Aggressive Elites

A Policy of Quiet Containment for Russia's Diversionary Tactics

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Current international responses to Russia's aggressive actions, such as in Ukraine and Syria, have failed to curtail Moscow. The current deterrence-based policy relies on an incomplete analysis, which fails to consider that Russian elite dynamics drive diversionary conflict. Elites continue to escalate conflict as a face-saving mechanism to maintain their power. The United States should pursue a policy of "quiet containment" that increases the costs of Russian aggression and reassures allies without playing into Russia's diversionary strategy.

Introduction

Russia has used new generation warfare, a combination of covert subversive operations and direct state involvement in the military, against the United States and its allies since the Soviet era.[1] However, current policy responses neglect the role of elite dynamics in Russia's decision-making. While political and economic analyses are necessary for understanding Russia's motivations, examining the role of elite dynamics has important implications for identifying policies to counter Russian aggression. As elites become increasingly dependent on conflict to maintain power, the existing policy of sanctions and military exercises in Eastern Europe will likely further Russian aggression, thereby exacerbating long-term global insecurity. Instead, a policy of "quiet containment" limits opportunities for Russian elites to incite future conflict through indirect signaling, increases the costs of Russian aggression through proxies, and reassures allies through military advising.

Russia's Threat to U.S. Interests

Russia uses disinformation to sow distrust in the U.S. system of democracy and global governance and conventional military tactics to consolidate its own power by exploiting conflicts.[2] Although President Vladimir Putin understands the weakness of Russia relative to the West, he consistently demonstrates the disruptive capabilities of a declining power with aggressive international policies.[3] Putin's actions challenge the current world order and U.S. interests regarding the spread of democratic values.

Undermining Democratic Governance in the West

Russia employs information warfare—namely hacking, social media messaging, and trolling—to undermine democratic governance, affect citizen perceptions of liberal democracy, and support illiberal parties.[4]

- *Russia's information warfare.* Despite imbalances in conventional military capabilities relative to the United States, Russia has developed sophisticated cyber warfare capabilities.[5] Moscow uses a combination of cyberattacks, social media messaging, and internet trolls to undermine U.S. online resources.[6] Russia regards information in all forms as a weapon, a target, and an operational domain in peace and wartime. Thus, the Russian toolkit includes information distortion as a tactic in its political, diplomatic, and military engagement.[7]

  On social media, Russia engages in political messaging, financial propaganda, and fear-mongering.[8] The Kremlin employs internet trolls and bots to disseminate unsubstantiated or fabricated news stories to targeted audiences with the intent of advancing an unfavorable opinion of democratic systems.[9]

- *Russian support for illiberal parties.* Russia supports extremist parties that are sympathetic to its interests.[10] Moscow has been funding nationalist and populist political parties over the last decade and more recently has bolstered them on social media to foster fractionalization in Europe.[11] While this support does not usually result in a populist victory, Russia often succeeds in bringing nationalist and populist parties' messages to the forefront of politics.[12] As a result, Europe and the West face a backlash against liberal values.[13] Furthermore, Russia undermines the ability of the EU to influence nearby transitional democracies.[14]

Exploiting Political Fractures to Consolidate Power Globally

Russia militarily exploits divisions in the Middle East and the post-Soviet region to open political space for its interests and in the process leaves behind a more unstable geopolitical landscape.[15]

- *The Middle East.* Russia supports authoritarian regimes in the Middle East regardless of their governance or human rights record.[16] While the West is divided over support for authoritarian regimes, Moscow continues to make diplomatic, political, and strategic gains in Egypt, eastern Libya, and Turkey. These gains allow Russia to consolidate power and present itself as a legitimate alternative to the West.[17] The Kremlin currently provides military support to Bashar al-Assad's regime as a symbol of resistance against democratic transition.[18]

- *The post-Soviet space.* In the post-Soviet space, Russia has conducted a number of military interventions to halt the spread of democracy and perceived Western influence. In 2008, Russia launched a military assault in Georgia's disputed territories in response to the pro-Western policies of then-president Mikheil Saakashvili.[19] The disputed territories are now Russian-occupied frozen conflicts.[20] In 2014, Moscow responded to Ukraine's Euromaidan movement to oust pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovych by leveraging pro-Russian sentiments in Eastern Ukraine to seize Crimea.[21] Russia exploited Ukraine's internal divisions, which created a dysfunctional government. The government's instability reduced the West's influence in the region, while increasing Russia's.[22]

Russia seeks to restore its international status outside the bounds of Western values and institutions. Achieving this goal requires an economically less powerful West and an unstable Western geopolitical landscape. Through its assaults on democracy in the West and use of military power in other regions of strategic importance, Moscow seeks to limit U.S. power projection.[23]

Incomplete Analyses of Russia Leading to Misaligned U.S. Policy

> *"NATO was built to counteract the Soviet Union in its day and time. At this point there is no threat coming from the Soviet Union, because there is no Soviet Union anymore. And where there was the Soviet Union once, there is now a number of countries, among them the new and democratic Russia."*
>
> —Vladimir Putin, 2001[24]

Current analyses of Russian intentions portray the government as geopolitically insecure, inherently expansionist, or domestically vulnerable. These characterizations provide an incomplete understanding of Russia's motivations, limiting U.S. policy-makers to a choice between either appeasement or overt, rigorous deterrence.[25]

Geopolitical Perspectives

Geopolitical insecurity and expansionist aims simultaneously drive Russian actions. Russia's history of conflict with the West has created a paranoid political culture that has allowed a few powerful oligarchs monopolize power.[26] Official Russian rhetoric disproportionately portrays Western actions as threatening, perpetuating the sense of insecurity among the Russian population.

Putin and his allies want to reestablish Russian dominance in its near abroad. They are convinced that if Russia operates within existing Western frameworks, Moscow will compromise its independence and influence.[27] In achieving this goal, Russia wants to avoid overextending itself and sparking a conventional conflict with the United States or triggering severe economic sanctions.[28]

According to this view, therefore, Russia's geopolitical insecurity and limited expansionism require a strategy that employs both deterrence and appeasement. Deterrence alone will further Russia's sense of insecurity, but coupled with moderate appeasement the United States can avoid provoking greater uncertainty.

