think we should give up on Russia yet. The homes I am disinvited from in Moscow are precisely those of the people who cannot adjust. When I look at the foreign policy of Russia, it seems to me that they are facing an immense choice. But I think the forces that are gathering to make the choice ultimately in favor of some form of recognizable and civilized cooperation are actually increasing, not decreasing. But still the foreign and security policy area in Russia, when you compare it to the political or economic area, is the most unreformed. The people that Sasha rightly points to as the brightest spots in Russian policy right now very rarely get involved in foreign policy. They get involved in Belarus because there is money. But when they are forced to come out and speak, you have a lot of stupid things that Chubais and Nemtsov say on all sorts of issues.

In other words, there are not Chubais' or Nemtsovs yet in the foreign policy community. To the extent that there are new interests working in the foreign policy community in Russia, right now they are economic and regional and only affect individual issues. They do not affect the strategic question. It is hard for me to believe that Gasprom and Lukoil and all these people are simply doing the bidding of Primakov. I think Primakov is running to get ahead of a train. We have not finished seeing the transformation of this Russian elite. The thing that makes it hard for us to see this is that they keep publishing these articles. I do not know how many times I have recently quoted from this Migranyan/Zatulin thing about the end of history and the undermining of Ukrainian sovereignty. Those people still exist and their rhetoric becomes important for Yeltsin. That is

what in the end makes me think we are not quite over the hump. But there are other forces going on in Russia.

One thing I think is really tough is that in modernizing international relations and pushing Europe to the East, the most nimble institution we have right now, for a lot of reasons, is NATO. I think that it is the toughest institution for Russians to immediately embrace. It is a fact that I am actually in favor of NATO expansion, but I know in Moscow it is just not easy, and for a lot of reasons.

Roman Solchanyk: If you would allow me to take what Sherm said one step further and maybe somehow be even more rigid. What Sasha said about a fundamental change happening, I wish it to be so. I suspect that what he had in mind was the appointment of Chubais and Nemtsov in February. But I think the distance between February and May is a little too early to phrase it just the way you phrased it, that "this is it, *konets*, it is finished, it is all different now." It has only been three months. Sherm's point—who certainly knows better than I do—is that these young people like Nemtsov and Chubais are interested, primarily, in domestic reform. This does not mean they cannot have an impact on foreign affairs.

I did want to bring up that programatical article by Zatulin because when I have these discussions with my colleagues at RAND, I point to these sort of outlandish statements by 39-year old members of Yabloko who are deputy chairmen of the Duma and who say that they love the Ukrainian language, but really Ukraine should be reduced to the status of Bashkir-Tatariya. Where does somebody who was born in 1957 get ideas like that? When you ask his boss Yavlinsky "Who is this guy Mikhail Yuriev? Where did you find him? What is wrong with this guy?" He says, "He is a businessman. He does not understand anything about politics. Don't worry about it." I get the same thing at RAND from my colleagues, "Roman, why are you always bringing up these tasteless quotations from Russian politicians? They do not mean anything. It is rhetoric, they could not do it even if they wanted to. Let us look at Nemtsov, at Chubais." Okay, but I am sorry. Zatulin is there. If you read the Zatulin and Migranyan article, rather program, in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*—I wish we had the full text of it, maybe Sherm's agent *vliyaniya* can secure that for us and find out what the full text is. If you read that text it brings you back to Struve in 1910. It brings you back to Fedotov in the 1930s. The bottom line is very simple. The existence of a Ukraine in any shape or form other than as part of Russia is—to quote or paraphrase Mr. Solzhenitsyn—"a mortal threat to the existence of Russia itself." Finished. That is all that is.

I must give Migranyan and Zatulin a compliment for figuring out how to destabilize and how to destroy Ukraine. I never would have figured it out myself. Before it was always the CIA that was doing this, but now they really have a different way. What they suggest (if you have not read the program) is that all pro-Russian forces in Ukraine completely boycott the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections. This will bring Chornovil to power—namely a pro-Western sort of person—and therefore will cause a revolt of the Russian elites in Ukraine. Bring the Ukrainian nationalists to power and then the Russians will really realize the danger. Zatulin has been able to convince your normal Russian and Ukrainian that the situation is bad, one does not get paid, etc., but he has not convinced your statistically average Russian that his identity is threatened by the existence of Ukraine. So how do you do that? You boycott the elections. You bring all these Chornovils to power and all these other people who have strange ideas about Ukraine and therefore Ukraine will collapse because then

Russians will realize, "Chornovil is in power, *konets*, we are finished." And then Russia will have achieved its aim of destroying Ukraine. Very original.

Sherman Garnett: I think that makes my point, however, that one should not spend more than thirty-five seconds on Migranyan and Zatulin. I really think they do a tremendous disservice to Russia and I will not get invitations to Migranyan's house anymore either. I think that scenario is relatively foolish.

Roman Solchanyk: My point, Sherman, is not whether it is foolish or not, but that it is there. That is a reflection of history.

Sherman Garnett: Let me make one point on mentality because I think the Russians and Ukrainians are fond of this. I used to write in my journals every time they talked about *mentalitet* and especially genetic pessimism connected with the elite. Both of those themes seem to be really popular. I just do not come from that tradition. The thing I would say is that I think Igor could give a very fascinating presentation on Russian historical opinions of Poles. Same stuff, not quite, but some of it. There are real problems in Russian-Polish relations and in the mentality of the Russians toward Poles, but it is not the same. And it suggests that over time you can grudgingly push this country to confront reality.

Roman Solchanyk: There was a Polish-Soviet war in 1920 that might have changed the mentality.

Sherman Garnett: There is a Ukrainian state right now. Every day everybody gets up and realizes it. It could even be a non-functioning state. It is not a nationalist state. It has accomplished some things, it needs to accomplish others. But I think this over time is a real mental block. It is a physical reality. It makes people like Migranyan more and more bizarre as the days pass because they have to account for a reality that somehow cannot exist within their mental world and, as Galileo said, "yet it moves." That is where we are.

Ian Brzezinski: Okay. On that note, unfortunately we have already gone ten minutes longer than our session was scheduled for and I think that is a reflection of how successful our panelists have been. They have given us fantastic overviews of the genetic, historic, the cultural dimensions of Russian-Ukrainian relations, insights of where they might be heading, and some steps that the West can take to ensure it is a stable relationship. I think we owe them a round of applause for their effort. Thank you for participating.