University of Alberta

Ukraine's Nuclear Weapons Era: 1923-1996

by

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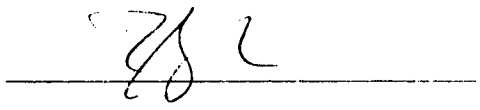

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Ukraine's Nuclear Weapons Era: 1923-1996 submitted by Roman Peter Zyla in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the person who inspired the effort to continue in my academic career. Without her persistent encouragement my efforts might have been lost among the plethora of amusements the world offers in our time. For her help, her support and her endless patience, I thank Larissa Talpash.

I would also like to thank Dr. David Marples for having put me onto this topic. His encouragement and guidance helped me greatly. Our soccer matches and squash games were welcome diversions throughout. Cheers!

Finally, the colleagues who were there to keep the wheels ` nning, Kelly Brian, Cowboy Dan and Torch, thanks.

Abstract

Since the early days of nuclear research, Ukraine has participated in the development of the technology that would eventually lead to nuclear weapons. Since the early part of this century, Ukraine's involvement in nuclear matters however, has been determined, not by the leadership of the Republic but by the leadership in Moscow. This has placed Ukraine in a secondary role in terms of policy and leadership. Since achieving independence in 1991, control over Ukraine's nuclear policy has moved not to Kyiv, but from Moscow to Washington. As during the Soviet era, Ukraine has been a secondary participant and not a leader in nuclear research and military strategic affairs.

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It is absolutely fundamental for a nation to arrive at a clear conception of its place in the society of nations, to develop its international relations accordingly, and to augment its military establishment in order that it retain a respectable position in that society.

-Stuart Portner, "Militarism and Politics"-

Introduction

Ukraine has always been a participant and an innovator in the development of nuclear weapons. It has been a part of the progression into the nuclear age since the discovery of radium in 1896. Ukraine participated in nuclear development in the pre-nuclear bomb era, in the cold war era and the post-Soviet world, Ukraine also occupied an important place in the Soviet Union as the second largest republic in terms of agriculture and industrial output. Despite this, Ukraine has never controlled the weapons on its soil, nor did it achieve a position of leadership, even after independence in determining policy regarding the nuclear arsenal.

That Ukraine was a participant and not leader in strategic matters may seem elementary and obvious, yet little has been written concerning Ukraine's specific role in nuclear weapons development and deployment. This paper seeks to address this gap in Ukraine's nuclear history: to expose Ukraine's contributions in the developmental stage of nuclear discovery, the subordinate role Ukraine played as republic within the USSR, and the role it has played as an independent nuclear nation since 1991. The thesis examined in this paper is that in the early stages of nuclear technology, Ukraine was only a participant in nuclear arms development and was never able to ascend to a leadership role in policy making with regard to the uses of nuclear weapons technology, despite its significant contributions to the technology and its important role within the USSR.

Evidence discovered and published by historian Dr. David Holloway has shed light on the role played by key participants and institutions in the development of the nuclear bomb. Despite the extensive amount of information in his work, Holloway does not accord much more than passing reference to Ukrainian participation.

Nevertheless, Ukraine has made a contribution to nuclear weapons technology and its deployment either as part of the Russian Empire, a republic of the USSR or as an independent nation. This contribution needs to be documented in order to gain a fuller understanding of contemporary Ukrainian history.

As a result of seventy years of Soviet rule, independent Ukrainian contributions were rarely acknowledged as such and were included within general Soviet accomplishments. Even events, discoveries and advances predating the Soviet Union have in many cases, been merged into those made during the Soviet era, thus rendering the examination of Ukraine's nuclear weapons history difficult. Primary Soviet sources regarding military matters were guarded and information on strategic weapons was kept entirely secret. Publications about Ukraine's specific role in the deployment and administration of nuclear weapons are non-existent. Some information has, however, recently become available through unpublished interviews with some key players in the development of the bomb; other information has been assembled from diaries and memoirs of people affiliated with the centres where nuclear technology was developed.

Compounding the difficulty of determining Ukraine's role in nuclear technology development is the question of Ukraine's specific role within the Soviet structure. While much has been written about Ukraine's social and economic situation as a Soviet republic, little attention has been paid to Ukraine's role in formulating policy. The Communist Party, its structure and ethnic demography has been widely examined; however, the nationality of the individuals making policy decisions has rarely factored in these examinations. Some analysts have noted for

example, that ethnic Ukrainians placed in leadership positions worked in the interest of the Soviet Union and not for that of their 'nation'.[1]

The Soviet Union's interest in developing nuclear weapons and Ukraine's participation in the nuclear program began in the early 20th century. The first chapter briefly chronicles the development of nuclear energy and the construction of the bomb, with particular emphasis on the Ukrainian contribution. This chapter makes clear that Ukrainian participation was indeed limited although there were individuals of Ukrainian ethnicity who were indispensable in leading the Soviet Union into the atomic age.

The second chapter examines Ukraine's status within the Soviet Union. Ukrainians reached the upper echelons of power within the USSR. Ukrainians were also represented in the Communist Party, although there were periods of relative under-representation, which would have an impact on Ukraine's participation in determining policy. Furthermore, many prominent Soviet leaders emerged from Ukrainian Communist Party cadres: Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev for example. The second chapter also looks at the position Ukraine occupied within the Soviet structure as a sovereign republic with full membership in the United Nations. Although Ukraine participated in several international organisations and was given a certain degree of control over its individual non-security matters, along with the other republics it was mindful of Moscow's watchful eyes. Despite increased decentralisation or regional authority, and its involvement within the leadership structure, at no time was Ukraine able to pursue independent security interests.

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[1]Yaroslav Bilinsky, The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine After World War II (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1964) 306-8.

The final years of the Soviet Union were marked by Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost'* and *perestroyka*. These policies were meant to revitalise the Soviet economy and ease social strains on the population. In his attempts to restructure the economy Gorbachev perceived that one institution in particular was seen as an obstacle to reform: the military. By overhauling the military, Gorbachev believed that economic revival would be imminent. Whether the revamping of the Soviet military was akin to removing the keystone is uncertain. However, the administrative dilemma created by its restructuring allowed the republics to assume control over military structures on their territories once the Union began to collapse. The third chapter explores the changes in republican authority which eventually led to independence and claims of nuclear ownership. The chapter concludes with a look at Ukraine's status as an independent country, its new role on the world scene and its responsibility as the world's third largest nuclear weapons power. Moving to control the nuclear arsenal left on its territory gave Ukraine an opportunity to solidify its hold on independent sovereignty.

As the republics sought more control over military functions, and as Moscow lost that authority, the USSR unraveled leaving the republics to form their own armies and claim the military assets left on their soil. The issue of ownership of military equipment, installations, even personnel scattered in the various republics, became a serious source of tension between the republics and Moscow. No other republic was so embroiled in that debate as Ukraine. The five years following the break up of the USSR were characterised by confused negotiations, posturing and demands from all sides trying to gain control over the nuclear arsenal of the former Soviet Union.

The manner in which Ukraine pursued its interest following the collapse of the Soviet Union is also reviewed. The relationship between the United States and Russia as well as the relationship between Russia and Ukraine determined Ukraine's course of action. After decades of not being able to pursue policies beneficial primarily to itself, Ukraine used the weapons as a vehicle to pursue its political and economic needs. However, because these interests did not coincide with those of the international community, Ukraine once again was forced to give up what many have argued was the most powerful negotiating tool Kyiv had.

1. Development of the Bomb

Ukraine as Participant

The first chapter of this paper provides a historical perspective on the development of the first atomic bomb. The focus of the chapter is on the Soviet experience and in particular the participation of Ukraine and Ukrainian figures. The purpose is to illustrate the extent of Ukraine's participation in the nuclear weapons development program. This will lay the foundation for the thesis that, as the second most important contributor to the development of the bomb after Russia during the early half of the 20th century, and despite its important position in the Soviet Union, Ukraine was only a participant and did not develop into a leader in nuclear arms development or in the policies surrounding the uses of nuclear weapons technology.

The start of the nuclear age marked a new era for humankind. To those who pioneered the technology, nuclear power was alchemy conquered: limitless powers could be unleashed using this new science. Physicists at the turn of the century had no real comprehension of the potential power of nuclear technology. In the early 1920's, the future Soviet dictator Josef Stalin proclaimed that "the Soviet Union is fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or they crush us".[2]

Throughout the 1920's, most experts acknowledge, the field of Soviet physics was weakly developed. Many experiments were simply reproductions of those performed in Western Europe and work accomplished in Russia (later the Soviet Union) had been achieved by riding the coat tails of West European scientific

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[2]David Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994)15.

research. Controversy arose in the physics world about the validity of Russian and Soviet accomplishments and Soviet physicists' rank in the world.

In February 1923, outside the city of Petrograd, Abram Ioffe, a Ukrainian-born physicist, opened the new Physiomechanical Institute, the aim of which was to encourage technological progress in industry. The institute's opening came appropriately at a time when Stalin had proclaimed the need to catch up with capitalist countries in science and technology. Under Ioffe's directorship, the Institute began advanced research in physics. According to both Soviet and Western historians, Ioffe became a cunning manager who was able to maintain political and financial support for his research despite difficulties in the early stages. It could be argued that without Ioffe's contribution Soviet nuclear science might never have developed.

Ioffe firmly believed that Soviet physicists ranked fourth, behind Britain, the US and France, in world physics research and technical ability. The director of the Ukrainian Physiotechnical Institute in Kharkiv, Aleksandr Leipunskii, however, argued that Ioffe was wrong to give the impression that all was well in Soviet physics. Leipunskii and those who supported him saw a need to motivate Soviet physics, and to pursue the development of technology along a path independent of the West.[3] Ioffe defended his ranking of Soviet physics arguing that his intention was to show that work of significant value had been done in the past. Domestic demand for Soviet technology was not high in the mid-1920's, nor was official

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[3]Holloway 18. Holloway describes the debate between Ioffe and Leipunskii in detail. The debate serves as prologue to many such debates within the Soviet nuclear structure and foreshadows the amount of work done by Soviet physics to bridge the technological gap.

support for Soviet research. Ioffe blamed the lack of new development partly on physicists but also on industry and the state, which were reluctant to support Soviet initiatives. According to Ioffe, industry was more interested in Western developments in technology. He cited many examples where Soviet science had developed a product only to find Soviet industry uninterested until the same product became available in the West.

Technological developments in science in the Soviet Union were slow to be realised and as a result, the Soviet regime criticised all sectors of science for not contributing to the building of the state. Purges in the late 1920's virtually destroyed several fields of science. The Communist Party demanded complete ideological commitment from all areas of society. Militant adherents to the Party's ideology set out to judge the scientific community's work to determine its scientific value. Basing their inquisitions on Communist Party doctrine, these philosophers felt they were better able than Soviet physicists to determine sound scientific theory. Biology and genetics were devastated by the purges, but physics was left comparatively unscathed. This was due partly to the nature of the science. Some argued that whereas biology and genetics were relatively easy to understand, physics was much less accessible to the uninitiated. As well, there is also some evidence to suggest that a high degree of co-operation among physicists protected their work from criticism despite internal political divisions. Much of the early survival and relative successes of the physical sciences however, were credited to Ioffe. Political scientist David Holloway writes that Ioffe's Institute was an incubator for Soviet physics. "[Ioffe's] vision of physics as the basis of technology matched the Bolshevik aim of making the

Soviet Union a great industrial state, and he was able to win support for his work by conveying this to the Party leaders".[4]

The support Ioffe was eventually able to gain enabled Soviet physics to progress quickly. The new opportunities provided for Soviet physics students by Ioffe encouraged their return from studies in Germany and Britain to study in newly established Soviet institutes. The growth and development of physics in the late 1920's was rapid in comparison to the slow pace of previous decades. The new era of Soviet physics was characterised by one physicist as "a wonderful and truly romantic period."[5] Many Soviet physical scientists were able to flourish in the new age of discoveries and opportunities in ever-expanding and politically sheltered institutes.

The 1930's, as described by Holloway, were more difficult due to increased demands on physicists to contribute to Stalin's demands for industrialisation. State officials were anxious to obtain a return for their support in the previous decade. This was evidence of the complexity of physics and the inability of officials to grasp the limits of the returns on their investments. The pressure from officials for physicists to produce, created an environment of growing economic hardship and poor working conditions.

The close ties among physicists around the world before the 1930's created an international co-operative structure within the physics community. These contacts were strained by Stalin's new isolationist policies. Soviet scientists were left stranded by their western counterparts, thus they were forced to learn of advances in journals

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[4]Holloway 25.
[5]Physicist, N. N.. Semenov, cited in N. M. Reinov, *Fiziki - uchitelia i druz'ia* (Leningrad: *Nauka*, 1975) 36.

smuggled in from Europe and North America. Instead of collaborating with their colleagues on pioneering experiments, Soviet scientists were left simply recreating them. The transformation of the physics world occurred in 1932 in Britain with the discovery of the neutron. Unable to participate in this advance, Soviet scientists set out to recreate the British experiment on their own. By the end of 1932, the Ukrainian Physiotechnical Institute(UFTI) in Kharkiv successfully repeated the neutron experiments which propelled the establishment of a nuclear physics group at Ioffe's institute supported by the People's Commissar of Heavy Industry, Sergo Ordzhonikidze.

The main centres for work in nuclear science were Leningrad and the Ukrainian capital city, Kharkiv. The UFTI in Kharkiv was established by Ioffe in 1928 with the support of Ukrainian authorities and many foreign scientists were encouraged to work there. According to Holloway, the well-funded UFTI thrived during the early 1930's and eventually grew larger than Ioffe's own institute near Leningrad. The scientists who worked in Kharkiv were trained in leading institutions across Europe and gave UFTI credibility in the world of physics. Alexander Weissberg, an Austrian physicist, wrote that "The Soviet Government expended huge sums in order to cover the land with a network of research institutes. In Khar'kov alone over twenty new institutes were created. The most important of them was UFTI. Its lay-out made it one of the biggest institutes for experimental physics in Europe"[6] Others who had spent time working at UFTI acknowledged that the lag in technology noted by Stalin in the 1920's, did not exist once UFTI began its work. However, Stalinist purges and policies of the mid 1930's had a severe effect on the entire scientific community. Physics was not spared as it had been previously and the UFTI was purged of its best

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[6]Alexander Weissberg, The Accused (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951) 157.

scientists. The damage had been done just as Western physicists were on the verge of discovering fission.

Policies of isolationism and the establishment of the Iron Curtain limited collaboration between Soviet and Western physicists. Soviet science was forced to fend for itself or to wait for western journals to arrive to learn of technological and academic advances. The fervour surrounding the discovery of fission by Enrico Fermi,[7] impelled Soviet nuclear physicists to repeat Fermi's experiments, updating their work in the field. V.I. Vernadskii, a geochemist, wrote that because research was being done so quickly in the West and because Soviet physicists had to wait for weeks to read journals, they were able to participate not as bearers of new findings, but only as students of the West.[8] However, an important work was published by Khariton and Zel'dovich from Kurchatov's institute, on the conditions necessary to produce a chain reaction. They concluded that the chain reaction research done by Fermi in water was not feasible because of the low concentration of hydrogen in the water. Khariton and Zel'dovich discovered that the same chain reaction experiment performed in heavy water, which had the required composition, would produce the desired results. They also concluded that if uranium-235 found in natural uranium could be increased, Fermi's original experiment using regular water would also work.[9] These two conclusions showed that despite obstacles, Soviet physics did participate in advancing nuclear science.

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[7]Enrico Fermi, Italian physicist.
[8]Holloway 51.
[9]Holloway 52. Iulii Khariton, Physicist, together with Iakov Zel'dovich worked at the Institute for Chemical Physics (Part of Ioffe's institute) The detailed explanation of the process is part of standard physics curriculum.

The 1939 All-Union nuclear conference included a discussion about the potential uses of atomic energy for generating power and explosives. However, no one at the conference felt there were any real prospects for such applications.[10]

Throughout the late 1930's, Western physicists noted that potentially, power could be harnessed from chain reactions to control and produce a nuclear explosion capable of massive destruction. These claims were often ignored in the USSR. In early 1940, the world's first successful experiment on spontaneous fission was conducted by Georgii Flerov and Konstantin Petrzhak, researchers under Kurchatov. According to Holloway's account, the West's reaction to both the theory of chain reactions and to spontaneous fission was muted because fission research had been classified by numerous governments. Furthermore, the world powers were embroiled in conflict in theatres of war in Europe and the Pacific. Because of limited contacts with the West, Soviet scientists had little or no opportunity to share their information. As a result of the sensitive nature of the experiments and the potential weapons applications, which many had surmised by this point, no government or institution was willing to share new advances or encourage others to delve further into the research, yet the Soviet discovery was quickly added to the accumulation of atomic knowledge. Reflecting global tensions and considering the highly sensitive content of Flerov's and Petrzhak's research, Soviet scientists were not given the opportunity to discuss their findings with an international audience.

Analyst Stephen Meyer has noted that a widely held misperception in the West was the belief that Stalin was not aware of the importance and potential of nuclear weapons. Meyer has shown that Stalin must have been somewhat acquainted with

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[10]Holloway 53. Igor Golovin, a physicist, took part in the conference.

the possibilities offered by the new technology, as Stalin himself ordered the atomic bomb project, organised research teams required for the research and others to develop a long-range heavy bomber. There exists, however, some doubt as to whether the Soviet leader believed a nuclear bomb could be effective in changing the Soviet Union's fortunes during the war.[11]

When Germany invaded the USSR, nuclear research in the latter country immediately ceased. Research laboratories were closed and the scientists recruited to the war effort. While Soviet researchers were preoccupied with conventional military work, the United States and Britain expanded their nuclear projects. In July 1941, the Maud Committee secret report was completed and determined the potential of building an atomic device.[12] Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt gave orders authorising the construction of an atomic bomb.

Reported advances in German nuclear research led the US and UK to accelerate the Allies' research efforts. In September 1941, the Soviets obtained information provided by the "Cambridge Five"[13], testifying that Britain was nearing the final stages of development of an atomic weapon, but evidence suggests little was done by the Soviet leadership at this time to develop a Soviet weapon. Six months

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[11]Stephen Meyer, "Soviet Theatre Nuclear Forces Part I: Development of Doctrine and Objectives," Adelphi Papers, 187 (1984) 8.

[12]The Maud Committee was set up by the British government to explore the possibility of developing a nuclear bomb. It coordinated nuclear research efforts in Britain.

[13]The "Cambridge Five" spy ring made up of British secret service operatives who passed secrets to the Soviet government before and during WWII. See, for example, Christopher Alexander and Oleg Gordievsky, KGB: The Inside Story (New York: Harper Collins, 1990). Also, Yuri Modin, My Five Cambridge Friends, Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, (1994).

passed before the government of the Soviet Union took action on the news that had been forwarded from Britain. In April 1942, a German officer's notebook containing a list of materials needed to build a nuclear bomb as well as the required chain reaction calculations was expropriated by the Soviets and became the catalyst by which Stalin agreed to commence a project to construct a Soviet nuclear bomb.[14] The decision to launch the project coincided with the initial stages of the Battle of Stalingrad, a low point of the war for the Soviets by which time they had lost considerable ground and thousands of personnel.