Domestic Perspectives

Russia's economic decline, societal discontent, and fear of waning political legitimacy are converging to exacerbate a sense of insecurity among Putin's inner circle.[29] Government

corruption and significant structural problems in key export industries are causing economic stagnation.[30] Prolonged economic decline is exacerbating social discontent and accelerating the waning political legitimacy of Putin's regime.[31] As Russia suffers domestically it grows increasingly insecure and seeks to reassert itself as an autonomous international actor through an aggressive foreign policy.

According to this interpretation of Russia's actions, engagement could help mitigate Russia's internal problems and diminish Moscow's sense of insecurity.

An Incomplete Understanding of Russia

Recent U.S. policy toward Russia has focused on open containment and deterrence in response to its aggressive displays. This policy is based on an understanding of Russia as an inherently expansionist power that can only be deterred with clear and credible threats.[32]

- *U.S. policy.* The United States uses a combination of sanctions and increased military exercises as central components of a deterrence-based policy toward Russia. The United States imposed economic sanctions on Russia in response to its annexation of Crimea and support of pro-Russian rebel forces in Eastern Ukraine.[33] As Russia remained active in Ukraine and increased its patrols off European coasts, U.S. allies in Eastern Europe and the Baltics became increasingly worried about Russian aggression. To support its allies, the United States established a standing military presence in the Baltics and Poland and stepped up military exercises with NATO.[34]

- *Russian response.* While current U.S. policy may be perceived as minimal from an American perspective, Russian elites are able to manipulate the view of these events. Elites use a form of diversionary rhetoric to convince the Russian population that they are under attack from the West every time the United States overtly deters Russia.

Recent U.S. policies have not adequately curtailed Russian aggression because they are based on an incomplete understanding of Russia's geopolitical views. Current U.S. policy would be sufficient against a purely expansionist Russia. However, sanctions and overt military posturing have only fueled Moscow's domestic rhetoric that the West is hostile and provides justification for a further consolidation of domestic power.[35] Proposed policies for appeasement are also flawed. While appeasement relies on a more accurate understanding of Russia's geopolitical views, it does not adequately reassure NATO and EU allies.[36]

Current and proposed U.S. policies to counter Russia rest on improper and incomplete understandings of Russian motivations. The lack of an adequate understanding leads to misaligned and ineffective policy, thus requiring a deeper analysis of Russian elite dynamics.

A Closer Look at Russian Elite Politics

Prevailing explanations for Russia's actions overlook the role of elite dynamics in the Kremlin's

decision making. Because Putin and loyal elites ultimately shape Russian foreign policy, it is critical to understand how they will perceive and respond to U.S. actions.

A Shift in Power among Russia's Ruling Elite

The transfer of power to the military-security elite, also known as the *siloviki*, has changed the composition of Russia's governing structure.[37] Russia's economic decline reduced Putin's ability to buy off political elites outside of the *siloviki*.[38] Consequently, Putin initiated a process of empowering new leaders within the *siloviki* who pledge their loyalty to him.[39] Following this power shift, there has also been a consolidation of power at the center.

- *Replacement of existing elites*. Putin has replaced elites in multiple political domains. The arrest of Alexey Ulyukayev, Russia's former Minister of Economic Development, for an alleged 2 million dollar bribe represents a high-profile replacement within Putin's cabinet. Following the arrest of Ulyukayev, the *siloviki* supported Igor Sechin's state oil company, Rosneft. According to both parties, Rosneft wanted to buy out another oil company, Bashneft, but Ulyukayev rejected the merger. Ulyukayev then asked Rosneft for a bribe, at which point Rosneft informed the authorities and promised the minister a payoff. After the arrest, Ulyukayev was removed from office, and Sechin, a formidable member of Putin's inner circle, accrued considerable power.[40]

  In addition, Putin appointed the parliament speaker Sergei Naryshkin, a former intelligence officer, as head of the Foreign Intelligence Service.[41] The vacant parliament speaker's post was given to a former Kremlin aide, Vyacheslav Volodin, who organized the most recent election and engineered the pro-Putin party's victory.[42]

- *Rise of the siloviki.* Representatives of the military-security elite occupy key positions of influence in the Putin regime.[43] While the *siloviki* were previously subordinate in the political hierarchy, they managed to elevate the importance of the executive relative to the legislative branch and advance their personal interests. After consolidating power, the *siloviki* imposed their agenda on other ruling elites between 2011 and 2012. Moreover, the annexation of Crimea gave the *siloviki* additional clout, which reinforced their power.[44]

- *Reduction of elite stakeholders.* Shared control over political, economic, and military interests among Putin's elite circle allows the Russian president to govern more unilaterally.[45] Presently, the FSB controls Russia's entire financial sector, the head of the Customs Service is a former KGB officer close to Putin, and the FSB itself is being significantly expanded to include foreign intelligence, in addition to its current domestic intelligence operations.[46] These developments reduce the number of elite stakeholders, thus consolidating Putin's political control.

The ousting of existing elites, shift in power towards the *siloviki*, and the consolidation of power among elite circles serves to further Putin's domestic legitimacy and Russia's international status.

Elite Juggernaut Propagates Anti-Western Nationalism

Changes in the elite power structure have led to a change in political attitudes among the elite and the increased legitimacy of the Putin regime domestically. As a result, Russia will likely become progressively confrontational and maintain a narrative that Moscow is responding to Western encroachment.

- *Changes in elite political attitudes.* Today's elites are increasingly anti-American and nationalistic.[47] The rise of the *siloviki* coincides with an increase in anti-American sentiment. According to a Hamilton College Levitt Poll, elite perceptions of the United States as a threat to Russia's national security are at a record high. Over 80 percent of elites in 2016 considered the United States to be a critical threat to Russia in 2016, compared to only 54.1 percent in 2004 and 26.9 percent in 1993.[48] Perceived hostility of the United States has also increased to an unprecedented level. In 2016, 88 percent of respondents reported that the United States is either "fairly" or "very" hostile to Russia, compared to only 9.5 percent in 1993.[49]

  In addition to a pervasive anti-Western sentiment, Russian elites are becoming increasingly nationalistic. A growing number of elites regard the inability to solve domestic problems as the "utmost threat" to Russia's security.[50] At the same time, more elites believe that Russia's national interests should be expansive. In 1999, 82.3 percent of elites agreed that Russia's interests extended beyond its existing territory. By 2004 this percentage declined to 71.9 and to 43.4 percent in 2012. However, in 2016, elite sentiments in favor of expansion skyrocketed back to 82.3 percent.[51] Lastly, for the first time since 1993, a majority of elites, 52.3 percent, report that the Russian military is the deciding factor in Russia's international relations, as opposed to the country's economic potential.[52]

- *Increased government legitimacy.* As the *siloviki* consolidate power, they increase pressure on civil society organizations and independent media outlets. With declining space for civil society, Russian elites are weakening opposition forces, and thus bolstering their legitimacy among the Russian population.[53] Likewise, Putin strategically replaces certain elites with new politicians who owe him their political careers and are unlikely to counter his policy agenda.[54] A united political elite surrounding Putin in turn increases the legitimacy of the Russian government as a whole.

An anti-American and aggressively nationalistic Russia is likely to be more confrontational than in years past. As Russian elites seek to justify their rule in the face of declining economic, social, and international status, they are more likely to use aggressive tactics against the West as an alternative source of power.[55]

Quiet Containment

The United States should pursue a policy of quiet containment that increases the cost of Russian

aggression without further inciting elites to engage in violent diversionary conflict. Quiet containment seeks to reduce Moscow's ability to use perceived Western aggression as a justification for its own diversionary spectacles. The aim of quiet containment is to deprive Russia's pretext for warmongering, while providing support for U.S. allies.

The Goldilocks Principle: The Danger of Too Much or Too Little

To ensure there are checks on Russian power projection, the United States must find a balance between excessive interference and doing nothing in the face of an aggressive power.[56] A rigorous containment policy risks playing into Russian elites' diversionary political strategy. On the other hand, a policy of appeasement risks allowing Russia's actions to continue, setting a precedent that the rules of the international order may be violated.

- *The risk of overt containment.* Russia is likely to respond to an excessive open containment policy of increased threats and deterrents with greater paranoia. Elites facing declining power status and a U.S. containment policy will use increased aggression to re-establish a sense of security.[57]

- *The risk of appeasement.* Without a consistent threat of costs to ward off aggressive actions, Russia will have no reason to change its behavior. Under a U.S. policy of pure appeasement, Putin would escalate disputes with the West with little fear of reprisal.[58]

Both overt containment and appeasement would exacerbate instability rather than minimize it. Quiet containment thus seeks to strike a middle-ground between the extremes of overt containment and appeasement.

Quiet but Not Silent

Quiet containment requires indirect signaling in response to Russian actions. The policy uses proxies and intermediaries as backchannels to hinder Russia in conventional and unconventional arenas and provides support to at-risk allies through military advising and technological development.

- *Indirect signaling.* Quiet containment fundamentally relies on indirect signaling to impose costs on Russian elites without playing into their diversionary logic. Indirect signaling means that the United States works through backchannels and uses subtle cues to avoid direct confrontation with Russia.

- *Using proxies and intermediaries.* The United States should use its allies in international organizations as proxies to punish Russia. U.S. allies could serve as valuable partners in beginning the process for ICC indictments and other similar punitive actions.

  Outside of international organizations, the United States could encourage non-NATO states, such as Sweden and Finland, to initiate mediation disputes with Russia. Because

the Kremlin typically blames Russia's marginalization on Western organizations, namely the EU and NATO, acting outside of these alliances would present Russia with a less threatening forum for negotiations.

- *Areas to target.* The United States should seek to engage in quiet containment policies in areas where Russia is currently involved or will likely intervene given the opportunity. Russia remains a major actor in areas such as Syria, Ukraine, and the Arctic, as well as broad policy areas such as nuclear and cyberspace.[59]

- *Military training and technology development.* Weapons sales would play into Russia's diversionary logic. Thus, the United States should pursue a policy of advising and training vulnerable U.S. allies. This training could include joint military training without forward deployments to limit the appearance of aggression.

  To support its allies, the United States should assist allies in developing or purchasing the necessary technologies for resilient defense networks. Technological development should focus on key areas such as cyber security and missile defense.

Quiet containment's use of indirect signaling, proxies, and non-aggressive assistance avoids fueling diversionary action in all areas where the United States must counter Russian aggression.

Opportunities for Quiet Containment

The United States should apply quiet containment policies in areas of current or likely future Russian involvement. Russia's ability to disrupt the international order demonstrates that Russia is still too large and influential to ignore. Russia remains a credible force in Syria, Ukraine, nuclear policy, cyberspace, and the Arctic.[60]

- *In Syria.* Assad will likely continue to violate cease-fire deals in Syria negotiated by the United States and Russia. Regardless of Assad's defiance, Russia will continue to support the regime and attack rebel forces.[61] On the other hand, if the United States escalates military operations, Russian elites will interpret these actions as hostile. Thus, both open containment and appeasement will prolong the Syrian civil war and increase U.S. costs.[62]

  Instead, a quiet containment policy would prompt Washington to work with U.S. allies in international organizations to indict key Syrian regime figures for war crimes at the ICC. In doing so the United States could signal that it is unwilling to tolerate Russia's continued support of the Assad regime. At the same time, the United States should work with Turkey to maintain safe zones for moderate rebels and civilians along its northern border with Syria. These safe zones protect civilians while denying Russian elites an excuse to incite further conflict with the United States.