It is arguable that Stalin's nuclear project was insufficient in terms of technical ability and resources, to produce a bomb in a short time, though Stalin might have believed otherwise. Although the fortunes of the war had turned by the Spring of 1943, the Soviets maintained a heavy emphasis on conventional arms. As a result of wartime experience, manoeuvre and surprise were seen as keys to victory. Nuclear weapons, on the other hand, were not seen as decisive factors in major conflict.[15] The Red Army's westward march yielded benefits for the Soviets in terms of territory gained, securing close satellites in Central Europe, and access not only to necessary strategic raw materials but to scientists from Germany and Central Europe. However, at the conclusion of the war, the Soviet leadership was still not convinced that an atomic bomb could play a role in world politics, thus additional financial and political support for the project was not forthcoming.

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[14]Holloway 85.

[15]Condoleezza Rice, "The Making of Soviet Strategy" in Alexander Dallin, ed. Articles on Russian and Soviet History, 1500 - 1991 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992) 50.

Wartime experience had proven to Stalin that the only way to ensure victory in conflict was a massive ground force. Thus his emphasis continued to be on the build up of conventional weapons and ground forces. His view on nuclear weapons was that a nuclear device would not be decisive in a major conflict.[16] On July 24, 1945, Stalin received information that the United States had detonated a nuclear device at a test site on American soil. Despite this information Stalin instituted little change in his policy towards the immediate development of the Soviet bomb. Only in August 1945 with the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki did the Soviet Union fully realise the strategic impact of the new weapons system. The explosions over Japan immediately assumed great importance, compelling Stalin to speed up and expand the USSR's atomic efforts. Allowing only a brief respite after the wartime devastation, in February 1946 Stalin issued orders for the build-up of Soviet military strength.

Over the next four years, the bomb was the single most important project undertaken by the USSR. In the period immediately after the war, under the auspices of the wartime alliance, close ties were maintained between the US and the Soviet Union particularly amongst the scientists working on the bomb, including the exchange of documents which described all research the US had done, with extensive accounts of the Manhattan project. Relying heavily on Western experience, an entire industry had been built in the four years between the end of World War II and the detonation of the first Soviet nuclear bomb. Accused spies such as Julius Rosenberg and Klaus Fuchs contributed significant information to the Soviets about the American advances in nuclear technology.[17]

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[16]Robbin F. Laird, The Soviet Union, the West and the Nuclear Arms Race (New York: New York University Press, 1986) 4.

[17]A full examination of the role played by Julius and Ethel Rosenberg along with Klaus Fuchs and others, in providing the Soviet Union with nuclear secrets can be

V.I. Kurchatov wrote that Stalin's new approach to the nuclear project was enthusiastic partly as a result of information provided by the US and by agents abroad. He spared no cost in creating the conditions necessary to accelerate the project. Kurchatov's own notes describe Stalin's views during a meeting in January 1946:

> Viewing the future development of the work Comrade Stalin said that it is not worth spending time and effort on small scale work, rather, it is necessary to conduct the work broadly, on a Russian scale, and that in this regard the broadest, utmost assistance will be provided... Comrade Stalin said that it is not necessary to seek out the cheapest paths,...that it is not necessary to carry out the work quickly and in vulgar fundamental forms.[18]

Kurchatov also gave an indication of Stalin's commitment to the speedy progress of the nuclear project:

> Regarding the scholars, Comrade Stalin was preoccupied by thoughts of how to, as if, make it easier, help them in their material-living situation. And in prizes for great deeds, for example, on the solution to our problem. He said that our scholars are very modest, and they never notice that they live badly - that is bad in itself, and he said that although our state had also suffered much, we can always make it possible for several thousand persons to live well, and several thousand people better than well, with their own dachas, so that they can relax, and with their own cars.[19]

Holloway cites a CIA report that more than 350 000 people were involved in various aspects of building the bomb.[20] The Soviets made rapid progress in their nuclear industry through 1946, only to face problems similar to those encountered

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found in Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, The Rosenberg File (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983).

[18]From personal notes of V. I. Kurchatov, "Archive of the Russian Scientific Centre "Kurchatov Institute,"" Fond 2, *Opis* 1/c, Document 16/4, cited in Cold War International History Project Bulletin (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, Issue 4, Fall 1994) 5.

[19]Cold War International History Project 5.

[20]Holloway 172.

years earlier by the Americans. One such problem was the difficulty of designing a low-power production reactor which would supply the Soviets with plutonium. A Ukrainian scientist, Nikolai Dollezhal', the Director of the Institute of Chemical Machine-Building, was able to overcome difficulties in design. The main problem had been in the question of how to insert and remove fuel rods into the reactor core. Dollezhal' concluded that unlike the American horizontal design, a vertical reactor would be easier to access, using the weight of the fuel rods to load and unload. The new design was approved, and construction of the reactor was started in March 1946. Another difficulty was in the safe handling of radioactive materials. In 1949, A.P. Alexandrov discovered that by coating plutonium hemispheres with nickel, the radioactive material could be handled with relative ease and a significantly higher degree of safety.

Throughout the late 1940's, an ideological debate was gaining momentum within the Soviet scientific community. Western ideas in the sciences were being attacked by Communist Party ideologues in an effort to gain control over the intelligentsia. For example, the biologist Trofim Lysenko charged that the scientific intelligentsia was subscribing to Western ideas and was thus undermining Soviet science. Lysenko asserted that the science of genetics as studied in the West and identified as "Weismannism" and later "Mendelism-Morganism", was "bourgeois" and any scientists who believed in the existence of genes, or in the chromosome theory of heredity, were unpatriotic.[21] Lysenko's campaign to extend his isolationist view of

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[21]Conway Zirkle, Death of Science in Russia (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949) 94-134. Lysenko supported Michurinism, which "does not recognise the existence in an organism of an hereditary substance separate from the body of the organism. An alteration in the hereditary of and organism or in the hereditary of a separate part of its body always appears as a result of a change of the living body itself." See also, David Joravsky, The Lysenko Affair (Cambridge, MA:

science, was of grave concern to those working on the nuclear bomb, which had been based on an American design. According to Holloway, Stalin himself quashed Lysenko's ideological drive; the bomb was far too important in advancing the Soviet Union on to the world stage. In the summer of 1949 the first bomb was ready for testing and, on August 29, 1949 the Soviet Union detonated its first nuclear device.

The detonation of the first nuclear device crossed a threshold in Soviet technology. The contributions of the individual republics to the nuclear development effort were lumped together as Soviet innovations. Because much of the work done in the post-war period was controlled to a great extent by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, it was that structure which took credit for work done across the Soviet Union. Its prime function was to guide the scientific efforts of the scientific communities in the republics. in other words, "It performs the key role in the management of the national effort in science..."[22]

The management of all-Soviet scientific progress meant that republican efforts were not individually celebrated, but rather hailed as part of greater Soviet success. From the end of the Second World War, Ukrainian contributions to the advancement of nuclear weapons technology became part of Soviet progress in this area.

The Soviet Union did not immediately pursue a new military policy focusing on atomic weapons. Although the policies of the State were not yet changing, developments in nuclear weapons technology were. Throughout the 1950's Nikolai Dollezhal' remained in charge of reactor design. In 1950, Dollezhal' and Leipunskii

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Harvard University Press, 1970).

[22]Alexander Vucinich, Empire of Knowledge (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984) 1.

led the effort to develop a fast-breeder reactor, the purpose of which was to economise on the natural uranium available and to increase the production of plutonium, which in turn could be used for fueling reactors or for weapons.[23]

Despite the new advances and the recognisable potential of nuclear weapons technology, Stalin continued to maintain that the key to success lay in massive ground forces capability. Although the possibility existed that the US would attack the Soviet Union using nuclear weapons, the Soviet Ministry of Defence maintained that the United States would be unable to inflict unacceptable damage on the USSR. Until Stalin's death, the Soviet Union's military strategy was based on "operating factors of war" developed during World War II.[24] This strategy was never challenged because of Stalin's total dominance over political and military institutions and because purges had destroyed all assertiveness and independence within the ranks of the Party or the officer corps. Stalin's cult of personality forced all military thinking to his ideas thereby stunting Soviet military development. "The development of military theory and its separate problems were insufficiently pursued. An attempt was made to fit everything new in military affairs into one or another saying of Stalin."[25]

Ukraine's participation in the development of nuclear weapons technology began to subside in the post-war period. According to several analysts, the reason for the decline in participation in science and technology by Ukrainian researchers

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[23]A.I. Leipunskii, *Izbrannye trudy. Vospominanniia* (Kyiv: *Naukova dumka*, 1990) 62-68.

[24] Laird 4. The "permanently operating factors of war" were canonised by Stalin. They included 1)the stability of the rear; 2) the morale of the troops; 3) the quality and quantity of divisions; 4) the armaments of the army; and the organisational ability of the command personnel of the army.

[25]Meyer 8.

was a general fall in their enrollment into the academies of science, and anti-Ukrainian policies adopted by the regime in the late 1940s and 1950s.[26] Although this is difficult to confirm because of the homogeneity of Soviet research and science, control over the academies of science by the so-called "Empire of Knowledge", the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the relatively few accounts of Ukrainian contributions indicate a decline of Ukrainian participation in nuclear weapons technology.

Soviet Nuclear Era

More information is available regarding the individual republic's contributions to nuclear technology in the early part of this century. The secrecy of the later period meant that Ukrainian contributions, or those of any republic, were not widely recognised. Soviet developments in the realm of nuclear technology are part of Soviet history, but must therefore also be seen as Ukrainian developments by virtue of Ukraine's position in the Soviet Union. Therefore Soviet nuclear developments are also an integral part of Ukraine's nuclear weapons history. This is particularly true of the Cold War era, when policies surrounding Soviet nuclear weapons began to change.

Stalin's death in 1953 freed the general staff from arbitrary constraints and ushered in a new era of military strategy. Issues concerning planning, strategy and doctrine, particularly those pertaining to nuclear weapons, were soon being openly and critically discussed. Open discussion permeated military and leadership structures over the inevitability of war with the West and consideration of the atomic

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[26]Bilinsky 289. On p. 76, Bilinsky examines the relative participation of nationalities in academic and research positions, among others, and concludes that in 1960, Ukrainians did not occupy a proportionate share of the positions in these fields.

weapons factor. Even Stalin's permanent operating factors upon which the Soviet military strategy had been based were being openly questioned. However, one thread of continuity ran through Soviet doctrine into the early Khrushchev period: nuclear weapons were not yet considered to be a decisive method of warfare. One reason was the inability to deliver the bombs against a potential Western target. The Soviet missiles used at this time were short-range rockets capable of delivering a bomb into Western Europe, but incapable of reaching a North American target. In 1955, a delivery missile came into service whose maximum distance potential was a strike on France or Denmark. A strike on the UK would have meant forward deployment in Poland or East Germany.[27] However, evidence suggests that Soviet nuclear weapons were never deployed in Soviet satellite nations.[28] Because of limited distance capability as well as the amount of time needed to prepare the weapons for active deployment, Soviet missiles were deployed in Ukraine (and Belarus) to improve offensive capabilities. It is interesting to note the irregular geographical distribution patterns in the deployment of nuclear weapons. The weapons were concentrated in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus (although fewer weapons were deployed in Belarus).[29] The distribution of military industrial complex plants, particularly those involved with nuclear weapons also followed a similar pattern and encompassed Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.[30]

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[27]Meyer, part II 7.
[28]Meyer, Part II 10.
[29]"Nuclear Notebook", Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (November 1991) 48-49. Eventually nuclear weapons were also deployed in significant numbers in Kazakhstan.
[30]Hannes Adomeit and Mikhail Agursky, The Soviet Military Industrial Complex and its Internal Mechanics (Kingston: Centre for International Relations, Queen's University, Jan. 1978) 45.

Custody over the weapons was retained by KGB troops, although administrative functions were carried out by the Ministry of Medium Machine Building in Moscow. The Ministry of Medium Machine Building, created by Lavrenti Beria, was established in June of 1953 under the auspices of the (MVD) Ministry of Internal Affairs (later to come under control of the KGB), and was responsible for the Soviet atomic programme. Soviet specialist Robert Conquest described the transfer of control from the Ministry of Medium Machine Building to the KGB as a "breaking up" of Beria's empire.[31] The KGB preserved control over the weapons until the late 1950's during which the 12th Chief Directorate for Nuclear weapons was established within the Ministry of Defence. It was expected that the Directorate and the KGB would have had close relations concerning these sensitive weapons. However, little detailed information was made available.

In 1955, the Soviets introduced bombers to counteract the American nuclear build-up in regions adjacent to the Soviet Union. These aircraft were able to deliver weapons to Western Europe. However, Khrushchev himself noted that these planes would be useless in combat: "[They] would be shot down long before [they] got anywhere near [their] target."[32] In 1957 the Soviet Union shocked the world with its space technology when it launched Sputnik. This success also advanced the nuclear program into primary strategic and military position as the Soviet Union possessed a missile capable of delivering a warhead to the United States.

The Soviets were internationally regarded as the leaders in space technology, and Sputnik's launch suggested a "missile gap" crisis. The perceived "gap" resulted in

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[31]Robert Conquest, Power and Policy in the USSR (New York: Harper & Row, 1967) 222.
[32]Nikita Khrushchev cited in Holloway 322.

a massive build-up of American missile systems. Western claims about the "gap" however, had been greatly exaggerated: Soviet missiles were not being produced, as Khrushchev had threatened "like sausages". In 1955, it was estimated that the Soviet Union had between 200 and 500 weapons, a figure which is now disputed. Reliable data indicate that, by the end of the 1950's, American weapons were said to outnumber Soviet missiles by a ration of 4:1.[33] (The real ratio was likely even more weighted in favour of the United States as estimates of Soviet warheads in 1955 were greatly overestimated.) However, in the late 1950s, Western military analysts were confident that although the Soviet Union now had the will to commit increased resources to missile development, the United States continued to lead the technological race.[34]

According to Robbin Laird, an American analyst, the late 1950's and early 1960's were a time for rebuilding, during which new ideas and initiatives were given "relatively free rein" both in the United States and the Soviet Union.[35] The Soviets set out to strengthen their military position after having spent the earlier decade trying to gain minimal levels of strategic parity with the West. However, as NATO forces had supported their nuclear programs earlier than did the Soviet Union, they had negotiated strategically located sites. For example, NATO established a nuclear missile system just across the Black Sea from Ukraine, in Cigli, Turkey, which made any Soviet attempt to deploy nuclear weapons anywhere but on their own soil a difficult prospect. According to Western figures, there were only four Soviet missile launch systems in 1960 and in 1962, that figure had not changed. In an effort to

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[33]Walter Slocombe, "The Political Implications of Strategic Parity," Adelphi Papers 77 (1971) 4.
[34]Steven J. Zaloga, Target America (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1993) 149.
[35]Laird 10.

counter the American missiles placement in Turkey, Khrushchev arranged the Cuban missile deployment. The details surrounding this deployment initiative have been well described in other works. Recent publications have claimed that the Cuban missile crisis was sparked by a misunderstanding of the American system of government as well as a misjudgment of Kennedy by Khrushchev.[36] The debate over the detailed causes of the "crisis" will be discussed for a long time. Suffice it to say that the forced removal of missiles from Cuba was acknowledged by Soviet military leaders as a sign of the Union's weakness and that the Soviet military plan had long outreached its technological capabilities.[37] The embarrassment of the Cuban missile "crisis" was the most convincing factor amongst many in the Soviet leadership's decision to issue top priority orders for the amassment of missiles.[38]

In the mid 1960s, the Soviet Union maintained a belief that conflict with the West would be "more protracted but still an all-out nuclear war".[39] This belief signaled to the Soviet Union that in addition to accumulating nuclear missiles, it also should rebuild its conventional forces in order to prepare effectively for multi-level confrontation. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, military spending in the USSR was increased at an approximate average annual rate of 8% between 1966 and 1973. By the latter date Moscow was spending almost 13% of its GNP on military

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[36]A thorough discussion of the developments which led to the Cuban missile crisis and its effects on the US-Soviet relationship can be found in Donald Kagan, On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace (Toronto: Doubleday, 1995). Khrushchev believed that Kennedy would never interfere with Soviet activities in Cuba. Furthermore the Soviets assumed that the American public would never allow the US government to become embroiled in a confrontation with the Soviet Union so close to American soil.

[37]William Hyland, editor of Foreign Affairs cited in Laird 13.

[38]Zaloga 216.

[39]Laird 13.

affairs.[40] The Soviet government took measures to continue missile production to match and surpass those stockpiled by the US. Most analysts recognise the early 1970s as the period by which the Soviet Union had built up a strategic force with "assured destruction capability".[41] The competing superpowers had reached a point of relative equality in their arsenals but a new danger was emerging: it was possible that other countries could obtain the technology and materials necessary to build their own atomic bombs. China was the archetype of potential enemies to both the Americans and the Soviets. The ideological revolutionary zeal and the commitment to building nuclear forces was a threat to both Moscow and Washington. The threat potential was highlighted when both Moscow and Washington tried to prevent Beijing from acquiring the weapons manufacturing plans. The Soviets tried to cultivate Chinese leaders and steer them away from nuclear weapons by suggesting that the Soviet Union would always protect China in case of a nuclear conflict. Nevertheless the Chinese pursued their nuclear plans and intended to develop a nuclear arsenal. This factor would certainly destroy the delicate balance maintained by the superpowers. The balance provided an opportunity to stabilise the escalating arms race. However, the arms control agreements which highlighted the 1970s and 1980s were no obstacle to a continued Soviet weapons build-up. "The Soviet Union saw in the negotiating route a possible way of curtailing Western programmes and dispositions that tended to offset the gains the USSR had herself been making in

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[40]Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Yearbook 1972 (New York: Humanities Press, 1972) 53. For figures on published Soviet spending data, see also Thomas Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press,1970) 432., and Philip Towle, ed., Estimating Foreign Military Power (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

[41]Slocombe 1. "Assured-destruction capability" in this case, indicates a level of weapons stockpile allowing the Soviets to launch a destructive attack on the US even after sustaining the heaviest first-strike possible by NATO.

bringing about a more satisfactory military balance, especially as regards to nuclear and strategic weapons."[42]

It can be argued that the US believed that the USSR defined nuclear parity strictly within the European region. The continued Soviet production of weapons, however, stemmed from the threat it faced not only on the European border but from China as well.[43] China, according to most analysts, was fast becoming a serious 'land forces' power. Under Brezhnev, Soviet military strategists felt that securing borders and the Warsaw Pact countries was insufficient to protect the country, so the leadership moved to secure the eastern border areas as well. The Soviets were committed to positioning themselves politically on a level with US. This meant attaining higher international status, and therefore Brezhnev continued to modernise and expand the military.