- *In Ukraine.* If the United States sells arms to Ukraine, Russian elites will view Washington as openly hostile to Russian interests in the region. This interpretation of U.S. actions will then trigger a diversionary spiral. If the United States does not support

Ukraine, Russia will be able to continue interfering in Ukraine's affairs, and the United States will lose credibility with an Eastern European ally.

In line with quiet containment, the United States instead can send military advisors to help train Ukraine's armed forces as a means of protecting the country from future Russian aggression. Any training drills should refrain from forward deployments to reduce perceived hostility of the United States towards Russia. Technological advisors could also be sent to Ukraine to build cyber defense capabilities. These initiatives would reassure Ukraine of U.S. commitment without attracting a Russian diversionary spectacle that would likely follow troop deployments and weapons sales.

- *In cyberspace.* If the United States fails to impose costs on Russia's cyber hacking, it leaves itself and its allies vulnerable to future cyberattacks. However, if the United States openly launches a counter-cyberattack on Russia, it risks triggering elite diversionary logic. Escalating cyber conflict would not only harm U.S. security in the present, but also set a dangerous precedent for proportionate responses in the cyber realm.[63]

  Instead, the United States should publish evidence of Russia's cyber misdeeds.[64] Making Russia's misdeeds public penalizes Russia for its use of aggressive tactics, but avoids directly angering elites who would likely retaliate with additional cyber force. The United States could also consider discreetly providing allies and Russia's political rivals with evidence of Russian hacking in their own domains. These measures would allow proxies to take action against Russia without directly involving the United States.

- *On nuclear weapons.* If the United States does not impose costs on Russia's violations of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty, Moscow is likely to continue advancing a hostile nuclear policy in Western Europe. However, the United States should not openly counter Russia's violations of the INF Treaty with its own aggressive nuclear policy. Such actions would risk direct confrontation with Russia in a particularly dangerous area of foreign policy.[65]

  Through non-NATO proxies, the United States can remind Russia of why the INF Treaty was originally drafted and how it serves Russia's own security interests. U.S. technical assistance can simultaneously help allies develop additional air space to surface cruise missiles that fall within the legal bounds of the INF Treaty. These measures would deter Russia from deploying proscribed missiles and launchers.[66]

- *In the Arctic.* Russia's current Arctic policy is simultaneously cooperative and confrontational. Because the Arctic represents a rare area of U.S.-Russian cooperation, the United States should ensure lasting circumpolar cooperation with Moscow.[67] At the same time, the United States should ensure it represents allied interests in bodies governing the Arctic as a means to counter Russia's current military buildup.[68] Actively including Russia in Arctic negotiations ensures that the Kremlin is not threatened by Western expansionism, while U.S. advocacy for its allies would reassure these nervous states of its security commitments. Such measures would balance Russia's military interests in the Arctic and limit potential elite perceptions of aggressive U.S. actions.

In areas of current conflict, including Syria, Ukraine, cyberspace, and nuclear policy, the United States must consider how the extremes of overt containment and appeasement would allow Russia to incite conflict. In the Arctic, where the United States and its allies are not in direct conflict with Russia, the United States must focus its quiet containment policy on avoiding a new point of conflict.

Conclusion

As Russia continues to disrupt the international order, it is crucial to understand the role of elite dynamics in Russia's foreign policy decision-making. The United States should consider a policy of quiet containment that imposes costs on Russia without playing into the Kremlin's diversionary logic. Quiet containment can be a useful U.S. foreign policy tool in numerous areas where Russia is still a major player, including Syria, Ukraine, cyberspace, nuclear, and the Arctic, and its underlying principles can be applied to future conflict areas.

[1] "New generation warfare" refers to Russia's rethinking of the forms and methods of warfare. Under new generation warfare Russia's uses of political subversion, proxy sanctuary, intervention, coercive deterrence, and negotiated manipulation to achieve its national security goals. Russia's idea of new generation warfare differs from Western understandings of hybrid warfare. While hybrid warfare is a blend of conventional, irregular, and cyber warfare tactics, new generation warfare combines covert and open state involvement in subversive operations. Москва, Кремль, "Указ но. 683: О Стратегии национальной безопасности Российской Федерации," Президент Российской Федерации, December 31, 2015, http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/l8iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf; Phillip A. Karber, "Russia's 'New Generation Warfare,'" National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, June 4, 2015. https://www.nga.mil/MediaRoom/News/Pages/Russia's-'New-Generation-Warfare'.aspx; Keir Giles, "Russia's 'New' Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow's Exercise of Power," Chatham House, March 21, 2016. https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/research/2016-03-21-russias-new-tools-giles.pdf

[2]Andrew Weisburd, Clint Watts, and J. M. Berger, "Trolling for Trump: How Russia Is Trying to Destroy Our Democracy," War on the Rocks, November 6, 2016. http://warontherocks.com/2016/11/trolling-for-trump-how-russia-is-trying-to-destroy-our-democracy/; Emile Simpson, "Vladimir of Arabia," Foreign Policy, November 2, 2016. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/11/02/vladimir-of-arabia-putin-russia-middle-east/

[3] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub 66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[4] Andrew Weisburd, Clint Watts, and J. M. Berger, "Trolling for Trump: How Russia Is Trying to Destroy Our Democracy," War on the Rocks, November 6, 2016. https://warontherocks.com/2016/11/trolling-for-trump-how russia-is-trying-to-destroy-our-democracy/; Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[5] William Courtney and Martin C. Libicki, "How to Counter Putin's Subversive War on the West," *Rand Blog*, August 1, 2016. http://www.rand.org/blog/2016/08/how-to-counter-putins-subversive-war-on-the-west.html