In the late 1970s, the United States advanced the arms race to a new level. Under the presidency of Ronald Reagan after 1980, the US turned its attention to the economic weakness of the Soviet Union and began to develop the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). This new venture in weapons technology would be developed at enormous cost. If the Soviets were to maintain the balance of power, they would have to match the technology. Many analysts touted the development of the SDI concept as the decisive factor in breaking Soviet military confidence which had been bolstered by the USSR's monopoly in the area of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD).[44]

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[42]Helmut Sonnenfeldt and Wm. G. Hyland, "Soviet Perspectives on Security," Adelphi Papers, 150 (1979) 21.
[43]Honore M. Catudal, Soviet Nuclear Strategy from Stalin to Gorbachev (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1988) 130-131.
[44]Catudal 284. For a full description of BMD see, in Ashton B. Carter et al. (eds.) Ballistic Missile Defence (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984).

Under Gorbachev, the Soviets were unable to compete with Western military initiatives and spending. Gorbachev's domestic problems also made it difficult to pursue international competition with the West. A slowing of the arms race would benefit Gorbachev's domestic reforms by eliminating superpower instability. Soviet willingness to negotiate and reach arms reduction agreements was evident at each meeting between the US and the USSR By the time Gorbachev announced the policies of *perestroyka* and *glasnost*, the Soviet military was in a state of disarray from which it would never recover.

In the aftermath of the 1991 dissolution of the USSR, the Soviet nuclear arsenal was left without a steward. In place of one monolithic superpower, four new independent states claimed control over the weapons on their respective territories. Russia, the largest nuclear power to have emerged from the USSR, claimed control over all former Soviet weapons. Belarus, the smallest of these new nuclear nations readily gave up the weapons on its territory to Russia. Ukraine and Kazakhstan, however, initially retained their weapons. Alma-Ata eventually agreed to give up its arsenal, mostly because the United States provided monetary and technical compensation to Kazakhstan. Ukraine, using the opportunity to exercise political initiative, tested its new-found sovereignty by using nuclear weapons as a bargaining factor to try to solicit Western and Russian guarantees of security and compensation. As we shall see later in this paper Ukraine's position had much to do with maintaining its independent status and sovereignty as well as expressing its concerns over Russia's continued dominance in the ex-Soviet region.

2. The Nature of Soviet Ukrainian Statehood

The difference between the theory and the reality of republican membership in the Soviet Union is fundamental to our understanding of Ukraine's strategic relations with Moscow. While on the one hand Ukraine was, in official parlance, a sovereign and independent republic of the Soviet Union, a relationship into which it freely entered, the reality of that union was quite different. In the words of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, "the Ukrainian SSR [was] deprived of nearly all attributes and functions of a self-governing body politic."[45] This chapter will show that although Ukraine was theoretically sovereign and played a significant role in the structures of the USSR, it sought divergence from Moscow's political and social course. In fact there were periods when Ukraine did have influence in Moscow and compared to non-Slavic republics Ukraine was considered quite important. The growth of opposition movements in the 1960's and the revival of national consciousness indicated that Ukraine was pursuing a divergent path from that of Moscow. However, these movements were quashed by Moscow and Kyiv was never able to pursue its interests over Soviet policy on a grand scale, and in matters of state security, Kyiv's opinion was completely ignored.[46]

Although there is a vast amount of material available on the topic of internal Soviet dynamic, relations between the centre and the republics posed problems for the Communist regime and little information regarding this internal struggle was made available to the West. Concerning questions about the military, much has been

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[45]Ivan L. Rudnytsky, Essays in Modern Ukrainian History (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987) 465.
[46]Borys Lewytzkyj, Soviet Ukraine 1953-1980 (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1984) 48-59.

published in the West but much of this writing is speculative and official information from American intelligence organisations was proven wrong by hindsight thus making it difficult to find accurate information.[47] Furthermore, matters relating to the interaction between military cadres and command structures were kept secret and little has been written on this topic.

In her article on centre-republic relations within the CPSU, political analyst Mary McAuley introduces her work by stating that "the Soviet system is usually thought of as an extremely centralised, uniform system."[48] Generally the centre decided on policy and the periphery, the republics obeyed. McAuley's work highlights the dichotomy of the Soviet system with specific reference to the Communist Party and its organisation. As the most powerful body in Soviet politics, it is reasonable to conclude that the Party's organisational strength was reflected across the union. However, McAuley's work suggests that beyond a generalisation, there is a trend which shows that the republics used political methods to their benefit, and applied Moscow's dictum of each republic, according to its needs.

One measure of republican power could be to look at how effectively the republic used the political means at its disposal. The relations described in McAuley's article are useful in determining this relative power. Briefly, the 1936 Constitution (in theory) of the USSR declared that the highest organ of state authority is the All

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[47]American intelligence reported throughout the early Cold War that Soviet arms build-up was significantly higher than it really was. For example, Soviet missile stockpiles were reported by the CIA to be 200-300% higher than the real figure. Errors such as these place virtually all CIA figures from the Cold War under suspicion.

[48]Mary McAuley, "Party Recruitment and the Nationalities in the USSR: A Study in Centre-Republican Relationships," British Journal of Political Science (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 461.

Union Supreme Soviet. The Supreme Soviet provided the State with an administrative body responsible for implementing the State policies. It was, however, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which made the decisions for the State, and it was that institution which approved appointments of personnel to various government positions. As noted by political scientist Jerry Hough, " the real cabinet of the Soviet political system is the Party Politburo, the real Parliament is the Central Committee and the real prime minister is the Party general secretary."[49] Furthermore, the next tier of power below the leadership level was based upon sector officials rather than republic leaders. For example, the Central Committee was less interested in the needs of national or regional interests than it was in the institutions which made the economy and the "system" work.

Hough makes the point that several of the Soviet government organs vied for authority within the State structure and although each had a very specific role to play, it was the "extraparliamentary Party organisation (the Party congress, the Central Committee and the Politburo)" which determined the leadership function of the State and made key decisions regarding policy direction and planning.[50] Although this is generally accepted, Stalin, in an uncommon move, made changes within the Constitutional Amendment of 1944, granting the republics greater powers in the areas of defence and foreign relations, presumably as a means by which to convince the West of these countries' sovereignty and to foster the "friendship of peoples" , which was seen as an ideal and not as a current situation.[51] To this extent,

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[49]Jerry Hough and Merle Fainsod, How the Soviet Union is Governed (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) 362.

[50]Hough and Fainsod 362-408. Hough How the Soviet Union is Governed, provides a detailed look at the structure and the theoretical workings of the Soviet government.

[51]Bilinsky 274-275. Bilinsky notes several examples where the relations within the

McAuley's assessment of increased republic influence vis-à-vis political methods is accurate.

However, despite this Constitutional Amendment, there is no evidence to suggest that any of the republics were able to exercise the newly granted powers. Even if they had been able to make nominal decisions regarding defence or foreign policy, the republics' decisions could have easily been vetoed by the USSR Council of Ministers and by the Central Committee. According to the 1936 Constitution, the relationship between Moscow and the republics was federal in nature and the republics were considered to be "sovereign states"(Article 76). Each republic thereby had the right to enter into direct relations with other states and even to conclude agreements with them. It was also stated that each republic had the right to secede from the USSR But Article 76 was limited by Article 73 of the Constitution which indicated that the centre had responsibility for the "establishment of principles of organisation and activity of the republican and local organs of State authority and administration... establishment of the basis of legislation of the USSR and union republics... conducting a united socio-economic policy."[52] In essence, republics were limited from taking action in spheres that any "sovereign" state might want and political manoeuvring by the republics therefore is not an accurate indicator of power within the Soviet Union.

A second measure of republican strength could be the relative strength of the republican Communist Parties. The leading organ of the Soviet Union was the

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USSR were less than ideal. "If we can trust Khrushchev's account, Stalin would have dealt equally with the Ukrainians had he known where and how to deport a people of 40 million".

[52]Hough and Fainsod 482-483.

Communist Party. A republic's strength (Ukraine's, for the purpose of this paper) within the Union must therefore be viewed from the perspective of constitutional theory and tempered with the reality of Soviet internal politics. In his thorough work on the political structures in Ukraine after World War II, political scientist Yaroslav Bilinsky concluded that the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) had a lower membership relative to the Union average, and that the majority of the members came from what Bilinsky terms "better classes". He also notes that the composition of the CPU showed a disproportionately low number of ethnic Ukrainians. Despite these peculiarities, the Ukrainian cadres of the Communist Party were able to make inroads into positions of power in Moscow. Nikita Khrushchev, in his bid for the leadership of the Soviet Union, was supported by the Ukrainian cadres and together they rose to prominence or were rewarded for their loyalty and promoted to positions of authority in Moscow. One individual of particular significance to this paper is Kyrylo Moskalenko, who was in charge of the Moscow Military District immediately after Stalin's death. Moskalenko was born near Donetsk in south-eastern Ukraine and joined the army at eighteen years of age. According to Bilinsky, Moskalenko was a close associate of Khrushchev's working closely with him in the Moscow Party Committee and eventually becoming Marshall of the Soviet Union. He became a full member of the Central Committee of the All-Union Party in 1956 and in 1960, became the Commander in Chief of the Soviet Rocket Troops responsible for the USSR's nuclear arsenal.[53] Other members of the Ukrainian Party cadres were able to attain high positions in Moscow including: A.I. Kirichenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Party Central Committee, became a full member of the Presidium and eventually the Secretary of the Central Committee; V.Y. Semichastny, who rose through the ranks of the Komsomol to eventually become the head of the Committee

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[53]Bilinsky 244.

on the State Security, the Soviet secret police. There can be made an equally strong case in saying that Russians attained the highest positions in Ukrainian Party ranks. For example, Ukrainian born L.I. Brezhnev, whose career positions included Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and Secretary of the All-Union Party Central Committee, began his career in the Party as an administrator in Dniepropetrovsk. In 1941 he was chosen as the 1st Secretary of Zaporizhya *oblast* Committee and in 1947 he became 1st Secretary of the Dniepropetrovsk *oblast* Committee.

Although the Ukrainian element within Soviet leadership was significant, upon closer analysis a number of peculiarities of the CPU become apparent. Many members who rose to prominence through Khrushchev in Moscow were ethnic Russians, and although from Ukraine, one cannot assume that their primary interest was to serve the needs of the Ukrainian SSR.[54] Though the Ukrainian element within the Soviet ruling structures was growing, Khrushchev promoted supporters from Russian and other ethnic cadres to positions of authority as well. There was however a significantly higher rate of promotion amongst Ukrainians.[55]

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[54]Bilinsky writes that "we may speculate that in the long run the rise of "native cadres" to responsible positions in Moscow and within the republics itself will strengthen a form of Ukrainian *Titoism*". Further, Bilinsky argues that Ukrainians in authority positions serve their own personal interests first. They seek political advancement often by rejecting their nationality and assuming a Russian identity. These people, however, maintain close ties with their associations in Ukraine in the event situations change in Moscow and they lose their positions. Bilinsky 283-310. Another point is that opposition movements in the 1960s had an effect on leadership. The interests of the Union would have demanded immediate quashing of any opposition, however, in the 1960's, the voice of dissent in Ukraine was relatively strong.

[55]For more on the make-up of the CPSU and the composition of the Central Committee, Politburo and the All-Union Cabinet of Ministers, see Hough and Fainsod.

In her article, "Party Recruitment and the Nationalities in the USSR", McAuley's thesis is that in theory there was little leeway for republican Party structures to apply centrally dictated policy according to their own republic's specific circumstances. However, key questions are: what kind of people belonged to the Party and what were their backgrounds? McAuley discovers that the Party composition was different in each republic, but more importantly she asserts that the central Party structures considered the republican Party's composition a serious issue. Under Khrushchev for example, the desired Party image as "of the whole people" demanded an effort by the Party leadership in Moscow to recruit people from a variety of social and national groups to positions within the Party. Under Brezhnev, the working class element was stressed alongside the multi-ethnic element.[56]

McAuley neglects to consider that regardless of the ethnic composition of the republic's Party, individuals who were placed into elevated political positions or into real authority were not selected from the new target groups *per se*. Those who assumed these positions were, despite their republic of origin, predominantly ethnic Russians. A review of leaders in the Politburo for example, shows that few were non-Russians, and those who were of other ethnic background, were unlikely to pursue republican interests.

Republican pretense towards self-assertion was not well liked or tolerated in the Soviet Union. One need only to take the example of the First Secretary of the CPU, Petro Shelest (1965-1972), a promoter of an expanded Ukrainian culture and greater Ukrainian autonomy within the Union. Ukraine, along with other republics,

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[56]McAuley 463 - 465.

was able to gain a significantly higher degree of autonomy in various sectors. In 1957 economic councils were created after a campaign for more authority in the realm of economic decision making.[57] While economic conditions in Ukraine were improving in the late 1950s and early 1960s, republics were taking credit for the changes. Moscow tried to criticise the self-assertiveness and self-praise by attacking the "localism". These attacks were countered in Ukrainian papers with "glowing reports about the fulfillment and overfulfillment of targets set by Ukrainian economic councils."[58]

In the area of economics Ukraine had gained significant powers, which were in many ways matched in other spheres. Lewytzkyj writes that "The party leadership (especially in Ukraine) was surprised at the degree of resistance to its attempts to curtail the rights of the republics and to all forms of Russification and discrimination, particularly in language and culture "[59] Ukraine had moved away from previous norms in Moscow-republic relations, and was following a different path.

According to historian Jaroslaw Pelenski, in the period immediately preceding Shelest's coming to office, Ukrainian national revival began to "assume broader socio-political dimensions and to acquire certain characteristics of a more aggressive nature."[60] Shelest encouraged the revival and tried to create a political environment

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[57]Lewytzkyj 73. Reforms in economics were made from 1953 to 1964, and although many of them were not carried out to their fullest those which were implemented gave new powers to the republics. The union-wide slogan "More Rights for the Republics in the Economic Field" had profound effect in Ukraine where, for example, in a period of two years over 10,000 enterprises were placed under Ukrainian control.

[58]Lewytzkyj 78.

[59]Lewytzkyj 100.

[60]Jaroslaw Pelenski, "Shelest and His Period in Soviet Ukraine (1963-1972): A

in which it could survive by seeking a balance between the Soviet ideal and some degree of republican self-assertion. Pelenski wrote that Shelest, in the latter part of his tenure, went beyond the balanced approach to Ukrainian-Moscow relations and proved himself a spokesperson for Ukrainian autonomy.[61]

In the 1960s, Ukraine was able to gain a degree of autonomy which allowed for the growth of opposition movements and for Shelest to come to power with "liberally inclined leading party cadres. The rapid pace of change might have been the reason which doomed Shelest's changes in Ukraine. In 1972, as a result of a Moscow led purge, Ukraine was disciplined and recently gained powers were revoked. Traditional relations between Moscow and Ukraine resumed and any hopes Ukraine had for autonomy were dashed.[62]

Shelest was purged by Moscow authority in 1972 and he was replaced by Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, a strong Moscow supporter and Russophile. The leadership of the Soviet Union was broad-based and representative of the national diversity of the Republics in theory only. Brezhnev officially was seeking a merger of nations within the USSR. Thus Ukraine's power, as measured by the Communist Party of Ukraine's participation and influence in the All-Union Communist Party, was indeed limited regardless of Constitutional amendments and a "will" to include ethnic minorities into the decision-making circles of the Soviet Union.

Revival of Controlled Ukrainian Autonomism," in Peter J. Potichnyj, Ukraine in the Seventies (Oakville, ON: Mosaic Press, 1975) 286.

[61]Pelenski 296.

[62]Circumstances in the 1960's led Ukraine to seek greater autonomy in economic matters which then led to cultural and national assertiveness. In 1989, national revival began the process which eventually led to the break up of the Soviet Union. In the 1960's the process went too swiftly and became worrisome to authorities in Moscow before they gained strong popular support.

Ukraine's relative power in the Soviet Union can also be measured by reviewing Ukraine's role in international affairs. The Soviet Union as a whole enjoyed a superpower role on the international scene after World War II, and Ukraine and other republics benefited from Moscow's global profile. The conclusion of the Yalta Agreements on February 11, 1945 between the British, the Americans and the Soviets stipulated that Ukraine, along with Belorussia and Lithuania, would be accorded membership in the newly formed United Nations. On April 23, 1945, Both Ukraine and Belarus were invited to join the UN following a unanimous decision of the forty-seven member nations at the San Francisco Conference on the United Nations. Ukraine thus gained a role on the international stage.[63] After Ukraine's acceptance of the UN invitation, it participated on several committees of the world body, among them the Atomic Energy and Conventional Armaments Control Commission of the UN General Assembly. In 1947, Ukraine was elected to the UN Security Council and in 1957, became a charter member of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Despite the long list of committees and associate organisations to which Ukraine belonged, Bilinsky writes that little differentiated the Ukrainian delegation from that of the USSR. Bilinsky's account of a well known New York Times notice serves as a humorous yet telling illustration of the lack of independence of Ukraine and Belorussia at the General Assembly of the UN. "The delegate of the USSR said "*da*", which is the Russian equivalent for "yea". "*Oui*", voted the

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[63]Vsevolod Holub (Holubnychy), *Ukraina v Ob'yednanykh Natsiakh*(Munich: *Suchasna Ukraina*, 1953) 29 ff. The membership of Ukraine and Belarussia was related to the wartime losses of these two republics. A detailed account of the political process by which Ukraine and Belarussia were admitted to the UN is found in Edward R. Stettinius Jr., Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1949).

representative of Belorussia in French. The delegate of the Ukrainian SSR, however, said "yes" in English."[64]

This anecdote shows the limited nature of Ukraine's participation on the international scene as contrasted with Soviet propaganda.[65] Much of Ukraine's interaction with the West was conducted through dissident groups communicating with their support organisations around the world. The issues which primarily concerned the dissidents were cultural, social and even economic rather than the political advancement of Ukraine's standing on the world stage as a player with true foreign policy aspirations.[66] Few believe that the 1944 Constitutional amendments were adopted in earnest. Nonetheless, a move towards greater decentralisation became evident in the decade following Stalin's death. This process was by no means complete or extensive, but it covered a wide range of sectors within which republican governments could increase their powers at the domestic level. No change in the republican participation on the international scene was permitted within the decentralisation process. Thus republican participation in international affairs does not serve as an accurate measure of republican strength in the Soviet Union's structure as decisions and voices were dictated by the Central government.

Despite the limited diffusion of power under Khrushchev, the Party organs at the republican level did not claim to represent republican national interests. The

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[64]Bilinsky 264.
[65]For an example of a theoretical description of Ukraine see, *Ukraina na Mizhnarodni Areni* (Kyiv: *Vydavnytstvo Politychnoii Literatury Ukrainy*, 1968).
[66]Although it can be argued that it is precisely this end that dissidents sought, my argument here is that the immediate manifestations of the dissident movement were not aimed at gaining the Ukrainian SSR a place on the world scene as such. The end goal of most dissidents was to achieve Ukraine's complete independence.

party structures were simply responsible for implementing Party policy. They were subordinate not to the republic itself, but to higher authority in Moscow where instructions were issued. The *nomenklatura* of the Central Committee restricted republican authority and, because the republic Party organs were chosen by the Central Committee, the republican Party organs had limited participation in the decision making process regarding various non-military sectors in the republics. The one area in which republican Party organs did not even have pretense of authority was in military matters, which, according to the limited information available, were directly controlled from Moscow.

Under Khrushchev, the republics were given more say in their own affairs but, nearing the end of his tenure, he had lost his initial support from those who helped in his rise to power. The CPU, in response to his "sometimes haphazard economic experiments" backed the KGB putsch that ousted Khrushchev.[67] The new regime under Leonid I. Brezhnev changed the relationship between Moscow and the republics. The September 1965 plenum of the CC CPSU, ended the period of increased republican authority. Symbolic of the new order, for example, was the reversal of Khrushchev's economic management reform which was a decisive move towards a more centralised system of management, automatically stripping the republics of the delusion of power.[68]

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[67]Lewytzkyj 204.
[68]Lewytzkyj 95.

Military Command Structures

From the inception of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Army has been a Russian dominated institution. Since Stalin's era, the Army played a privileged role in Soviet society and, even during sweeping changes under Khrushchev, retained its powerful position. The Soviet Army was a creation of the Party and the command of its forces was theoretically held by the Ministry of Defence, led by a Marshall, of the Soviet Union. The reality of military leadership, however, was that all decisions regarding the army were made by the Party leadership. Historian Michel Garder describes the three pillars of the Soviet Union as the Party machine, the military and the police. The three complemented each other and acted in concert, but the Party played the leadership role among them.[69] Garder observes that, in addition to being the 'main force' of the Party, the Soviet army also served as a recruiting ground for future leaders of the Party. He further adds that the Soviet Army was an army of the Soviet nation based on its recruitment and "rediscovered [Russian] traditions."[70] What is implied is that the Soviet Army was in fact a Russian based institution with Russian traditions. Garder writes that by "Russian" he includes Russians, Ukrainians and Belarussians. However, the majority within the Slavic component of the army was made up of ethnic Russians. This is further reinforced by the heavy overrepresentation of Russians in the officer corps.[71] In addition to this, the Russian

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[69]Michel Garder, History of the Soviet Army (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966) 158.

[70]Garder 158-159.

[71]Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone, "The Soviet Armed Forces: The Challenge of Reform and the Ethnic Factor," in Uri Ra'anan, ed., The Soviet Empire (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1990) 156. "The professional officer cadre is 80 percent Russian and 90 percent Slav and generally Russified (the choice of a professional army career implies a *defacto* russification)." Timothy J. Colton, Commissars, Commanders, and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics (Cambridge, MA:

nature of the Soviet Army is reinforced by the fact that there have never been national army units within it. Based on its composition, its unspoken role as a leadership school for the Communist Party, and its elevated position within the Soviet leadership structure, the Soviet Army was without doubt an instrument of the central Party structure within which republican participation was limited.

The limitations of republican authority over military units were established under Stalin. In 1933 the Ukrainian Military District command and the heads of three regional Party committees, pleaded with Stalin to allow military units to help with agriculture. Stalin responded by saying: "They [military and civilians] are not to be in cooperation. The military should occupy themselves with their own business and not discuss things that do not concern them."[72] According to political scientist Timothy Colton, there was no change in the approach to military - republic relations under Khrushchev and Brezhnev. Furthermore, Moscow did not encourage the development of such contacts. Political and military leadership did little to include republican organs in their work.[73]

In the organisation of the Soviet Army, the participation of the republics was limited to the Military Councils. The Military Council, as described by Garder, was the board which oversaw all aspects of the armed forces in a particular republic, and each sector of the force was thus responsible to this Council. The sectors were structured in what appears to be a hierarchical manner with the military councils for

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Harvard University Press, 1979) 260-261. Colton shows that the Russian composition of the Soviet Army officer corps was 71.5 % as compared to the Russian portion of the Soviet population in 1970 which was 53.4 %.

[72]Colton 254-5.

[73]Colton 255.

the regions appearing near the end of Garder's list. It is questionable whether the list depicts accurately the importance of the regional military councils. However, the fact that these regions were listed near the end of approximately twenty listed sections of the forces signifies that the interests of the regions competed with those sections which appeared to be more strategically important.[74] The Soviet Army clearly served the purposes of the central authority. Republican military interests were relegated to a minor role on the Military Councils, a status which remained constant through the Brezhnev era.

The structure of Soviet institutions and the republican weakness characteristic of the Khrushchev period came under attack from within the Party structures. In October 1964, Khrushchev was ousted and replaced by Leonid Brezhnev. The Brezhnev regime's strategic military priority was evident almost immediately upon his taking office. New aggressiveness in military rebuilding was a key element in the policy. On the other hand, the Soviet Union under Brezhnev was the epitome of stability in terms of policy and personnel. Political scientist Robert Tucker, in his book on Soviet leadership, notes that the Brezhnev era partially returned to the ways of Stalin.[75] While Tucker shows that there were differences between the two eras, Brezhnev's USSR indeed shared some characteristics with its predecessor. Emphasis in both eras was placed on rigid centralisation and massive rebuilding of the military which, in Brezhnev's time, resulted in increased tensions in the Cold War and the invasion of Afghanistan.

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[74]Garder notes that the Military Council members, and their respective responsibilities are listed in their order of precedence. Garder 162.
[75]Robert C. Tucker, Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1987)

The power elite changes seen under Stalin and Khrushchev were not characteristic of Brezhnev's rule. The composition of the power elite reflected Brezhnev's political aims when he came to power, and it did not change dramatically during his term in office. In 1981, the Central Committee was clearly dominated by ethnic Russians (67.1%), Ukrainians made up the second largest group (15.5%).[76] Many of the other republican participants who served on the Central Committee were ethnic Russians. Of the participants from Ukraine, the majority were ethnic Russians. In terms of policy, the Brezhnevite social contract with the USSR's leadership and the elites established a stability in which dramatic policy changes were not pursued and the tenure of positions on committees and councils was rarely tested. An indication of this 'stability' was evident in the three elections of the Central Committee during Brezhnev's time: "Some members of both the elite and the leadership have been replaced under Brezhnev, but only very slowly and deliberately. Of the three Central Committees elected since 1966, at least four fifths of the living members of the previous Central Committee have been re-elected each time."[77] This stability led to a virtual stagnation of policy development and innovation.

Brezhnev was an ethnic Russian who had a long political career enabling him to establish networks across the territory of the Soviet Union. His rise through the Dnipropetrovsk party organisation would lead one to assume that others of that region would figure prominently in his inner circle and that Ukraine's strategic regional interests would be well served. In the 1970s however, the Communist Party had been purged of "nationalist" elements. Petro Shelest was seen as a leader figure

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[76]Mark Beissinger, "The Power Elite," The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, (October 1982) 26.
[77]Beissinger 25.

of this element.[78] According to Boris Lewytzkyj, Shelest appeared to be loyal to Moscow. However, Brezhnev needed someone in Ukraine "who had no scruples about subordinating the republic's interests to those of the USSR."[79] The removal of Shelest signaled Moscow's opposition to self-assertion in the republics. Brezhnev had acted to prevent any transfer of authority to the republics. The established relationship between Moscow and the republics had been preserved.

The Brezhnev regime could not be accused of stagnation in its approach to military rebuilding during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Brezhnev's demands for parity ensured that the USSR would continue to endeavour to meet American production levels in weapons build-up. "The Soviet military-industrial complex was accorded the resources that it had, for a long time been denied. The unsuccessful effort to overtake America in per capita production of meat, milk and butter gave way to an eventually successful one to rival her in missiles and other components of strategic military power."[80]

The comparatively dynamic period in Soviet politics, highlighted by massive military build-up at the beginning of Brezhnev's term gave way to political stagnation in the period from 1975 onward. By the mid-1970's political dynamism evaporated. With a GNP only half the size of the American, the Soviets were spending more on the military in order to keep up to the US. During this time, negotiation with the

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[78]Although the "nationalist" element is so called, there is no reason to believe that these people were radicals seeking major concessions from the centre. Social scientist Roman Szporluk, who has written extensively in this area refers to these "nationalists" as moderate communists. for more on this see: Roman Szporluk, "National Reawakening," in Ra'anan 75-94.
[79]Lewytzkyj 204.
[80]Tucker 127.

West on matters of arms reduction took centre-stage and became the focus of political interest in the USSR, exhausted by internal economic and social stagnation. The end of the Brezhnev era was to introduce significant changes in Soviet politics. However, the short rule of Andropov and then Chernenko did nothing to solve the Soviet Union's problems. The ascent of Mikhail Gorbachev to the leadership of the CPSU broke through the stagnation and signaled a change in Moscow on the level of policy and command structures.

The reality in the Soviet Union, however, was that the only the central apparatus had authority. The republics were left out of the command structures in most aspects of Soviet government, particularly the military. The civilian - military relationship, for example, is complicated and, according to one analyst, one where the needs of the two sides are accommodated through a "concurrence of practical objectives", determined for the most part by the central apparatus.[81] Within the Constitution, the republics had participation rights, but the practice did not accord with the theory, resulting from the ethnic composition of the CPU and various military organs. Republics such as Ukraine, although strategically important, were obliged to follow central orders. Because of their inability to participate in policy making in Moscow, as well as the Russian dominance within the military command structures, the republics were unable to advance any particular regional security interests.[82]

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[81]Colton 280. Colton makes the point that in relations between the military and civilian structures, the "concurrence" of interests serve the interests of both sides, however, in earlier chapters he examines the role of military personnel in government and concludes that the level of active participation in government is low. The greater the strength of the military, the more the interests of the state are served.

[82]Jiri Valenta and William Potter, Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1984). Valenta and Potter, in examining the Czechoslovak Crisis, detailed the organisational actors in the decision making

Conclusion

The relationship between the Moscow centre and the Soviet republics was complicated and difficult to ascertain because of the theoretical rhetoric of Soviet documents, including the Constitution, versus the reality of the workings of the USSR. The relationships continue to be difficult to discern as the extensive Cold War literature is unreliable at best. Though there are several excellent historical texts on Moscow-republic interaction, most concentrate on one specific aspect of the relationship. The texts which examine the military suffer because of the secrecy surrounding the topic. Information regarding internal relations between military sections or command structures is virtually non-existent.

What does appear clearly in the examination of the political relations between the Moscow-dominated centre and the republics, is that Ukraine had very little influence over state policy and policy direction. Although the case is made by Soviet rhetoric that the republics, particularly Ukraine, played significant roles in leadership structures in Moscow, the interests of the republic were not of prime concern to republican representatives who attained positions in the central government.[83] In one

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process. In brief, they write that departments concerned with internal affairs and regional party bureaucracies in the non-Russian republics *may* become involved in the process.[italics added] Although Ukraine supported Moscow's intervention in Czechoslovakia, it was Soviet interest that was being served. They make no speculation about a scenario where Ukraine's interests would be in direct conflict with those of the USSR. Such a scenario may have arisen if Shelest' needed to gain greater support for his 'Ukrainianisation' efforts which eventually led to his removal from office. Valenta and Potter's conclusion suggests that because the republics have a minor role in security decision making, their input is only sought when their interests serve the USSR as a whole.

[83]D.L. Zlatopolsky, State System of the USSR (Moscow, Foreign Languages

instance, a republican leader was removed because of his attempt to increase powers of the republic and to raise national consciousness. There were periods in Soviet history when republics had periods of influence, and compared to most Ukraine was considered quite important. Authorities in Moscow, however, feared that any form of Ukrainian self-assertion, would undermine the hegemony of the state. Thus the powers gained by the republic during the 1960s were rescinded in 1972. Ukrainian leadership was purged and the republic was forced back into its traditional compliant state.

Effective republican participation in centrally developed policy was secondary because of the absence of personalities who pursued the interests of the republics of origin. It is therefore evident that if republican interest was limited in the development of civilian policies, participation by republics advocating their own interests in military decision making would have been negligible. Bilinsky notes that a safe generalisation to make is that military decision making is limited to top leadership and to specialists, not as in some areas where the leadership is somewhat more responsive to the needs of special interest groups. An example of this is the matter of wages, where according to Bilinsky there is uncertainty as to who is making the policies, but there is "responsiveness to workers and peasants."[84]

The Soviet Union's military structures were indeed controlled by the centre, yet even though the republics were represented in the central government, military decision making was carried out by the topmost echelon of the Communist Party, the Politburo, within which republican participation was limited. Therefore, with little

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Publishing House, [nd]) 95-123. See also, John A. Armstrong, The Soviet Bureaucratic Elite (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959) 6-8.

[84]Hough and Fainsod 550-551.

say in the government structures, the questionable integration of "ethnics" into the Communist Party, controlled participation in international bodies, and limited access to military decision making structures one may conclude that in military matters, the republics were virtually left out.[85]

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[85]Valenta and Potter 23-73. Valenta and Potter examine the processes of policy formulation within various aspects of national security. Their findings indicate that republican representation was in fact limited on military councils. Republican participation was at higher political levels, which themselves were limited.

3. From Gorbachev to Independence

In 1990, Mikhail Gorbachev summarised the history of the Soviet Union with this observation: "What is Russia? It is the Soviet Union. What is the Soviet Union? It is mostly Russia."[86]

Throughout Soviet history, Ukraine's role - similar to that of the other republics - was essentially a secondary one with no authority in areas of strategic military importance. None of the republics was ever a truly sovereign nation in the Western sense, despite what various Soviet treaties, constitutions and rhetorical speeches would have had the world believe. In the past, under Khrushchev for example, there were periods during which Ukraine and the other republics were able to reach higher levels of participation in Moscow in pursuit of their regional interests. However these areas of interest were not as high on the list of strategic priorities of the Soviet Union as was, for example, strategic weapons policy. In matters of strategic forces, decisions were made in the centre without consideration for the republics and as with most administrations of the USSR, without the real participation of republican representatives with regional interests in mind.

The Gorbachev period was a time of change. Yet the government was unable to break the mould of previous administrations and the problems of the USSR continued. *Perestroyka* did little for the republics in terms of improving their relations with Moscow. However, as the Soviet Union began to unravel, the republics were in a position to increase their participation in various sectors, including the military.

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[86]New York Times, 28 December, 1990, A4.

The Gorbachev period is often viewed as the denouement of the Soviet Union. The changes and seemingly new approaches to matters of economics, nationalities and military doctrine adopted by the centre vis-à-vis various sectors eventually led to the dissolution of the USSR as a whole. It was also partially Gorbachev's failure to address the nationalities' need for greater expression in matters of strategic interest which ultimately weakened the Union and led to its eventual collapse. The unraveling of the Soviet Union as a result of Gorbachev's changes and prior Soviet leaders' inability or unwillingness to accommodate the republics' needs, started the process for the republics to declare themselves independent.

The first part of this chapter will look at the military and relations between the centre and the republics during the Gorbachev administration. The policies of restructuring the military and their impact on Moscow-republican relations, are important in understanding the conditions which led to the eventual downfall of the Soviet state and the opportunity offered the republics to pursue their own interests.

The second part of this chapter will look at the scramble to gain control over the weaponry and the resulting leap in international status of the new nuclear nations. The dissolution of the Soviet Union posed serious questions about the future of the republics, not to mention the effect on international relations. However, few issues took on the magnitude as the future of the Soviet strategic forces. The collapse of the USSR and the effect the dissolution had upon Soviet institutions posed an unprecedented administrative dilemma. The nuclear weapons question has become symbolic of assurance of independence for some of the republics in their relationship with the centre. International recognition gave newly independent nations, an

opportunity to test their sovereignty. In Ukraine's case, this was manifested through the issue of nuclear weapons. Ukraine's new assumed control over its own sovereignty will be examined in the latter part of this chapter.

Gorbachev's Rise to Power

The CPSU Central Committee elected Mikhail Gorbachev to the position of General Secretary in March 1985. It was hoped that Gorbachev could lead the USSR into a new era of prosperity and social unity. He was immediately touted in the Western media as being different from his predecessors, from Brezhnev in particular, and observers described Gorbachev's style of leadership as being similar to "Western-style pluralism." The Gorbachev period begs closer examination in this paper because of its impact on the Soviet Union as a whole and on its constituent parts, and for its inability to change the structure of the relationship between Moscow and the republics.

Like Brezhnev, Gorbachev moved through the ranks of the Communist Party until he became the youngest sitting member of the Politburo. However unlike his predecessors, Gorbachev came to office with bold ideas for reforming the Soviet Union. His immediate priority upon assuming the leadership of the USSR, was to develop a "stronger economy in order to improve the standard of living and safeguard the country's international status, and [Gorbachev] formulated the goals of an economic revitalisation."[87] The legacy of the Brezhnev regime left Gorbachev to

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[87]Anders Aslund, Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 26.

deal with an enormous lethargic bureaucracy with vast powers and every aspect of the Soviet government would have to be reformed if Gorbachev was to succeed in rebuilding the Union's economy.

One of the first realisations which faced the new General Secretary was that the military structure was a major obstacle to economic reform. The Soviet Union's military industrial complex and its bureaucracy consumed a significant proportion of the state budget and although demands for new expensive technology were growing, the economic and social conditions in the rest of the country were rapidly deteriorating. Accurate figures regarding the Soviet economy are difficult to ascertain but economist David Dyker estimates that from 1980 to 1986 the proportion of the total Soviet budget devoted to defence was around 10%.[88] According to analyst Stephen Meyer, there is little or no evidence that Gorbachev had concrete plans to change the Soviet defence doctrine, but the realisation that the military was causing much of the economic imbalance in the Soviet Union led Gorbachev to bring about changes within the military budgetary allocation.[89]

Gorbachev's new approach to economic questions resulted in sizeable military reductions, and restructuring programs were announced in December 1988. Of particular interest is that a significant percentage of the cuts made during the military

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[88]David Dyker, "The Soviet Economy in 1985," David R. Jones, ed., Soviet Armed Forces Review. Vol.10 (Breezehill. FL.: Academic International Press, 1987) 162-164. See also, World Armaments and Disarmaments: SIPRI Yearbook 1981, Cambridge, MA: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, Inc. (1981) 147-154. There are CIA estimates which suggest that Soviet military spending was approximately 50% higher than that of the US. However there are other figures based on official exchange rates which suggest that Soviet spending in this area is one-fifth of that of the US. SIPRI's own figures indicate that the spending of both countries was about the same.