[6] Russia's cyber activity includes the recent theft of emails from the Democratic National Committee and Clinton campaign office, and cyberattacks on former Secretary of State Colin Powell. However, Russia's pattern of cyber activity goes back to the 2007 cyberattacks on Estonia's infrastructure.
Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/; Patrick Howell O'Neill, "The Cyberattack That Changed the World," The Daily Dot, last modified February 24, 2017. http://www.dailydot.com/layer8/web-war-cyberattack-russia-estonia/; Kalev Leetaru, "The Real Russian Hacking Story: A Nation Underdefended From Cyberattack," Forbes, January 9, 2017. http://www.forbes.com/sites/kalevleetaru/2017/01/09/the-real-russian-hacking-story-a-nation-underdefended-from-cyberattack/#68773d21c866

[7] Russia's use of cyber as a distinct tool in its foreign policy objectives is further supported by the fact that Russia's defense minister, Sergei Shoigu, admitted the existence of "information warfare troops" as an established branch of Russia's military.
Adam Segal, "Cyber Week in Review: Feb. 24, 2017," Council on Foreign Relations, February 24, 2017. http://blogs.cfr.org/cyber/2017/02/24/cyber-week-in-review-february-24-2017/; David Fidler, "The Trump Administration Plays Right into Russia's Information Warfare Strategy," Council on Foreign Relations, February 13, 2017. http://blogs.cfr.org/cyber/2017/02/13/the-trump-administration-is-a-troll-farm-and-botnet-for-russian-information-warfare/

[8] Politically, Russia social media outlets design stories to tarnish democratic leaders and institutions. Financially, Russia seeks to discredit Western financial experts and institutions such as the Federal Reserve. Socially, Russia social media outlets highlight police brutality, racial tensions, protests, online privacy concerns, and alleged government misconduct to create negative citizen perceptions of liberal systems. Lastly, Russia attempts to promote a fear of global calamity by promoting fears of nuclear war or martial law in the United States. Andrew Weisburd,

Clint Watts, and J. M. Berger, "Trolling for Trump: How Russia Is Trying to Destroy Our Democracy," War on the Rocks, November 6, 2016. https://warontherocks.com/2016/11/trolling-for-trump-how-russia-is-trying-to-destroy-our-democracy/

[9] Andrew Weisburd, Clint Watts, and J. M. Berger, "Trolling for Trump: How Russia Is Trying to Destroy Our Democracy," War on the Rocks, November 6, 2016. https://warontherocks.com/2016/11/trolling-for-trump-how-russia-is-trying-to-destroy-our-democracy/

[10] Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[11] Peter Foster, Europe Editor, and Matthew Holehouse, "Russia Accused of Clandestine Funding of European Parties as US conducts major review of Vladimir Putin's Strategy," The Telegraph, January 16, 2016. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/12103602/America-to-investigate-Russian-meddling-in-EU.html

[12] In Austria, Russia supported the Freedom Party, a far-right anti-immigrant party. While its candidate, Norbert Hofer, failed to win the presidency, the party won over 46 percent of the vote, making it the third-largest party in parliament. Similarly, Russia has supported the National Front in France, another far-right immigrant party. The National Front's leader, Marine Le Pen, has endorsed the annexation of Crimea and called for an end to Western sanctions. Marine Le Pen could presumably be elected the next President of France. Regardless, Le Pen's main rival is French Prime Minister, Francois Fillon, who has called for a similar building of a closer relationship with Russia. Lastly, in the U.K., Russian media praised the successes of the Brexit campaign and its leader Nigel Farage. Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[13] Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[14] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[15] Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[16] Emile Simpson, "Vladimir of Arabia," Foreign Policy, November 2, 2016. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/11/02/vladimir-of-arabia-putin-russia-middle-east/

[17] Emile Simpson, "Vladimir of Arabia," Foreign Policy, November 2, 2016. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/11/02/vladimir-of-arabia-putin-russia-middle-east/

[18] "Why Russia is an Ally of Assad," The Economist, September 30, 2015. http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2015/09/economist-explains-22

[19] Recently, Russia has begun increasingly moving in on the Georgian territory of South Ossetia. In 2015, Russia began establishing a boundary between Russia and Georgia using green border signs that cuts through South Ossetia. Additionally, Russian border guards have become increasingly present. South Ossetia is already heavily financed and defended by Russia; its frontiers are guarded by Russia's border service, it has three Russian military bases with several thousand troops, and with little economic activity, it is dependent on Russian financial support for its survival. The "borderization" of a formerly vague administrative boundary suggests increasing pressure from the Russian government on the breakaway region. Furthermore, the leader of South Ossetia, Leonid Tibilov, has said he plans on holding a referendum similar to the one held in Crimea in 2014 regarding whether to request annexation. Andrew Higgins, "In Russia's 'Frozen Zone,' a Creeping Border with Georgia," New York Times, October 23, 2016. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/24/world/europe/in-russias-frozen-zone-a-creeping-border-with-georgia.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur&_r=0; Larry Diamond, "Russia and the Threat to Liberal Democracy," The Atlantic, December 9, 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/12/russia-liberal-democracy/510011/

[20] Russia's frozen conflicts refer to quasi-independent territories under Russian influence and control. These areas are unrecognized by the international community, but are generally supported by Moscow. Regions included in the

list of "frozen conflicts" are Transnistria in Moldova, Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, and South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the Republic of Georgia. Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and support for the separatist territories of Luhansk and Donetsk in Ukraine are a potential new set of frozen conflicts. Russia creates frozen conflicts as a means of increasing Russian leverage in its near abroad. Because frozen conflicts are territorial and legal "grey zone," they pose a security risk to the post-Cold War order. Agnia Grigas, "Frozen Conflicts: A Tool Kit for US Policymakers," Atlantic Council, July 2016.
http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Frozen_Conflicts_web_0727.pdf

[21] "Why Russia is an Ally of Assad," The Economist, September 30, 2015.
http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2015/09/economist-explains-22

[22] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[23] Москва, Кремль, "Указ но. 683: О Стратегии национальной безопасности Российской Федерации," Президент Российской Федерации, December 31, 2015; Olga Olicker, "Unpacking Russia's New National Security Strategy," Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 7, 2016.
https://www.csis.org/analysis/unpacking-russias-new-national-security-strategy