[89]Meyer 33-34.

restructuring were in military districts on Ukraine's territory. The significance of these cuts in Ukraine is that Ukrainian military districts received disproportionate resources from Moscow during the build-up of the 1970s and during the peak of the Cold War and were therefore targeted for a 'downsizing' under the new policy.[90]

The reductions and changes in the physical structure of the military were matched with a sharp decrease in the military's participation in decision making in Moscow. In 1987, shortly before the major restructuring announcements were made, Gorbachev removed Marshal Sokolov, the Minister of Defence, from the Politburo replacing him with Dmitri T. Yazov. Yazov had close ties to Gorbachev and was a strong proponent of military reform. This move in effect disconnected the military leadership from a position in which they participated directly in decision making within the Politburo.[91] Military-strategic decisions had become purely political in nature; furthermore, the military-strategic decisions were now in the hands of the civilian leadership in Moscow.

The decisions on restructuring the defence sector which followed Yazov's departure were significant in terms of their regional consequences particularly because the military was in no position to influence the nature of the forthcoming

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[90]Graham H. Turbiville Jr, "Restructuring the Soviet Ground Forces," Military Review, (December 1989). This article describes some of the changes of Gorbachev's December 1988 restructuring program. Although he attempts to describe the effect of the deactivation and ongoing changes, he notes that difficulties remain in trying to assess the true meaning of these changes.

[91]Jan S. Adams, "Institutional Change and Soviet National Security Policy," in George E. Hudson, ed., Soviet National Security Policy Under *Perestroika*, (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990) 154. Adams writes that Yazov's ascent to the position of Minister of Defence indicated that "military representation in national security policymaking at the highest level took a giant step backward."

changes. The 1988 Constitution gave the Council of Ministers authority to direct areas of military concern but in 1990, through constitutional change, Gorbachev was able to render the Council impotent in these areas. As well, the Council of Defence, the 'phantom' body of insiders which was reputedly the inner sanctum of military policy-making, no longer played a role in defence decisions and were eliminated completely from the Constitution in 1990.[92] Republics were underrepresented in these bodies, and eliminating the Councils from the decision-making process relegated the republics to an even more peripheral status.

Gorbachev pursued the nationalities question in a manner similar to his centralised, one-sided military restructuring. Those in the Politburo in January 1989, were all ethnic Russians, with the possible exception of those who represented the republics (but these individuals were not relevant to strategic matters because they were proven supporters of Union interests over those of the regions they represented). This group included the First Secretary of the CPU, V.V. Shcherbytsky.[93] A 1990 revision to the Constitution required the President to appoint a special 10 member advisory body (Presidential Council). However, even the composition of this advisory body showed that Gorbachev ignored the interests of the republics. According to analyst Michael McGwire, of the ten members of the Presidential Council, five were Politburo members, all of whom were Russian. Also on the Presidential Council were three non-Slavs, leaving only two positions for non-

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[92]The Council of Defence was a secret body within the Presidium of the USSR, not subordinate to the Council of Ministers. Few descriptions of this structure are available and most discussion on the Council of Defence is found in notes. See Valenta and Potter 69.

[93]William J. Bishop, "Domestic Politics and Gorbachev's Security Policy," George E. Hudson, ed., Soviet National Security Policy under *Perestroika* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990) 135.

Russian Slavs.[94] In addition to creating the Presidential Council, the 1990 changes to the Constitution gave more power to an executive presidency. Without doubt, this lessened the authority of the central legislative bodies in which republican interests were already underrepresented thus further reducing their voice in strategic matters.[95]

The process Gorbachev initially started was a form of democratisation. It was his belief that the bureaucracy had become too powerful and that a shift in political controls was necessary. Various economic problems within the USSR demanded changes which could only be made by restructuring the government and the military. However, these changes would prove to have a disastrous effect on the structure of the Soviet Union and left the state vulnerable to disruptive political changes. Similar structural changes began in Poland and spread to the rest of Eastern Europe through the late eighties. The Gorbachev strategy of restructuring was threatened by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and fear spread in the Soviet government that the nationalist resurgent movements in Eastern Europe might have serious influences on Soviet republican nationalities. In 1989, ethnic tensions were running high in several Central Asian republics compounding the distrust of Gorbachev's plans for restructuring the Soviet bureaucratic monolith.

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[94]Michael MccGwire, *Perestroika* and Soviet National Security (Washington, D.C. The Brookings Institution, 1991) 349. MccGwire was a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Foreign Policy Studies program.

[95]Although the central legislative organs were weakened by the establishment of an executive presidency, changes, which included democratic elections and the institution of the presidency, gave republics greater autonomy *vis-a-vis* Moscow. This increased autonomy eventually led to republics making claims of sovereignty.

Adding to centrifugal trends in Eastern Europe was the dissolution of power within the Communist Party. Rand Corporation analyst Harry Gelman wrote that Moscow was losing its ability to exert control over the internal organisation of the CP, particularly in the republics.[96] The lack of authority within the regional Party structures was also felt in the military, offering the republican authorities an opportunity to gain greater power over their own military-strategic interests.

In early 1990, the republics took advantage of the political climate in Eastern Europe and within the USSR and started to make demands on Moscow, which would eventually lead to a collapse of central authority. Several republics, Ukraine among them, adopted declarations of sovereignty which included assertions of their right to create national military forces. Ukraine's declaration of sovereignty was adopted in July 1990 and although it made no mention of nuclear weapons, it asserted the right of the republic to create its own armed forces.[97] The declaration also stated that the KGB in Ukraine would become subordinate to republican authority and that Ukraine would become a neutral state and conduct its own foreign relations. The July 1990 declaration was the most assertive statement made by Ukraine, and one of several from former Soviet republics with which Moscow would be forced to contend.

The emergence of republican forces in 1990 marked a monumental chapter in Soviet history, which resulted in the Union's imminent demise. The civilian authority in Moscow was woefully unprepared to deal with the events of this period and made

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[96]Harry Gelman, "Gorbachev and the Future of the Soviet Military Institution," Adelphi Papers 258 (Spring 1991) 32-34.

[97] "Declaration of Sovereignty," Pravda (17 July 1990) 2. CDSP Vol. XLII No. 30 (1990) 8.

desperate attempts to reassert control over the regional military structures. The central authorities believed they could remedy the situation by changing the boundaries of the military districts redrawing them to coincide with the borders of republics. The rationale was that this concession would placate nationalist movements, curb growing dissatisfaction within the republics over military divisions and create a semblance of republican force. The military believed that Soviet forces could not realistically be divided.

> [How could the Soviet Union] painlessly divide the nuclear potential, the PVO(air defence) and PRO (anti-ballistic missile defence) structures, the military-strategic command and control system, and the military-industrial complex as a whole? Without a unified system to provide cover, fragmented republic armies will not be able to repulse a potential air-space attack by an enemy, which would be the basis of a modern strategic operation.[98]

With a small and practically powerless voice in central decision-making structures, the Soviet military leadership's warnings were unheeded. Proving its ignorance in matters of military concern, the leadership in Moscow was convinced that such a restructuring would work and did not even consider removing nuclear weapons from Ukrainian, Belarusian (Belorussian) and Kazakh regions. These weapons were however, removed from other regions. The Sunday Times reported in early October 1990 that Moscow's concerns for the safety of the weapons was such that they removed them from the Baltics, Armenia and Azerbaijan.[99] Having taken this precaution, the Soviet leadership initiated a political reorganisation and a last ditch effort to stabilise the Union.

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[98]Col. O. Belkov, "Roundtable Discussions," *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* (vol. 5, 1991), cited in Roy Allison, "Military Forces in the Soviet Successor States," Adelphi Papers, 280 (1993) 7-8.

[99]The Sunday Times, Moscow Television Service in Russian, (1 October 1990) FBIS -Sov- 90 194 (5 October, 1990) 52.

On March 17, 1991, a referendum was held on the question of the Union's future. Although 71 percent voted in favour of preserving a revised Soviet Union, about the same percentage in Russia voted in favour of electing a president of the RSFSR.[100] In order to achieve stability, in July 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev announced the creation of a new Union Treaty which would establish a Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics. In this treaty Gorbachev proposed that defence policy would be decided upon jointly by the centre and the republics, but the republics regarded the proposal as "too little too late" and conversely, the conservative elements in Moscow believed that the centre had given away too much. The rapid political changes occurring in Eastern Europe prevented the Soviet leadership from reacting quickly and by November 1991, several republics had individual ministries of defence which had in effect, suspended Moscow's right to physically maintain control over nuclear weapons on their territory.

The Gorbachev regime had attempted to strengthen its hold on power by democratising the USSR but the events of the late 1980s created an environment in which control over the process of *perestroyka* was out of Moscow's hands. The republics were able to take advantage of the situation to gain sovereign control over their own polity. Reaction from Moscow to the power grab by the republics was limited and inadequate in terms of preserving the status quo. It can be argued that the reason for Moscow's inadequacy was the lack of regional participation in the Politburo and other high level decision-making bodies. While Moscow was preoccupied with matters pertaining to the Union, republican needs went unnoticed. Soviet leaders assumed that the sanctity of the State and, equally important, the

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[100]John B. Dunlop, The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993) 33-35.

solidarity of the military, could not be shattered and Gorbachev understood that without a renewed commitment to the Union by the republics, collapse would continue. The Union Treaty was to assure economic and political sovereignty for the republics within a new Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics and, according to the proposed resolution, called for the "renewal and preservation of a unitary Soviet Union." Gorbachev himself called for a union made up of "strong republics and a strong centre."[101] The Union Treaty offered greater strength to the republics and yet Moscow leadership assumed that if it remained the 'strong centre', some form of general order could be maintained despite political changes.

However, the renewed form of the Soviet Union was not put to test because of the events of August 1991. Mikhail Gorbachev was placed under house arrest while on vacation in Crimea; simultaneously in Moscow, a group of leaders tried to assume authority. Although the putsch was a failure, many in the West and in the former Soviet Union saw it as the critical point marking the end of the Soviet Union. For Ukraine in particular, the events in Moscow and Crimea validated the need to establish and maintain a republican force. The political instability in Moscow up to and during the coup radicalised the republican agenda giving Ukraine's leaders the temerity to make demands on the centre as the risk of losing the augmented powers, gained in the previous months, was relatively high. According to one analyst, the creation of a Ukrainian military force in the immediate aftermath of the coup was essential to safeguard the Ukrainian agenda towards sovereignty from Moscow. This role for the Ukrainian military force was perhaps even more important to Ukraine than that of defence against other foreign states.[102]

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[101]Stephen White, After Gorbachev. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 176-77.
[102]Allison 9.

Independence

In the months following the putsch, Gorbachev rapidly lost any semblance of power in Moscow. Russia's President, Boris Yeltsin, was gaining increased authority and had started to establish links with other republics. Yeltsin's approach to the other republics indicated that indeed, the putsch had created a new climate for inter-republican relations. As the Union began to crumble, the fragmentation of the Soviet military had just begun.

In the period immediately after the coup, the Soviet military leadership tried to prevent a structural fragmentation of the armed forces. Soviet Defence Minister Shaposhnikov ventured to develop formulae which would align republican and Union forces in the interest of maintaining strategic security of the Union. Shaposhnikov also suggested the formation of a consultative body similar to the Warsaw Pact, to be made up of republican leaders. Such proposals were irrelevant by this time the republics were committed to establishing their own military structures and pursuing equitable allocation of Soviet military assets.

Immediately following Ukraine's declaration of sovereignty in July 1990, it claimed to inherit the Soviet Union's assets on Ukrainian soil. This claim was of great consequence since the foremost order of business for the republics after the fall of the Soviet Union was to establish their independence *pro forma*. Ukraine held a national referendum to determine its future democratically, and it was the only republic to do so. The results of the December 1, 1991 vote were overwhelmingly in favour of independence. The vote however, was based mainly on the general

concepts of sovereignty and economic issues. Matters of control over Soviet weaponry were not raised during the campaign, with the exception of promises that Ukraine would become a non-nuclear country. This promise seemed to parallel Moscow's position which stated that all nuclear weapons forces should remain under unified control. The policy direction proposed by Moscow seemed to be a dictum rather than a mere suggestion, although it had been agreed to in principle by the republics. The Minister of Defence of the RSFSR stated that, "we must unite all the republics or Ministers of Defence of all the republics, giving them equal rights... The main issue is that we should keep centralised control of our strategic nuclear forces and not divide them up among the republics... all republics will agree to this."[103] Belarus and Kazakhstan agreed to leave the weapons under Moscow's control, Ukraine however, did not and did not submit to Moscow's command.

The first hint of Ukraine's deviation from the policy of centrally controlled strategic nuclear forces was proffered in October 1991 by Viatold Fokin, Ukraine's Prime Minister. His supposition that Ukraine might keep the weapons was made in context of a speech regarding safe dismantling of nuclear weapons on Ukraine's territory. Fokin acknowledged that Ukraine sought to become nuclear free, yet at the same time expressed concern that the weapons could fall into "irresponsible hands" and that it was therefore essential to work out a system of strategic security for the region. Other Ukrainian leaders agreed with Fokin's statement that Ukraine was going to become a non-nuclear state. Colonel General Kostiantyn Morozov, Ukraine's Minister of Defence, insisted that Ukraine would become nuclear free, but added that any dismantlement or management of weapons on Ukrainian soil would

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[103]Gen. Konstantin Kobets, Minister of Defence for the RSFSR, in FBIS - SOV 91-170 (3 September, 1991) 87.

have to be enacted with Ukrainian participation. Fokin's statement combined with General Morozov's resolve for Ukrainian involvement in all decisions and resulting actions regarding nuclear weapons marked the beginning of Ukraine's claim of stewardship over strategic weapons found on its soil.[104] Ukraine's new ideas also marked the beginning of Western and Russian worries about Ukraine possessing a certain degree of control over nuclear weapons. A Ukraine with nuclear weapons posed a direct security threat to the region of the former USSR which in turn became a threat to the US itself. The threat this posed to the US and to Russia will be examined in the next chapter.

The denouement of the Soviet Union came in December 1991 with the signing of the Alma-Ata declaration which established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).[105] The manifesto of this association of newly sovereign states attempted to define the relations between the signatory countries with respect to post-Soviet issues including those of military control. The first CIS summit at the end of December 1991 concluded that all strategic weapons and the personnel responsible for them would be unified and under single command, subordinate to the leaders of the member states. Ukraine took a lead role in seeking to divide the remaining Soviet military, non-nuclear arsenal among the republics. Like other republics, Ukraine had established its own conventional forces and therefore refused to commit itself to the CIS-wide military structure which Russia had proposed. Russia assumed the dominant partner position in the CIS and was thus able to serve

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[104]Kostiantyn Morozov, personal interview (Cambridge, MA.: 28 December 1995).
[105]Ukraine participated in creating the CIS, although Ukraine refused to join primarily because as a result of Moscow's pressure to create a unified military command within the Commonwealth.

the interests of a Moscow-centred strategy even though the CIS was theoretically to be based on equal partnership.

Some have attributed the discord within the CIS to the precedence of Moscow's interests over those of the CIS authorities.[106] While many of the republics which were militarily, economically or politically weak were prepared to follow Moscow's leadership and forego their sovereignty, others were not. Without the full participation of these renegade nations, primarily Ukraine, the CIS could not expect to survive as a coordinated alliance. As Ukraine would not partake in joint military command over forces on its territory, it was assigned only associate membership status in the CIS. Reiterating provisions for member equality, Kyiv openly challenged the CIS, bristling against Russian dominance within the structure. Dmytro Pavlychko, Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament Commission on Foreign Affairs, wrote about a day when "we will no longer sit under Moscow's watchful eye... We will leave the CIS as we left the old prison."[107] From the Ukrainian standpoint, Russia had been unwilling to consider itself an equal partner in the region and was reluctant to give up the controlling role it had played over the past century. On several occasions Ukrainian leaders said that if Russia continued to dominate the CIS, the organisation would fail, primarily because Ukraine would never remain subordinate to Moscow.[108] Ukraine's participation in the CIS was restricted mainly

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[106]Kostiantyn Morozov noted that this was a common thread in political discourse in Ukraine.

[107]Dmytro Pavlychko cited in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 24 March 1992, p.1-2, (CDSP. Vol. XLIV, No.2, 1992, p. 14)

[108]CDSP. Vol. XLIV, No. 2 (1992) 14. Several officials made public statements regarding Ukraine's position within the CIS. For example on January 14, 1992, President Kravchuk, cited in *Trud*, demanded that Russia stop manifesting its " great-power chauvinism". Dmytro Pavlychko, cited in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, commented to reporters, "We are getting close to the end" This comment was paraphrased by a

because of difference of opinion in the purpose of the body: Ukraine felt the structure was far less useful than did the Russians, and when Kyiv signed the CIS agreement on strategic forces and the Black Sea Fleet in February 1992, it was only because "general principles were recorded on it".[109] One month later, in his introductory remarks to a CIS meeting in Kyiv, President Kravchuk stated that the CIS had yet to produce any real results and called the CIS a "dream". This reaction was prompted by the lack of progress in discussions with Moscow concerning the division of Soviet property and institutions.[110]

The taciturn manner which Ukraine assumed towards the CIS (*de facto* Russia), evolved into a war of words which escalated tensions between Kyiv and Moscow. Several issues dominated relations between these two countries, among them the division of the Black Sea Fleet, the Crimean question, and the issue of nuclear weapons ownership all of which played a role in nascent independent Ukraine-Russian relations. The issues of the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea contributed to the increasing tensions, influencing both Ukraine's and Russia's perceptions of resulting threats which made resolutions of the nuclear issue incrementally more difficult.

Ukrainian Television commentator as an "irrevocable confirmation of a course aimed at achieving genuine state independence for Ukraine."

[109]Vera Kuznetsova, "The CIS: It Was Decided in Minsk That There Will Be a Nuclear Collective Farm in the Ruble Zone," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (18 February 1992) 1-3. in CDSP. Vol. XLIV, No. 7 (1992) 3.

[110]Albert Plutnik, "The CIS Between a Dream and Necessity," *Izvestiya* (23 March 1992) 1. in CDSP. Vol. XLIV, No. 12 (1992) 11. Also see Vitaly Portnikov "CIS: The Commonwealth is a Dream," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (24 March 1992) 1-2. in CDSP. Vol. XLIV No. 12 (1992) 12.

It was widely reported in Western and Ukrainian media that on May 2, 1992, Ukraine had completed the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to Russia and that Kyiv had reiterated its commitment to achieving non-nuclear status. However, the question of the strategic weapons was not as simple to resolve.[111] Although exact figures concerning the size of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal are difficult to find, recent estimates of show that in the summer of 1992 Ukraine was in possession of 1768 nuclear warheads, making it the third largest nuclear weapons arsenal.[112] Considering the size of the arsenal combined with the level of tension over Crimean questions and those of the Black Sea Fleet Ukraine commanded participation and not simply acquiescence to Moscow's position in bilateral talks. In June 1992, Russia and the West signed a preliminary agreement to the START II accord on nuclear arms reductions and limitations. Ukraine's reaction to these bilateral talks was to demand a stake in further negotiations and participate fully in the dialogue on arms reduction.