[24] Vladimir Putin, interview by Robert Siegel, *NPR News*, NPR, November 15, 2001.
http://www.npr.org/news/specials/putin/nprinterview.html

[25] Ariel Cohen, "Domestic Factors Driving Russia's Foreign Policy," The Heritage Foundation, November 19, 2007.
http://www.heritage.org/europe/report/domestic-factors-driving-russias-foreign-policy#_ftn2;
Stephen M. Walt, "Why Arming Kiev Is a Really, Really Bad Idea," Foreign Policy, February 9, 2015.
http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea/

[26] Prior to World War II, Russia's struggles against Western states culminated in Napoleon's failed, but devastating march on Russia in 1812. Later, Russia confronted the British, the French, and the Ottomans in its bloodiest war, the Crimean War. During World War II, or what Russia calls "the Great Patriotic War," Russia faced the brunt of the Nazi German invasion of Russia in 1941. The Nazi invasion epitomized Russia's fears of a Western power conducting a war of annihilation on Russian territory. In the aftermath of World War II Russia then faced a monarchy-collapsing revolution and a brutal civil war that it blames on Western-driven instability. As a result, Russia was suspicious and defensive towards the West going into the Cold War. During the Cold War the West was Russia's primary adversary. When the USSR fell, blamed its fall from great power status and the accompanying economic and political distress on the West. Economically, Russia faced rampant inflation, financial crisis, and poverty, which it associates with Western capitalism. Politically, Yeltsin's incompetency is associated with Western democracy. This post-Cold War distress left Russia with a deep sense of embarrassment and insecurity. At the same time, the West did not include Russia in NATO after the fall of the USSR. Meetings that took place during the 1990s, however, had led Russia to believe that NATO would not expand into the former Soviet bloc. NATO has since expanded into the former USSR and Warsaw Pact countries, which has led Russia to feel increased NATO encirclement and an accompanying need to retaliate. Loren Thompson, "Why Putin's Russia Is the Biggest Threat to America in 2015," *Forbes*, (2 January 2015); Peter Zwack, "Russia's Contradictory Relationship with the West." *PRISM* 6, no. 1 (2016). http://cco.ndu.edu/Publications/PRISM/PRISM-Volume-6-no-2/Article/840779/russias-contradictory-relationship-with-the-west/#.WCxRirphj5g.facebook; Thomas F. Remington, *Politics in Russia,* Seventh Ed., New York: Longman; James Goldgeier, "Promises Made, Promises Broken? What Yeltsin Was Told About NATO in 1993 and Why It Matters," War on the Rocks, July 12, 2016. https://warontherocks.com/2016/07/promises-made-promises-broken-what-yeltsin-was-told-about-nato-in-1993-and-why-it-matters/; Krishnadev Calamur, "Was Obama Too Soft on Russia?" The Atlantic, February 15, 2017. https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2017/02/trump-obama-russia-crimea/516777/

[27] Fiona Hill, "Understanding and Deterring Russia: U.S. Policies and Strategies," Brookings, February 10, 2016.
https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/understanding-and-deterring-russia-u-s-policies-and-strategies/

[28] A common misconception regarding Russia is that it is inherently driven to expand due to its history and tradition of strategic thinking and its greedy and self-glorifying leadership. Stephen M. Walt, "Why Arming Kiev Is a Really, Really Bad Idea," Foreign Policy, February 9, 2015. http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-

arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea/; Eugene Rumer, Richard Sokolsky, and Andrew S. Weiss, "Guiding Principles for a Sustainable U.S. Policy Toward Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia: Key Judgments From a Joint Task Force," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 9, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/02/09/guiding-principles-for-sustainable-u.s.-policy-toward-russia-ukraine-and-eurasia-key-judgments-from-joint-task-force-pub-67893?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiT0RVNFpUTXlOVGs0TW1NeCIsInQiOiJtZjBoZ2l0WFNnNkt6dElrTXZDWlwvUFoyVWRtcWtxcEFxQ2lxckdFUXpaZWdIQ3BuRGxwb0hpSWE5eXhGa053NmljRGQwUTVLRzdVRkJ5Ull4aCt2RHUxV3p4Z0dXS2JaQmJ3MUNcL1c5U0NUeFwvU2ZpRFpJTDl2c2QyZVwvN1ZMRlMifQ%3D%3D

[29] Ariel Cohen, "Domestic Factors Driving Russia's Foreign Policy," The Heritage Foundation, November 19, 2007. http://www.heritage.org/europe/report/domestic-factors-driving-russias-foreign-policy#_ftn2

[30] Economically, Russia faces structural economic problems due to its reliance on oil and natural gas exports and government corruption. High energy prices from 2007 to 2012 provided Russia with significant oil and natural gas revenues that allowed the state to invest significant amounts of money in social welfare projects, buy off the military and wealthy elites, and suppress protests. However, as elites syphoned off oil revenues, profits did not circulate through the economy, semi-private sector debt increased, and the economy showed signs of decline well before the imposition of sanctions in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea. In 2010, Russia's GDP grew by 4.5 percent, falling to 3.4 percent in 2012, and 1.3 percent in 2013. The sanctions exacerbated Russia's already declining economy, causing a decline in growth to 0.6 percent in 2014, and a further contraction of 3.8 percent in 2015. Because Russia's economic problems are structural, Russia will continue to face significant obstacles to economic growth regardless of a rise in oil prices of the removal of sanctions. Furthermore, it is unlikely that Russia will institute economic reforms, as any change in Russia's economic structure would break up the elite monopoly over the economy. With an upcoming presidential election in 2018, Russian authorities will prefer the status quo to any change that could risk their power. G. Fetisov, "The 'Dutch Disease' in Russia: Macroeconomic and Structural Aspects," *Problems of Economic Transition*, 50 no. 1, (May 2007) 53-73; William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D; Thomas F. Remington, *Politics in Russia,* Seventh Ed., New York: Longman; Mark Nukols, "Russia's Economic Troubles Could be Catalyst for Change," *Forbes*, (9 January 2015); "The Russian Economy: The End of the Line," *The Economist*, (22 November 2014); Anders Aslund, "Russia's Economic Situation is Worse Than it May Appear," *Capital*, (Hamburg, Germany: 1 December 2014). Reproduced at: http://piie.com/publications/opeds/oped.cfm?ResearchID=2719; Denis Volkov, "Russia of the Mid-2020s: Breakdown of the Political Order," The Jamestown Foundation, July 6, 2016. https://jamestown.org/program/denis-volkov-russia-of-the-mid-2020s-breakdown-of-the-political-order/