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[111]"Tactical" describes short range (100-1,000 km), Ground Forces weapons which involve action against small formations, installations, equipment and command centres in the forward area of combat. "Strategic" refers to medium to long-range nuclear weapons (MRBM and IRBM), weapons of the Strategic Rocket Forces, Long Range Aviation and Navy Missile forces. They are larger than "tactical" weapons, are their impact is expected to be decisive in achieving the desired outcome in a conflict. For a detailed description of tactical and strategic weapons and their designation by the Soviet military see Meyer, Part I.

[112]According to figures in John Lepingwell, "Beyond START: Ukrainian - Russian Negotiations," RFE-RL Research Report 2, No. 8 (19 February 1993): 46-58. Ukraine's strategic weapons included 21 Bear H bombers each with 16 AS-15s, totaling 336 warheads, 16 Blackjack bombers each with 12 AS-15s for a total of 192 warheads. Bomber subtotal 528. Of the ICBM inventory, Ukraine was in possession of 46 SS-24s (10 warheads per missile), for a total of 460. 130 SS-19s (6 warheads per missile), for a total of 780. The subtotal of ICBM warheads came to 1240. Added together, the total number of Ukrainian warheads was 1768. This accounted for approximately 15% of the Soviet total arsenal.

Ukraine's stubborn position triggered it's hesitation to and difficulties in denuclearising the country. As Yeltsin began negotiations with the West on strategic weapons reductions, the Ukrainian President stated his belief that no one republic could lay claim to all of the USSR's legacy and was therfore unable to negotiate on its own.[113] Kravchuk directed his attention to Yeltsin's negotiations on arms control, and indicated that the Russian president had not sought a mandate from Ukraine, nor any of the other republics to negotiate on their behalf. It appeared that Russia had assumed the mantle of the USSR without consideration for the newly emerged players. Ukraine's position and future as a steward of nuclear weapons was not being determined by Ukraine's government in Kyiv. Although it was not technologically capable of producing nuclear weapons, the presence of these arms on Ukrainian soil was grounds for concern by Russia from a perspective of security. The United States felt concern from the perspective of nuclear proliferation, a matter for which it had assumed international responsibility

Since Moscow had been rendered politically impotent as a superpower, the republics turned to Washington for direction and recognition. Ukraine sought Washington's approval and attention since it was the remaining international authority which could assure national survival. In the period between 1992 and 1994 the participants in global nuclear weapons dialogue appeared to change from a combination of Moscow and Washington, to mainly Washington as the principal player. Moscow's authority over the weapons had obviously been undermined by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, leaving the republics with the perception that they were in positions of responsibility over the weapons on their soil. Unlike Belarus and

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[113]Viktor Litovkin, "There are no more Tactical Nuclear Weapons on the Territory of Ukraine and Belarus, Russia Continues to Destroy Them," *Izvestiya* (6 May 1992) 1-2. in CDSP. Vol. XLIV, No.2 (1992) 13-14.

Kazakh leadership, Ukrainian leaders made reference to wea ons in Ukraine as belonging to Ukraine, although the new nation's capacity to develop its own nuclear weapons was questionable. While Ukraine produced strategic missiles, transport aircraft, aero-engines, radar systems, communications equipment and military optical equipment, it is uncertain to what degree these industries are integrated with those of other regions of the former USSR, or if they are entirely based on "closed-cycle production".[114] The defence industry could supply Ukraine with its conventional military needs, but self-sufficiency in the area of nuclear weapons was doubtful.[115] There was some worry that Ukraine might gain positive control over the weapons, however the greater concern in the West was that Ukraine's failing economy could lead to proliferation of nuclear material and technology and potential accidents due to poor maintenance of weapons systems.[116]

In November 1992, Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ihor Yukhnovsky stated that Ukraine would become a non-nuclear state but expanded on Fokin's 1991 statement

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[114]Allison 44.

[115]Some analysts, among them Yuri Kostenko have argued that because of its high level of scientific and technical potential, Ukraine could build nuclear weapons. However, in his essay William Potter, Nuclear Profiles of the Soviet Successor States, Program for Nonproliferation Studies Monograph No.1 (Monterey, CA: Monterey Institute for Nonproliferation Studies, 1993) 83-102, William Potter argues that, although Ukraine does possess fuel production centres, uranium mines and research reactors, it does not actually possess the necessary facilities to manufacture a nuclear weapon.

[116]Positive" control of weapons systems indicates that control over all aspects of nuclear weapons, including launch capability, is present. "Negative" control indicates that while there is no ability to launch or to retarget the weapons, there is physical and administrative authority over the weapons on the territory of the state. Viktor Litovkin, "Second Chernobyl Brewing in Ukraine's Missile Silos," *Izvestiya*. 16 February 1993, 4 (FBIS-SOV-93-029, 16 February 1993, p.1) Litovkin writes that many of Ukraine's nuclear weapons are in need of "technical servicing" and that there are a number of serious storage and maintenance problems which could lead to "emergencies."

indicating that Ukraine wanted not only to claim the weapons on its soil but that it would pursue the possibilities of selling the "goods which belong to us". He clarified this comment stating that Ukraine could not allow the nuclear weapons located on its territory to be removed for free: "Ukraine must be paid for its nuclear weapons."[117] These comments by Yukhnovsky signaled Ukraine's intention to retain control over its share of the former Soviet nuclear weapons. Further, Ukrainian leaders expressed the desire to prevent the weapons from potentially falling into "irresponsible" hands resulting in demands for compensation from the West and Russia for the strategic materials, bases and equipment used to house and maintain the weapons.

Ukraine's demands for compensation coincided with it's economic free-fall. In 1991, Western European institutions lauded Ukraine as having the greatest economic potential of any former Soviet republic.[118] Optimism and the prospect of good economic fortunes supported Ukraine's drive to woo Western European investment and Ukraine's non-nuclear status was a selling feature it used at a time that Kyiv felt it could risk losing military control in return for economic support. In the months following independence however, Ukraine's economy did not improve as had been predicted by economists, officials and academics and it became evident to Ukraine's leadership that the economy might collapse.

As the economy continued its fall, Ukraine's leaders came to terms with the vast wealth potential associated with the strategic weapons.[119] The value was not

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[117]Leyla Boulton and John Lloyd, "Yeltsin Rejects Cabinet Shuffle," Financial Times (6 November 1992) 2.

[118]Germany's Deutsche Bank reported in 1991, that Ukraine had the best potential of all the former Soviet republics to become a major European economic power within a relatively short space of time.

[119]"Nuclear Notebook," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (November 1991) 49,

only in the strategic materials themselves but in the actual ownership, theoretical threat and political headache the weapons posed to the West, Russia and other neighbouring countries. By January 1994, it had become clear to Ukraine that its debt to Russia would not be written off in return for Ukrainian weapons, nor was the economy likely to improve with continued reticence towards the disarmament process.[120] Ukraine's demands for compensation and financial assistance from the West were in part an attempt to use the nuclear arsenal to benefit its economic interests.

Ukraine escalated tensions by holding back delivery of weapons to Russia in an attempt to increase the amount of compensation, to emphasise the necessity of security guarantees and to raise its own status on the world scene. Several times since Fokin's first statement on Ukraine's claim over the nuclear weapons, Kyiv suspended or threatened to suspend the transfer of weapons to Russia. In March 1992, Ukraine suspended the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons on the premise that there were insufficient guarantees that weapons would be destroyed. When the transfer was resumed it was reported that the US had pressured Ukraine but that Kyiv had insisted that the United States become involved in international verification of the destruction of the weapons.[121] In 1993 Ukraine slowed its efforts to rid itself

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The Ukrainian nuclear arsenal was estimated to be 3755 warheads. Of those 1300 were said to be strategic offensive weapons including ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bomber weapons (Bear G, Bear H and Blackjack). Ground forces had 930 warheads, air defence systems had 125 warheads, the air forces had 1050 and the navy was in possession of 500 warheads excluding SLBMs. It is difficult to determine the value of these weapons. However, in 1993 the US earmarked $175 million for the dismantling of Ukraine's nuclear weapons. This figure can be used as a benchmark for the potential value of those weapons, although Ukraine has claimed their value to be much higher.

[120]FBIS - Eurasia - 94 (13 January 1994) 21.

[121]Sergei Mushkaterov, "Ukraine Will Soon Resume Withdrawal of Tactical Nuclear

of the weapons. The majority of the parliament of Ukraine expressed a political will to maintain "at least a temporary nuclear status" for Ukraine.[122] It was only after the satisfaction of Kyiv, expressed by Minister of Defence Morozov after a visit to Washington, that Ukraine was going to step up its disarmament efforts. This however, came only after Kyiv and Washington came to an "understanding" on Ukrainian security, and the US stopped exerting the pressure it had been on Ukraine.[123] In November 1993, Ukraine ratified the START I agreement, however with 13 qualifications attached. Reaction from Russia was that Ukraine was again stalling the disarmament process and Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev said that "what Ukraine did [ratification of START I] was not ratification".[124] The conditions Ukraine had placed on its tentative agreement to the START I Treaty incorporated a full list of the compensation and guarantees sought by Kyiv. It was in February 1994 that the Ukrainian parliament announced that it felt that the conditions it had placed on the ratification papers in November 1993, had been met.[125] By the end of 1994, Ukraine had given "velvet ratification" of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would come into effect only when Ukraine obtained a "properly executed document providing guarantees".[126] Russia, the United States, Great Britain, France and China

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Weapons Asserts Foreign Minister Zlenko," *Izvestiya* (15 April 1992) 4. in CDSP. Vol. XLV, No. 18 (1992).

[122]Pavel Felgengauer, "Ukrainian Nuclear Weapons as Means of Deterrence," *Sevodnya* (19 July 1993) 4. in CDSP. Vol. XLV, No. 19. (1993) 21.

[123]Irina Pogodina, "Ukrainian Defence Minister is Satisfied With US Visit," *Izvestiya* (14 August 1993) 2. in CDSP. Vol. XLV, No.31 (1993) 11.

[124]Vladimir Skachko, "Ukraine's Parliament Ratifies START I Treaty," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (20 November 1993) 1-3. in CDSP. Vol. XLV, No. 47 (1993) 26-27. What had been reported at the time to have been ratification was in fact only an initialing of the documents.

[125]"Ukrainian Parliament Ratifies START I Treaty," *Sevodnya* (5 February 1994) 4. in CDSP. Vol. XLVI, No. 5 (1994) 25-26.

[126]Andrei Vaganov, Ukraine Adopts Non-Nuclear Status," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (18 November 1994) 1. in CDSP. Vol. XLVI, No. 46 (1994) 29-30.

were reported to have already made promises that they would provide all necessary guarantees to Ukraine.[127] Ukraine was able to make certain demands only because it had the ability to prevent the weapons from leaving its territory. This was not a nuclear threat in the sense that Ukraine might have been able to launch a weapon from its soil, but Kyiv could prevent the removal of the arsenal or more sinister, it could sell the technology.

Kyiv had seized the opportunity offered by the international attention that was focused on Ukraine as a result of the claim over nuclear weapons and delays in their transfer. Ukraine wanted to ensure that it would survive on the world stage and added a request for security guarantees to its compensation demands. Ukraine's Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko addressed the UN in November 1992 and outlined Ukraine's situation.

> Ukraine is not only the only country in the world that has made the choice for non-nuclear status. But our peculiarity lies in the fact that we voluntarily took the burden of eliminating hundreds of strategic and tactical nuclear warheads inherited from the Soviet Union... Having embarked upon the road toward reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons, we expect strict international guarantees of our national security against the possible threat or use of force on the part of any nuclear state.[128]

In effect, Zlenko and other Ukrainian leaders were requesting that the West guarantee Ukraine's sovereignty. Ukraine's struggle as a new nation, particularly in the realm of economics, showed its leaders that protecting one's sovereignty was a difficult and expensive prospect. Although its leadership wanted sovereign power

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[127]Vagaw 30.

[128]Anatoly Zlenko, Ukrainian minister of foreign affairs, "Speech to the United Nations," The Ukrainian Weekly (15 November 1992) 6.

over Ukraine's matters, the reality was that this was likely impossible without a guarantor. The authoritative reaction to Ukraine's petition would normally have come from Moscow, the traditional decision maker in the region for seventy five years. Reactions however, were forthcoming from Washington, the new global watchdog over nuclear weapons. Russia, which had lost its superpower role and had declined in status, became a threatening factor to Ukraine. Moscow's assumption of leadership within the CIS and the emergence of ultranationalist political movements in Russia caused this fear in Ukraine.

As a vexing neighbour, Russia's new role in Ukraine's policy-making process forced Kyiv to assess its post-Soviet achievements. Firstly, Ukraine achieved international recognition which in turn gave Ukraine legitimate access to virtually all international organisations, several to which it belonged as a republic of the Soviet Union. The second achievement was to claim a place in international negotiations regarding the dismantlement of nuclear weapons. Thirdly, Ukraine gained limited concessions from the West and from Russia regarding compensation. These three main achievements initiated Ukraine to the established standards of international politics and allowed Ukraine to maintain its new-found sovereignty.

The achievement of international recognition came in the days and weeks following the December 1, 1991 referendum on independence. The referendum indicated Ukraine's choice for a democratic path, one which was most welcomed by the West.[129] The fact that the international community was prepared to grant

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[129]Ukraine was the only former Soviet republic to hold a referendum. This made its approach to the new world order unique. Ukraine took the extra step to prove to the West that democracy could work in Ukraine. Kyiv needed to placate western fears even in the immediate post-Soviet period.

Ukraine recognition offered Kyiv access to various international bodies within which Ukraine's representatives were able to participate in debates, helping to define the post-Soviet order. Without such international recognition, Ukraine would have remained a subordinate state under Moscow's sphere of influence with little or no means by which to exercise its sovereignty. Ukraine was legitimately able to pursue an independent political path and accordingly claims over nuclear weapons on its territory including decisions to halt the transfer of weapons to Russia.

Sovereign decision making in matters of national defence necessitated Ukraine's participation in strategic talks. Despite the fact that the West and Russia were uncomfortable with the emergence of another nuclear state, Ukraine participated in the high-level talks during which it asked for financial compensation and security guarantees in exchange for transferring its nuclear arsenal to Russia. Ukraine expressed concern over statements made by Russian officials regarding Russia's place of power within the East European region which were perceived by Ukraine as threatening to its national integrity. For example, Boris Yeltsin's speech to the Civic Forum of the CIS on February 28, 1993, piqued Ukraine's security fears when he asked the world community, including the UN, to grant Russia special authority as regional guardian. "The time has come for the appropriate international organisations to grant Russia special powers as the guarantor of peace and stability on the territory of the former Soviet Union."[130] Yeltsin's request gave way to concerns over Russia's intentions regarding the weapons which were to be delivered from Ukraine. Although Ukraine's demands by were not fully met, the West was able to satisfy

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[130]Vladimir Nadein, "Predictable Polemics after Chance Remark," *Izvestiya* (4 March 1993) 2. in CDSP. Vol. XLV, No. 9 (1993) 17.

Ukrainian leaders' economic and political concerns to the point to which the transfer of weapons to Russia was resumed.

Ukraine's goal of becoming independent from Moscow was complete. Its intention to control its sovereignty however was another matter. The nuclear arsenal on Ukraine's territory served as a test for Ukraine's policy-makers and leaders to assert their sovereignty and to determine Ukraine's position amongst the world's nations. The status achieved by Ukraine was that of a nuclear weapons power, but only in a limited sense as Ukraine did not have positive control over the nuclear weapons on its territory. The boldness of Ukraine's posturing often hid the true essence of Ukraine's nuclear power and the control exerted by Kyiv over these weapons was "negative" in nature.[131]

Ukraine had therefore not truly become a nuclear power but rather a strategic participant in an old relationship between existing nuclear powers. The participants in the nuclear weapons 'club' remained essentially the same. Ukraine was however, able to gain certain concessions from the West and from Russia by immediately holding an independence referendum establishing Ukraine as a democratic state, then by taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the proliferation threat posed by the presence of nuclear weapons on its soil. Without positive control Ukraine could not

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[131]The sovereignty over the nuclear warheads was a symbolic claim, which would take on epic proportions. It must, however, be remembered that Ukraine never possessed "positive" control over these weapons. The "negative" control that Ukraine achieved was based on an administrative power over the units and the bases on which the weapons were maintained. Further, Kyiv was able to prevent Russia from simply ordering troops to load the warheads on trains and head for Russia. For a full description of the issue of control over the nuclear weapons in Ukraine see Martin J. Dewing, "Ukraine: Independent Nuclear Weapons Capability Rising," MA thesis, Naval Postgraduate School,1993, ch. 3.

apply as much pressure as could a "real" nuclear nation. The ability Kyiv had to halt the transfer of weapons to Russia proved to be a serious enough threat for the West and Russia to offer Ukraine concessions, and participation in the process of negotiation and dialogue with the West gave Ukraine's demands legitimacy. Ukraine had acheived its goals, gaining compensation and security assurances from both the West and Russia.[132]

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[132]According to Boris Polyachenko, First Secretary of Science and Technology for the Embassy of Ukriane, Ottawa, it is difficult to ascertain the total amount in compensation Ukraine received from the West (IMF, World Bank, G-7 and various national governments) because much of the compensation has come in the form of credits, technical assistance, goods and uranium slavaged from the nuclear weapons themselves. Boris Polyachenko, telephone interview (15 August 1996).

4. Ukraine as a Nuclear Weapons Power

In the early post-referendum era, Ukraine was viewed as an irresponsible nuclear weapons wielding power by some Western observers.[133] This viewpoint, it will be held, was mistaken. In reality, Ukraine was never a forces to be feared as it did not have positive control of the weapons on its territory. Further, since independence Ukraine has always had the second move in the negotiation process. Paradoxically this also signified that the country never had the opportunity to allay global fears of its new-found nuclear status. Furthermore, Ukraine was thrust into a difficult situation with little or no experience and personnel who could contend with the nuclear issue. Ukraine was also a political neophyte. President Kravchuk assigned top priority to national survival and it was within that context that the country formulated its initial policy on nuclear weapons. Essentially it placed Ukraine on the defensive.

Overview

Mikhail Gorbachev's ascension to power in 1985 signaled a new era for the USSR. This period was marked by major changes in the Soviet military and politics. The western media considered Gorbachev a modern Soviet leader with vision who saw a need to fundamentally change the way the Soviet Union operated. The changes he tried to implement proved to be more than the archaic state was able to bear, and soon the peripheries began to seek their own directions, tearing the empire apart.

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[133]See, for example, David R. Marples, "Ukraine's Relations with Russia in the Contemporary Era," The Harriman Review (Spring 1996) 105-107.

Ukraine declared its independence on August 24, 1991. The first assertion made by the new republic was its desire to become free of nuclear weapons. The Supreme Council of Ukraine adopted a decree claiming sovereignty over military units and equipment based on its soil, which included almost 1800 nuclear warheads.[134] It further proposed the creation of a Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, a National Guard, National Security Forces and a Ukrainian Armed Forces.[135] By this decree Ukraine had become *defacto* the world's third largest nuclear weapons power.

Four months later, on December 1, 1991, Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence in a national referendum. This vote was seen by many as the 'death knell' for the Soviet Union and thus and end to Mikhail Gorbachev's desire for a reformed Union. The margin and composition of the majority of those who voted in favour of independence surprised even the most optimistic observers in the West.[136] Having achieved complete independence and concomitantly having been elected Ukraine's first president, Kravchuk again announced that one of his main priorities was to see Ukraine become nuclear weapons free.

On December 8, 1991 three independent nations, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).[137] The Commonwealth

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[134] Dewing chapter 3.

[135] *Literaturna Ukraina*, August 29, 1991.

[136] In the December 1991 referendum in Ukraine, over 90% of the population ratified the declaration of independence. Of the 11 million strong Russian minority, a significant percentage is said to have voted in favour of independence. See Peter J. Potichnyj, "The Referendum and Presidential Elections in Ukraine," Canadian Slavonic Papers, Vol. 23, No.2 (1991) 123-138.

[137] Kazakhstan chose not to join the CIS structure, but weapons on Kazakh territory were considered as part of the CIS structure by its founders. See Mikhail Ustigov "A Temporary Nuclear State," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (October 1993) 34.

was forced to deal with a number of issues which resulted from the break up of the USSR, including the nuclear weapons question. Claims on the weaponry were made by the four nuclear inheritors: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The CIS faced great uncertainty regarding who controlled the weapons of the dismantled empire. Following initial talks, Ukrainian President Kravchuk, Belarussian Parliamentary Chairman Shushkevich and Russian President Yeltsin together announced that control over all weapons of the former USSR would be held jointly by these three founding states of the CIS.[138]

Interpretations of the agreements were varied and almost immediately the differences strained the CIS. In its understanding of the agreement, Russia maintained that the former Soviet air force, air defence, space, navy and strategic and tactical nuclear forces would fall under centralised control (CIS) and that the individual republics would create their own ground forces. Russian officials, including President Yeltsin and Chief of the General Staff, General Vladimir Lobov, had insisted that the weapons of the former Soviet Union be transferred to the Russian republic, where they could remain under centralised control.[139] Ukraine on the other hand, proposed a "Three button" mechanism to control the launch of nuclear weapons, ensuring that no one country could set a launch without the full authorisation of the other two members of the joint control.

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[138]Agreement on the Creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States," *Rossiiskaya gazeta* (10 December 1991) 1-2. in CDSP. Vol. XLIII, No. 49 (1991) 10-11.

[139]Roman Solchanyk, "Ukraine, the Kremlin and the Russian White House," Report on the USSR, Vol.3, No.44 (1 November 1991) 13-16.

On December 18, 1991, Russia announced that all former Soviet ministries' functions were to be transferred to Moscow's jurisdiction by the new year (1992), including control over nuclear weapons and strategic military services. Obviously feeling threatened by this pronouncement, Ukraine claimed control over all troops and equipment on its territory including the Black Sea Fleet, and three military districts in Ukraine established by the Soviet Union.[140] Further, in an effort to win recognition from the West and in particular, from Washington, Ukraine pledged to destroy or remove all weapons from its territory by July 1, 1992. This promise was kept: the last tactical nuclear weapon was shipped from Ukraine to Russia on May 6, 1992.[141]

The successful removal of tactical weapons from Ukrainian territory offered Ukraine an opportunity to show its willingness to co-operate with global powers. According to Col. General Kostiantyn Morozov, the Pentagon recognised Ukraine's important role in the region.[142] Kyiv's independent nuclear policy began with Kyiv leaving the command structure of the CIS on May 4, 1992. At this point Ukraine emerged as a new nuclear power, independent of the former USSR and Russia and linked only loosely to the CIS.

Over the next three years, negotiations regarding Ukraine's signing of the START I treaty and the NPT were marked by Ukraine's change in strategy on the weapons issue. Ukraine began to seek compensation for weapons disarmament (and environmental problems resulting therefrom) and for strategic materials and tactical

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[140]V. Litovkin, "Politicians Have Set Army and Navy in Ukraine a Difficult Choice," *Izvestiya* (4 January 1992) 2.
[141]Litovkin, CDSP 13.
[142]Morozov personal interview (28 December 1994).

weapons already taken from Ukraine. The US and Russia dominated the dialogue, leaving Ukraine to react to the positions set out by Washington and Moscow. The change in Ukraine's position was coupled with the demand for security guarantors and financial compensation. Eventually a trilateral agreement was reached between Ukraine, Russia and the US on January 14, 1994. It offered Ukraine partial assurance that the US and Russia would recognise Ukraine as a legal, sovereign. independent territory, the borders of which were inviolable. This latter point was critical for Ukraine which, until that point had never had such assurances from either the US or Russia.[143] Ukraine's signature on the agreement was the beginning of the end of Ukraine's nuclear weapons era. This chapter will examine the factors behind the actions of the US and Russia as well as the motives behind Ukraine's apparent nuclear weapons posturing. Let us examine each of the parties in turn.

The United States

The US hesitated before recognising Ukraine as an independent country, largely because of fears that the newly emerged republic posed a threat to the security of the former Soviet Union, to Europe as a whole and most importantly, to the United States itself. Buoyed by Ukraine's rhetoric on the nuclear weapons issue, however, Secretary of State James Baker "said he was satisfied with the former Soviet republic's assurances on nuclear security and disarmament..."[144] Baker was also concerned with the other new weapons powers: Belarus and Kazakhstan. The delicate East - West balance established through years of Cold War, was now

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[143]Petro Matiashek, "*Yaderna Spashchyna*," Polityka i chas, No.2 (1995) 15. The exception is the Ukraine-Russia Treaty of November 1990. Many in Kyiv argued that this treaty did not go far enough to assure Ukraine's sovereignty.
[144]Cited in The Ukrainian Weekly, (22 December 1991) 1.

teetering because of the emergence of fifteen countries from the former Soviet republics, four of which possessed nuclear weapons.

Some analysts have examined the psychological effects the break up of the Soviet Union has had on the United States.[145] When American President Bush announced to the world that the West had won the Cold War, it was implied that the victors would dictate the rules of the new order. The reality of the new world order however, was that the West had become responsible for expanding the disarmament dialogue with these new nuclear states.

The republic of Belarus, like Ukraine, was quick to renounce nuclear weapons in the pursuit of an independent security policy. However, in contrast to Ukraine, at no time did Belarus make serious claim over the nuclear weapons on its territory. The West understood that although Belarus' leadership advocated neutrality with its non-nuclear status, the *realpolitik* of Eastern Europe meant that Belarus was obliged to retain close links with Russia. In the early stages of the new world order this was seen as a positive reality. Kazakhstan, like Ukraine and Belarus, also pledged to become nuclear free. Although it took some time to accede to the NPT, most analysts agreed that Kazakhstan was not a serious contender for nuclear weapons stewardship. With few expert political analysts and fewer nuclear weapons specialists on its territory, "Kazakhstan had never been a nuclear republic. It was merely a testing site and a launching pad for the military elite in Moscow."[146]

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[145]Morozov (28 December 1994) made a comparison between the Russian psychological reaction to its loss of an empire to that of the US, which claimed to have won the Cold War but in reality had won nothing at all.
[146]Ustigov 34.

Ukraine, however, proved to be a more difficult case for the United States' leadership. American interests did not include ensuring that nuclear weapons were removed quickly from any of the inheritor republics so long as the weapons were under Moscow's control, and therefore under the scrutiny of international agencies.[147] When Ukraine began to make claims to the weapons and moved to gain at least administrative control over them, the US felt it had lost control, vital interests were threatened and Ukraine this became a problem for the West.

As debates continued between Moscow and Kyiv over the ownership of the weapons and their eventual removal or dismantling, the US at least tacitly supported the Russian position. To some extent this attitude was inevitable given the predominance of Moscow in the Superpower relationship during the Soviet Period. The White House thus became concerned that Ukraine was impeding the American goal of restricting the proliferation of nuclear weaponry. The potential hazards of the disarmament process also worried the US. Washington had spent many years establishing a dialogue and developing measured progress in negotiations with Moscow. Initially it did not recognise that Ukraine had quite a separate agenda, outside Russia's sphere or proposed sphere of influence.[148]

For some US observers therefore, Ukraine was a country with an uncontrolled and unstable nuclear arsenal on its territory, with no proven record of political leadership or negotiation. Ukraine's government had made promises of

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[147]Robert B. Cullen, Atlantic Council of the United States Bulletin, Vol. 5, No. 9, Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council of the United States, (9 September 1994).
[148]Both Belarus and Kazakhstan indicated in the early post-Soviet period that they would be giving up any claim to Soviet nuclear weapons. NATO was thus less occupied with planning for nuclear strategic talks with these countries and was able to focus its attention on Russia and Ukraine.

nuclear disarmament but to many analysts appeared to be behaving irresponsibly on the weapons issue. Lending credibility to this analysis were the differing positions put forth by Ukraine's political spectrum, with the nationalists at one extremity and the "accomodationists" on the other. The latter, whose stronghold was in Eastern Ukraine and counted in their numbers current President Leonid Kuchma, as well as the bulk of those involved in the military industrial complex, generally supported the CIS concept and were oriented toward closer economic ties with Russia. On the issue of nuclear arms, this group openly supported returning the nuclear warheads to Russia. Although the accomodationists viewed the disarmament issue as important to Ukraine's survival, this group expected some degree of compensation and the resolution of other issues. Among these additional issues were participation in US-Russia space exploration and some efforts that would permit Ukraine to maintain its missile, defence and industrial sectors intact, most of which lay in this geographical region.[149]

The nationalists, on the other end of the spectrum, have always been based in Western Ukraine, a more nationally conscious region which fell under Soviet authority during the Second World War, much later that the Eastern regions. In general, the nationalists felt that historically throughout the Russia-Ukrainian relationship, Russia has been the aggressor. They perceived Russia as a threat to Ukraine's national survival.[150] The nationalist camp was divided into several political parties, including Rukh (Popular Movement), the Ukrainian Republican Party and the

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[149]Sherman Garnett, "Ukrainian Nuclear Policy: Sources, Conduct and Future Prospects," draft paper, (August 1994) 5.

[150]On political differences between East and West Ukrainians, see, for example, Dominique Arel and Valeri Khmelko, "The Russian Factor and Territorial Polarization in Ukraine," The Harriman Review, Vol. 9, No.1-2 (Spring 1996) 81-91.

Social-National Party of Ukraine. The divisions in the nationalist platform were between those "who advocate the primacy of the state against those who see as the first task the necessity of economic and political reform."[151]

The West's worries stemmed from the various nationalist camps advocating the slowdown, halting and in some cases the reversal of the nuclear disarmament process. Rukh and other nationalist parties initially supported the pronouncement of a nuclear-free Ukraine. However, even by 1992 they had changed their thinking on this matter and pushed the government to focus on Ukraine's security needs and national interests. Based on these perceived needs, they moved away from a position that supported a simple divestiture of nuclear weapons. their influence was such that the Ukrainian leadership also began to question its initial policy, i.e., that all weapons should be given up to Russia as soon as possible.

Consequently, Ukraine halted shipments of warheads to Russia in March 1992. The leaders justified their action by arguing that they would encounter difficulties in shipping nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction because "technical, environmental and maybe political uncertainties may interfere with the completion of the plan."[152] The West reacted swiftly to Ukraine's actions and warned it would freeze aid unless shipments were resumed. Ukraine was forced into complicity but decided to develop a new and more assertive foreign policy. They new strategy was revealed on November 6, 1992, shortly after President Kravchuk affirmed Ukraine's intention to speedily negotiate with the other CIS nations a way to dispose of the strategic nuclear weapons. Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ihor Yukhnovsky announced that

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[151]Garnett, 6.

[152]Jeffrey R. Smith, "Ukraine Plans to Speed Removal of A-Weapons to Russia Within Year Envisioned," The Washington Post (20 December 1991) A1, A41.

Ukraine would seek compensation for the dismantling nuclear weapons on its soil. Yukhnovsky insited that the missiles in Ukraine belong to the Ukrainian people and said that "We can sell these nuclear warheads to the highest bidder among the nuclear states. That means Russia first of all, or maybe another state, depending on which pays most".[153] Ukraine's new approach, compounded with Kyiv's recalcitrance in signing the NPT and START I agreements heightened the West's concern about Ukraine's policies.

During discussions in Massandra (Crimea) on September 3, 1993, Russia and Ukraine agreed on the details of the withdrawal of strategic nuclear warheads from Ukraine to Russia.[154] This agreement, however, only partially concluded the matter: a hand-written addendum stipulated that the agreement would involve only those weapons encompassed by the terms of the START I Treaty.[155] The addendum was subject to wide interpretation by all parties involved.

Once again, Washington was frustrated by Ukraine's continued stewardship over strategic weapons. By the end of 1993, the US had earmarked $175 million in aid for Ukraine to assist in the disarmament process but none of the committed funds were delivered. Delegations from the West came to Kyiv as frequently as they went to Moscow, thus they were fully aware of Ukraine's economic predicament and knew

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[153]Chrystia Freeland, "Ukraine Having Second Thoughts About Giving Up Nuclear Weapons," Washington Post. (6 November 1992) A 20.

[154]The Massandra Protocol, signed by the prime ministers of Ukraine and Russia on September 3, 1993, agreed on the "withdrawal of all nuclear warheads of the Strategic Nuclear Forces deployed in Ukraine to the Russian Federation." See, for example, *Nezavisimost'*, (24 September 1993) 1.

[155]Only 130 silo-based SS-19s were encompassed by the START Treaty. SS-24s were not covered by START. "US, Four Commonwealth States Sign START Protocol in Lisbon," Arms Control Today, Vol. 22, No. 5 (June 1992) 18.

Ukraine could not afi. 1 to maintain the weapons.[156] The US observed Ukraine's poor economic performance and used it to pressure Ukraine to comply on the weapons issue by linking monetary aid to compliance with non-proliferation and the signing of the START I Treaty. The United States announced that it would not begin a bargaining process wiht Ukraine over ratification of the START I and NPT agreements.[157]

The Bush administration also had little sympathy with Ukraine's demands for adequate compensation for the removal of weapons. The United States had offered $175 million for assistance in disarmament, but Ukraine argued that the full cost of disarmament was closer to $3 billion.[158] However, without positive control over the weapons and lacking the funds for disarmament, Ukraine had only two options. Either Kyiv could give up the weapons to "protect" its new found independence and face an economic collapse, or it could give up the weapons and receive the promised economic assistance, in the process gaining international support. In effect, the West had established an aid and assistance blockade on Ukraine.

The "blockade" was lifted in 1994 with Ukraine's signing of the Trilateral Agreements in Moscow as Ukraine had agreed to the conditions of disarmament and weapons transfer set by Russia and the US. In essence, the Agreement committed Ukraine to the "elimination of all nuclear weapons, including strategic offensive arms, located on its territory in accordance with the relevant agreements and during the

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[156]Morozov, (28 December 1994).
[157]Don Oberdorfer, "Bush Details Assurances for Security of Ukraine," Washington Post (9 January 1993) A 18.
[158]Dewing 97.

seven year period as provided by the START I Treaty."[159] As a result of the signing, the US pledged to increase economic assistance to Ukraine. In March 1994, the assistance package from the US was doubled to $340 million and in July, the G-7 announced a $4 billion aid package for Ukraine.

Ukraine was on its way to divesting itself of nuclear arms in earnest: by October 1994, Ukraine had rid itself of 90% of the nuclear arsenal from its territory. Although Ukraine had improved its international standing, by October 1995, a number of G-7 nations still had not provided promised credits to Ukraine.[160] From the Ukrainian perspective it appeared that the country was still some way from earning the complete trust of Western countries. Why was this? One reason appears to have been the Russocentric nature of the Western media, which had long relied on Moscow as its official source for the non-Russian republics. The unfortunate effects of such a policy had been made evident four years earlier when President Bush delivered his "Chicken Kiev" speech in the summer of 1991, warning of the dangers of "suicidal nationalism" in Ukraine.[161] It took time therefore for Ukraine to cast off an image of a strongly nationalist country that posed problems for the stability of the Eurasian region. In addition, Ukraine's economic predicament compounded the nuclear weapons question from Washington's perspective.

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[159]RFE/RL Research Report (28 January 1994) 14.
[160]Open Media Research Institute, "Nuke Deactivization Proceeds," cited in Ukrainian News (11-12 October 1995) 16.
[161]See, for example, Alexander J. Motyl, Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine After Totalitarianism (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993) 81.

Russia

The historical relationship between Russia and Ukraine has been a complex one. The post-independence era has proved to be no different. Russia and Ukraine remain divided over several issues, and at the time of writing a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, initialed as long ago as February 1995, has still to be officially signed. The nuclear weapons issue was the first of the major hurdles to be crossed in the period of post-Soviet relations.

Ukraine's independence has been fragile from the outset, and clearly some prominent Russians, particularly in the Duma, have had problems reconciling themselves to the fact of Ukraine's independence. Ukraine's claim over nuclear weapons on its territory compounded the difficulties between the two major Slavic countries of the former USSR. Russia's policy toward independent Ukraine was described as an attempt to isolate Ukraine and bring the country ultimately under Russian hegemony.[162] One Russian official tried to convince Western European nations not to open embassies in Ukraine, since they would soon become unnecessary.[163] While such viewpoints did not necessarily emanate from the Russian presidency they clearly influenced public opinion in Ukraine.

At a seminar devoted to Ukrainian security questions, Dr. Vladimir Shekhovstov[164] maintained that the hostile attitude of some Russians toward Ukraine was a

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[162]Eduard Lysycyn, "*Pro deyaki aspekty yadernoi polityky Ukrainy*," Polityka i chas, No.9 (1993)32.
[163]Lysycyn 31.
[164]Interview with Dr. Vladimir Shekhovstov, Deputy Director of the National Institute for Strategic Studies, Dnipropetrovsk branch, Kingston, ON (September 19, 1995).

psychological reaction to the break up of the USSR. While psychological factors - as well as the historical role played by Moscow in the region - cannot be ignored, the more critical reason for Moscow's involvement in Ukraine was the West's offer to help pay for the dismantling of the weapons and offers of compensation for nuclear materials. The triangle between Ukraine, Russia and the United States pitted two economically devastated countries against each other, each trying to woo and impress Washington to gain a greater share of the proposed disarmament package.