[31] Currently Putin has a popular approval rating of 80 percent among Russian citizens, and while the regime has been able to maintain a favorable approval rating during a number of key time periods, the system has shown signs of declining popular support over the course of Putin's rule. In 2007 and 2008, political legitimacy peaked due to a high level of legitimacy and confidence in the future of Russia's economy. The 2009 economic crisis ended confidence about Russia's future, leading to national-level protests in 2011 in 2012. Putin was able to mitigate the effects of these protests through is May Decrees, which increased social spending. The increased spending was able to maintain support for the government, but was not able to increase it. The 2014 Olympic Games boosted approval ratings, but only by a small margin. Russia's seizure of Crimea also temporarily increased popular support of all state institutions, and increased Putin's approval ratings by 20 percent. However, Putin's approval ratings have been declining since the middle of 2015, and the approval rating of state institutions has been falling since autumn of 2014. Presently, approval ratings for the government are at pre-Crimea levels, with the exception of Putin. Continued decline in public support for the regime will eventually reduce the maneuverability of the government in political decision-making, thus leaving Russian elites with few options for exercising political control. Denis Volkov, "Russia of the Mid-2020s: Breakdown of the Political Order," The Jamestown Foundation, July 6, 2016. https://jamestown.org/program/denis-volkov-russia-of-the-mid-2020s-breakdown-of-the-political-order/

[32] Stephen M. Walt, "Why Arming Kiev Is a Really, Really Bad Idea," Foreign Policy, February 9, 2015. http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea/

[33] Krishnadev Calamur, "Was Obama Too Soft on Russia?" The Atlantic, February 15, 2017. https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2017/02/trump-obama-russia-crimea/516777/

[34] The United States and its NATO allies this spring will send battalions of 800 to 1,200 troops to each of the Baltic States and Poland. The United States has also switched its focus on training troops to "speed of recognition" of Russian activities. The Baltics have also taken steps to increase their ability to resist the threat of a Russian invasion. Since the Ukraine crisis, the Baltic States have doubled orders of new defense equipment. These orders are predicted to double again in the next two years. Military spending in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia has increased from $210 million in 2014 to $390 million in 2016, and Latvia and Lithuania have two of the fastest-growing defense budgets in the world since 2014. With regards to non-spending measures, Estonia has increased training for members of the Estonian Defense League, teaching them how to become insurgents; Lithuania has adopted a civil defense booklet that informs citizens on what to do in the event of a Russian invasion; and in 2015 Lithuania announced that it would be re-introducing conscription. Eric Schmitt, "U.S. Lending Support to Baltic States Fearing Russia," New York Times, January 1, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/01/us/politics/us-baltic-russia.html

[35] In vulnerable and insecure states, actions to coerce or deter the state reinforce the state's fears and make them more aggressive. Stephen M. Walt, "Why Arming Kiev Is a Really, Really Bad Idea," Foreign Policy, February 9, 2015. http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea/

[36] A policy of appeasement would involve abandoning current NATO and EU goals of expansion, as well as refraining from arming allies such as Ukraine in order to reassure Russia. Stephen M. Walt, "Why Arming Kiev Is a Really, Really Bad Idea," Foreign Policy, February 9, 2015. http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/09/how-not-to-save-ukraine-arming-kiev-is-a-bad-idea/

[37] Denis Volkov, "Russian Elite Opinion After Crimea," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 23, 2016. http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/03/23/russian-elite-opinion-after-crimea-pub-63094

[38] Denis Volkov, "Russia of the Mid-2020s: Breakdown of the Political Order," The Jamestown Foundation, July 6, 2016. https://jamestown.org/program/denis-volkov-russia-of-the-mid-2020s-breakdown-of-the-political-order/

[39] Konstantin Gaaze, "A Quiet Coup? What Lay Behind the Russian Minister's Arrest," Carnegie Moscow Center, November 24, 2016. http://carnegie.ru/commentary/?fa=66244

[40] Konstantin Gaaze, "A Quiet Coup? What Lay Behind the Russian Minister's Arrest," Carnegie Moscow Center, November 24, 2016. http://carnegie.ru/commentary/?fa=66244

[41] "Putin Appoints Duma Speaker Naryshkin as New Foreign Intelligence Chief," Russia Today, September 22, 2016. https://www.rt.com/politics/360320-svr-naryshkin-chief-duma/

[42] Vladimir Isachenkov, "Russia's Vladimir Putin Again Reshuffles His Inner Circle," Associated Press, September 23, 2016. http://bigstory.ap.org/article/40e702426c3147fc9abbfbdcad1bdcd2/putin-nominates-new-speaker-russian-parliament.

[43] The military-security elite includes officials from the law enforcement, security, and military structures. Ekaterina Grobman, "Inside the Power Struggle Within the Russian Elite," Russia Direct, August 5, 2016. http://www.russia-direct.org/analysis/inside-power-struggle-within-russian-elite

[44] Specifically the *siloviki* were able to shift decision-making away from a bloc of economically-oriented elites that rose to prominence in the 1990s. Denis Volkov, "Russian Elite Opinion After Crimea," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 23, 2016. http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/03/23/russian-elite-opinion-after-crimea-pub-63094

[45] Presently, the FSB controls Russia's entire financial sector; the new head of the Customs Service is a former KGB officer close to Putin; the FSB itself will be significantly enlarged, and its officers will be overseeing the entire law enforcement apparatus in the country. This represents an end to the informal system of checks and balances on power that used to exist in Putin's Russia up until this point. Vladimir Putin's preferred style of governance, where he created rival structures and make them fight with each other for favor, has always put the brakes on a single power center, apart from the Presidency, rising to dominate the others.