As Ukraine and Russia both face difficult economic futures, the key to survival is to improve their respective economic standings. Moscow's traditional contact with the West arguably benefited the Russian republic more than the other of the former USSR. With the break up of the USSR, Kyiv attempted to make inroads into well established Russian-Western ties by taking advantage of the weapons issue. These efforts raised the ire of Russia. Some Russian statespersons also noted that the "loss" of Ukraine had thrown the manufacturing process into chaos. A large proportion of the USSR's industrial and manufacturing centres were in Ukraine and thus both economies had suffered accordingly from the dissolution of the Union.

Ukraine's independence separated Russia from access to Crimea: a strategic military zone, the base of the Black Sea Fleet and less importantly, a traditional resort area for the *nomenklatura*. Ukraine also is a vital military "buffer zone" separating Russia from Europe and the South. Of concern to Russia therefore was the fact that independent Ukraine made overtures to the European Union as well as to NATO about possible alliances. Such agreements would bring NATO threateningly close to the Russian border and Russia's role as an arbiter in the region would therefore be significantly diminished. These issues struck at the heart of the relationship Russia

believed it had with Ukraine. Russia viewed these issues as threats to its own vital interests.

Russia's positions toward Ukraine appear to come from both official and non-official sources, the most reactionary of which are non-official. The rhetoric of Russian nationalists has gained significant influence and often seems to override official policy and attains wide publicity.[165] Such rhetoric has not been confined to the non-official camp. Mikhail Gorbachev said on October 21, 1991 that Ukraine was irreplaceable" and that a Union without Ukraine was "unimaginable".[166] Shortly after Ukraine had declared independence, a report out of Moscow cited Boris Yeltsin as inquiring of his Russian military command if a nuclear strike against Ukraine was possible.[167]

Nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union were always controlled by Moscow-based decision makers and the responsibility for negotiation and maintenance of the arsenal was, in reality, theirs alone. However, the international disarmament process severely diminished Moscow's role, as portions of the arsenal were on the territory of Ukraine and that of the other newly independent nuclear successor states. There is evidence to suggest that the West's somewhat jaundiced view of Ukraine on the nuclear weapons question was heavily influenced by Russia. Information about Ukraine in the past had often been solicited directly from Moscow, where contacts were stronger, rather than Kyiv. In 1993, according to one source, western information about Ukraine's capability was tenuous at best and derived mainly from "Russian sources eager to display to the West why Ukraine should be

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[165]Lysycyn 32.
[166]Solchanyk 2.
[167]Solchanyk 2.

forced into giving up its arsenal."[168] It has been suggested that information coming out of Russia on nuclear and other matters relating to vital interests was used to serve Moscow's own purposes.[169]

Ukraine's Options

Ukraine used the nuclear weapons on its soil as a tool to raise its status on the world political stage as well as to try to improve its economic standing. A former US Secretary of Defence, Robert S. McNamara, once wrote that the essence of security is t[illegible]tain in constant readiness the military forces necessary to protect the nati[illegible]m attack, keep its commitments abroad and support its foreign policy. Beyond that central mission of combat readiness, however, security is a broad concept. [the state must be prepared to focus its resources] both supporting our basic mission and adding to the quality of our national life."[170] Ukraine's actions in the early days of its independence were possibly the best option available to the nation to fulfill what McNamara termed "adding to the quality of [their] national life."

There is no evidence to suggest that Ukraine was attempting to gain positive control over the nuclear weapons on its territory. Martin Dewing suggests that potentially Ukraine could have gained control over the arsenal but goes no further than that inconsequential statement. In his view Ukraine was "increasingly likely" to

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[168]Dewing xi.

[169]Sherman Garnett, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, telephone interview (23 November 1995) Garnett said that the same was likely to be true of information emanating from Kyiv. Ukraine placed a Ukrainian-oriented spin on its information.

[170]Robert S. McNamara, The Essence of Security, New York: Harper and Row (1968) 122-123.

seek nuclear capability.[171] In September 1995, however, Ukrainian government officials and security advisors assured their Canadian counterparts that Ukraine's nuclear era was indeed coming to an end.[172]

A balanced analysis of Ukraine's inheritance of nuclear weapons and subsequent pressures from the West and Russia for Ukraine to disarm, must be accompanied by an understanding of Ukraine's prime objective: to achieve and maintain independence. In the early post-independence period, Ukraine's leaders saw the road to achieve this end as "to deter Russia and to obtain US guarantees and attention".[173] In pursuing its prime objective, Ukraine sought administrative control over the nuclear arsenal on its territory. This control, albeit limited by technical constraints, was sufficient to alarm the US and Russia. For Ukraine, the question of removing the weapons ultimately was never at issue: the country had already pledged to do so from the outset. The government's goal was to secure American and Russian agreement to several preconditions.

Ukraine's main preoccupation in the immediate post-Soviet era were to maintain statehood, and to gain international stature as a European nation. Ukraine's initial position - to rid itself of nuclear weapons - was well received by the international community. However, it soon became clear to the Ukrainian leadership that its sovereignty, economic stability and territorial integrity were being threatened

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[171]Dewing 131.

[172]Information provided by Ukrainian military and national security advisors at the Canada - Ukraine seminar, "Ukraine at the Strategic Crossroads," Department of National Defence. Kingston, ON: (19-21 September 1995).

[173]Stephen Blank, Proliferation and Nonproliferation in Ukraine: Implications for European and US Security, Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, (1 July 1994) ix.

and the promote disarmament policy was shelved. Ukraine was concerned, for example, that in the period prior to and during the Clinton-Yeltsin Summit in Vancouver, Russia and the US appeared to define their respective spheres of influence. Ukraine undoubtedly fell under that of Russia as part of what the Russians have termed the "Near Abroad".

Ukraine undertook a policy to keep the remaining strategic weapons on its territory until certain conditions were agreed to by the international community. These conditions included compensation for the strategic materials being transferred to, and already transferred to Russia, and perhaps most importantly, Ukraine's security was to be guaranteed by the US, Western Europe and Russia. Above all, Ukraine sought to convey its security fears to the United States, even though it was evident hat Russia would eventually acquire the weapons.

Perceived Threats to Ukraine

The most imminent threat to Ukraine's independence appeared to come from Russia. Analysts have pointed to three factors behind Kyiv's change in attitude towards disarmament: Russian-Ukrainian relations; Russia's internal instability; and Ukraine's economic predicament.[174] Kyiv's security concerns ranged from real defence questions and external factors to territorial integrity and economic disintegration. Relations between Moscow and Kyiv had been strained over several issues. For example, Russia had assumed leadership of the CIS in what was initially

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[174]Dave McCurdy, "The Evolving U.S. Policy Toward Ukraine," SAIS Review (Winter-Spring 1994) 157-161. See also, Lyle Goldstein and Blake Loveless, "Keeping the Bear at Bay," Military Affairs (Summer 1992) 46. Also Angela Stent, "Ukraine's Fate," World Policy Journal, Vol. XI, No.3, (Fall 1994).

structured to be a union of equal partners, particularly in the sphere of military coordination. Further, CIS policies appeared to be increasingly driven by Russia's domestic needs. Transferring launch codes from Soviet military structures to Moscow was one way Russia was able to use the CIS to its advantage.

The dispute over Crimea also highlights the problems of Russian-Ukrainian relations. Russia's evident assumption of the mantle of the Soviet Union prompted some truculent statements and demands, including the right of Russia to speak out on behalf of Russian minorities outside its borders, whether or not these people were citizens of Russia (the vast majority were not).[175] Russia's 1993 military doctrine anticipated interventions by its army in the event of "peripheral conflicts and ... protection of the rights of Russian minorities in neighbouring states".[176] Crimea, with a majority Russian population, was always an area of particular interest to Moscow. In addition to, and superseding Russian interest in Crimean Russians (though sometimes veiled by the latter) was the desire to maintain control over the Black Sea Fleet naval bases in Sevastopol.

Crimea typifies Ukraine's security fears elsewhere in the republic. If Russophone populations wanted to separate from Ukraine and join Russia, Moscow had suggested that it would assist with the secession. Secessionist or autonomist movements in the eastern regions of Ukraine and regions bordering Romania and Slovakia were supported to some extent by Moscow. Russian policy was elucidated

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[175]Colonel Stephen D. Olynyk has described this scenario in a recent article. It has also been brought up by ultra-Russian nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky and more moderate leaders seeking to gain popular support by calling for the protection of Russian minority rights abroad. Stephen D. Olynyk, "Emerging Post-Soviet Armies: The Case of Ukraine," Military Review, No. 3. (1994) 9.

[176]Olynyk 9.

by Vice-Premier Shokhin, who stated that the status and rights of Russian minorities in former Soviet republics would be linked to any negotiations with the former republics, including in economic talks.[177] According to one analyst, these comments were slowly being accepted within the Russian government as normal diplomatic procedure. The Russian election in December 1993 of a "still more aggressively imperialist-minded coalition", further raised Ukraine's anxiety.[178]

Some Russians have taken Russian chauvinist attitudes to new heights.

> Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev has called Ukraine a mythical state. Russian diplomats have argued abroad that Ukraine will not be a state for long, attempted to isolate Ukraine from Poland in particular, and frustrated any attempt to create a Baltic-Black Sea bloc in Eastern Europe. They Also have worked to prevent Ukraine from joining any Western security system that Russia is not a part of. Russia thus seeks a veto over Ukraine's freely chosen entry into NATO or the European Union.[179]

The question in the minds of Ukrainian leaders was: What if proto-imperialist or expansionist forces came to power in Russia? Such an eventuality led Ukraine's leadership to seek some means of protecting its vital interests. Russian guarantees of Ukraine's borders were made only in the context of the CIS, without a bilateral agreement. In 1993, Russia released its military doctrine within which Russia claimed Monroe Doctrine-type policy over the CIS region, stating that Russia alone could guarantee the security of the region. Ukraine felt especially threatened during the period when the United States appeared to stand behind Russia and opposed to or, at the least, ambiguous toward the interests of Ukraine.

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[177]Blank 11.
[178]Blank 12.
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Russia also had a major influence on Ukraine's economy, particularly within the energy sector. Ukraine had been reliant on Russian energy exports since its independence, without much hope for a change for the status quo in the near future. This interconnection with Russia allowed Moscow to withhold delivery of fuel, or to charge higher rates for the delivery of oil and gas, bringing its own sector close to world prices. This development put a severe strain on Ukraine's economy and paradoxically led Ukraine to increased dependence on nuclear power to meet urgent energy needs.[180]

The second issue, and one which increased Ukraine's anxieties and compelled it to change its attitude toward disarmament was Russia's internal instability. In Russia, President Yeltsin's task in the early post-Soviet period was to balance the interests of reformers and conservatives. The undemocratic military attack on the Russian White House in October 1993 and the subsequent election of a conservative government in November of the same year, brought to parliament individuals such as Vladimir Zhirinovsky, again raising the possibility that a self-acclaimed Russian expansionist could eventually succeed to the presidency.

One observer notes that during the Communist era, the economic needs of the Soviet Union were often secondary to those of security and strategy demands. In his view, Yeltsin changed the system from one in which the domestic needs played no role in the formation of foreign policy to one in which domestic political needs were coordinated with those of the national security policy.[181] The threat to a country like

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[180]See, for example, David R. Marples, "Ukraine, Russia, and the Current Energy Crisis," George Chuchman and Mykola Herasymchuk, eds., *Ekonomika Ukrainy: mynule, suchasne i maybutne*, Kyiv: *Naukova dumka*, (1993) 313-324.

[181]Nikolai Andreyev, "From '*Nyet*' to 'Don't Know'," The Bulletin of the Atomic

Ukraine was made [illegible] by the latter policy. The economic needs and the security needs Russia must satisfy for itself are often predicated on Ukraine being a buffer between Russia and Western Europe, on its being an agricultural and industrial centre and on providing access to the Black Sea and to Crimea. These factors all play an important role in Russia's domestic political needs.

Russia's own internal situation was declared to be "catastrophic" at this time. In early 1993, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said that "no foreign policy can be successful without the establishment of order - new order of course, not the old one - democratic and market order in our own house."[182] The underlying premise was that Russia's house was not in order. Russia's new foreign policy was being determined by Russia's domestic situation, which was reportedly in crisis.

The third issue affecting Ukraine's decisions regarding its weapons arsenal was Ukraine's poor economy. Lack of economic reform and limited privatisation had prevented any real economic growth. In 1994, the volume of industrial output fell by 28.3%, continuing a trend established in the year following independence.[183] the alarm created by an ever falling economy prompted Ukrainian leaders to demand compensation for its nuclear weapons. Ukraine was "now counting every kopeck and every dollar and could not give up its nuclear stock without compensation. The United States and Russia are rich. They must help Ukraine in this terrible situation."[184]

Scientists (January-February 1993) 21.
[182]Andreyev 25.
[183]*Pravda Ukrainy* (3 February 1995) 1.
[184]Sergei Kiselyov, "Ukraine: Stuck with the Goods," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (March 1993) 30.

Finally, Ukraine's own domestic political divisions complicated the leadership's ability to reach a concordant position on the nuclear weapons issue. After the 1991 referendum and President Kravchuk's claim to the role of defender of Ukrainian sovereignty, many nationalist parties were left without an issue to pursue. The nuclear weapons question gave these parties the opportunity to influence the political agenda of the country. Nationalists have been the backbone of the anti-Russian sentiment, and their position demanding the retention of the nuclear weapons was effective in swaying national policy regarding the weapons. The nationalist parties were also instrumental in countering the Russian propaganda campaign. Through escalating rhetoric, Ukrainians undoubtedly increased the uncertainty of which country was a greater threat.

Conclusion

Ukraine was considered in the early post-Soviet period as an irresponsible state because of its change in stance on disarmament. The US believed that with the Cold War over, it faced a severely diminished threat from the region of the former Soviet Union. In its place however, emerged four republics with nuclear weapons on their territory. The United States regarded this new situation in Ukraine with alarm, particularly since the new state appeared to be on the verge of economic collapse. the image of instability was also perpetuated by Russian officials, particularly Russian nationalists. As the centre of power during the Soviet era, Moscow occupied a privileged place in international discourse. with the emergence of newly independent states, Russia had to compete for Western attention and economic assistance, and particularly with Ukraine and its 52 million strong population. Furthermore

Ukrainian independence deprived Russia of most of its warm water ports and access to the Black Sea Fleet.

Ukraine emerged from the rubble of the Soviet Union with one primary interest: to survive as an independent nation. Confronted with threats from Russia and abroad, and facing economic collapse and the spectre of national oblivion, Ukraine had few options. The nuclear arsenal was used as a bargaining chip, eventually winning much of the compensation and security assurances it sought from the US and from Russia. Ukraine's stewardship over the strategic weapons had more to do with gaining security, economic assistance and higher international status than it did with Ukraine becoming a nuclear military power. Ukraine's prime objective was to maintain independence: from Moscow from economic collapse and from political oblivion. This could only be achieved by deterring Russia and by obtaining US guarantees of security as well ass its attention. While Ukraine was a major country simply in terms of size and natural resources, it lacked Russia's clout with the industrialized nations. From the Ukrainian perspective therefore the presence of the nuclear weapons guaranteed that Ukraine would be included in any international assistance efforts.

5. Conclusion

The last of Ukraine's nuclear weapons was [illegible] on June 1, 1996. This event brought to an end Ukraine's stewardship of Soviet atomic weapons, and the effective elimination of Ukraine's participation in the nuclear weapons club.

Ukraine was a minor player in the early days of nuclear weapons development and the role it played in developing policy in those days was also minor. Since the detonating of the first nuclear weapon, Ukraine's participation in nuclear weapons development has been high. What has remained constant is the minor role Kyiv has played in formulating policy and having its interests fulfilled. This lack of authority in exercising its own interests and sovereignty has played itself out since the development of the technology in the early part of this century.

Since the early stages of nuclear history, Ukraine's involvement has been important, albeit secondary. In the first chapter of this paper, Ukraine's role in the development of nuclear technology leading up to the building of nuclear weapons was examined. What is clearly shown is that many Ukrainians and Ukrainian institutions contributed significant work to the Soviet nuclear programme. Their involvement has often been discussed only within the context of Soviet nuclear advancement and not as an individual effort of one group within the Union. Many recent documents have looked at the Soviet nuclear programme based on information made available since the break-up of the USSR. This information however, has made little distinction between the Soviet contributions to nuclear science, and that of the individual "sovereign" republics.

The sovereignty of each republic and the role it occupied in the political structures of the Soviet Union are important issues in understanding the ability of the republics to play a role in, and influence decision making processes. Chapter two, which examined the composition of the Communist Party structures, showed the extent to which Ukrainian representatives influenced the development of policy, and to what measure they pursued the interest of the USSR or Ukraine. Further, the second chapter looked at the role played by Ukraine on the international scene. Its place in the United Nations and other international bodies helped serve Soviet interests, but the ability for Ukrainian representatives to determine security and strategic policy within Ukraine was curtailed by central authority in Moscow.

The policies of *perestroyka* and *glasnost'*, which characterised the Gorbachev period, were to have changed the relations between Moscow and the republics as well as to revamp the failing Soviet economy. Among the most significant reforms were those which changed the military. These changes were felt to be the answer to economic problems. However the republics were able to take advantage of Moscow's political uncertainty, and gained control of military structures on their respective territory as the Union collapsed. The transition from Soviet Union to independent republic gave Ukraine an opportunity initially to claim non-nuclear status, a policy Kyiv felt was in its own best interest. Ukraine, however, changed its mind, hoping that claiming ownership of the nuclear arsenal on its territory would yield international support and consequently assistance.

The final chapter examined the true nature of Ukraine's authority over the former Soviet nuclear arsenal. Ukraine's claim of ownership of the strategic weapons and the dialogue during which Ukraine tried to secure guarantees of security and

compensation were part of Ukraine's pursuit of its own interests being solidification of its independence and sovereign control over its territory. The status of Ukraine's physical and political control over the weapons was an issue, and what had been expected to be a bargaining tool by Kyiv, has proven to be a threat to the international support and assistance Ukraine initially sought.

Ukraine's history as a participant in the development of nuclear technology as well as its secondary position in the political decision-making process, led to Kyiv's attempts to assume control of the weapons left on its soil after the collapse of the USSR. The attempt to become sovereign controller of nuclear and security policy over its own territory succeeded only in part. Ukraine became involved in the international dialogue as a participant. However, its intention to lead the debate over the removal of nuclear weapons failed. The opportunity for Ukraine to assume control over its security policy, which had for so long been dominated by Moscow, had slipped away and gone into the hands of Western leaders, who were not prepared to allow Ukraine to become a new nuclear power in its own right. Ukraine's only opportunity to become a minor participant in the nuclear weapons dialogue was to lay claim on the weapons. This ensured attention to be focused on Kyiv at least for a short period. The change in Kyiv's policy and the removal of the last nuclear weapon from Ukraine on June 1, 1996 solidified Ukraine's place in today's world.

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