[46] Karina Orlova, "The *Siloviki* Coup in Russia," The American Interest, September 21, 2016. http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/09/21/the-siloviki-coup-in-russia/

[47] Denis Volkov, "Russian Elite Opinion After Crimea," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 23, 2016. http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/03/23/russian-elite-opinion-after-crimea-pub-63094; Leonid Berhidsky,

"Russian Economy Takes Hit From Putin's Grip," Bloomberg View, September 26, 2016. https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-09-26/russian-economy-takes-hit-fron-putin-s-grip; Shannon Werning Rivera, "Russian Elite 2016: Perspectives on Foreign and Domestic Policy," *Hamilton College*, 11 May 2016, <https://www.hamilton.edu/news/polls/2016-russian-elite> (accessed 3 November 2016). https://www.hamilton.edu/news/polls/2016-russian-elite

[48] The Hamilton College Levitt Poll is based on 243 face-to-face interviews conducted between February and March of 2016. The poll included elites working in Russia's federal bureaucracy, parliament, military and security agencies, private businesses, state-owned enterprises, academic research institutes, and media outlets. Shannon Werning Rivera, "Russian Elite 2016: Perceptions on Foreign and Domestic Policy," *Hamilton College*, 11 May 2016, <https://www.hamilton.edu/news/polls/2016-russian-elite> (accessed 3 November 2016).

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Denis Volkov, "Russian Elite Opinion After Crimea," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 23, 2016. http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/03/23/russian-elite-opinion-after-crimea-pub-63094

[54] Leonid Berhidsky, "Russian Economy Takes Hit From Putin's Grip," Bloomberg View, September 26, 2016. https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-09-26/russian-economy-takes-hit-fron-putin-s-grip

[55] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[56] Sergey Aleksashenko, "On Russia, Washington Should Wait," Brookings, March 7, 2017. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/03/07/on-russia-washington-should-wait/?utm_campaign=Foreign%20Policy&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=44378306

[57] John Mearsheimer. "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September/October 2014): 77-89.

[58] Eugene Rumer, Richard Sokolsky, and Andrew S. Weiss, "Guiding Principles for a Sustainable U.S. Policy Toward Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia: Key Judgments From a Joint Task Force," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 9, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/02/09/guiding-principles-for-sustainable-u.s.-policy-toward-russia-ukraine-and-eurasia-key-judgments-from-joint-task-force-pub 67893?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiT0RVNFpUTXlOVGs0TW1NeCIsInQiOiJtZjBoZ2l0WFNnNkt6dElrTXZDWlwvUFoyVWRtcWtxcEFxQ2lxckdFUXpaZWdIQ3BuRGxwb0hpSWE5eXhGa053NmljRGQwUTVLRzdVRkJ5Ull4aCt2RHUxV3p4Z0dXS2JaQmJ3MUNcL1c5U0NUeFwvU2ZpRFpJTDl2c2QyZVwvN1ZMRlMifQ%3D%3D; Eugene Rumer, Richard Sokolsky, and Andrew S. Weiss, "Trump and Russia: The Right Way to Manage Relations," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 13, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/02/13/trump-and-russia-right-way-to-manage-relations-pub-67995

[59] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[60] William Burns, "How We Fool Ourselves on Russia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/01/07/how-we-fool-ourselves-on-russia-pub-66614?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTmpGaVlqTmlaamsxWlRZMCIsInQiOiI5TW03QzJrbFNQWnZjMVNwOFdKUTdLU0tLY2dDQ2FtQUVhZG4wMnRVQUpHR09jQlB5c0c1aXVDMlp2bmd4U2FMOElwT29KXC9TSEJDak02VjlpV0daQmx6djE4VkpRUHJDN3B0VWZkQ0ZEbmpWV2FET0lEb3A2amswcFRJMERCekkifQ%3D%3D

[61] Charles Lister, "Obama's Syria Strategy is the Definition of Insanity," Foreign Policy, September 21, 2016. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/21/obamas-syria-strategy-is-the-definition-of-insanity/;

Dennis Ross, "The President's Syria Conundrum," The Washington Institute, March 15, 2017. http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-presidents-syria-conundrum

[62] Dennis Ross, "The President's Syria Conundrum," The Washington Institute, March 15, 2017. http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-presidents-syria-conundrum

[63] Adam Segal, "After Attributing a Cyberattack to Russia, the Most Likely Response is Non Cyber," Council on Foreign Relations, October 10, 2016. http://blogs.cfr.org/cyber/2016/10/10/after-attributing-a-cyberattack-to-russia-the-most-likely-response-is-non-cyber/

[64] Christopher Paul and Mariam Matthews, "The Russian 'Firehouse of Falsehood' Propaganda Model: Why it Might Work and Operations to Counter It," RAND Corporation, 2016. http://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE198.html

[65] Jon Wolfsthal, "Trump's Silence on Russian Missiles Makes America Less Safe," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/07/trump-s-silence-on-russian-missiles-makes-america-less-safe-pub-68217

[66] Jon Wolfsthal, "Trump's Silence on Russian Missiles Makes America Less Safe," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 7, 2017. http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/07/trump-s-silence-on-russian-missiles-makes-america-less-safe-pub-68217

[67] However, Russia's actions in Ukraine has led to a suspension of cooperative efforts such as joint military-preparedness exercises. Katrina V. Negrouk, "Opportunity in the Arctic: Defrosting Russia and America's Chilly Relationship," The National Interest, January 13, 2015. http://nationalinterest.org/feature/opportunity-the-arctic-defrosting-russia-americas-chilly-12017?page=2

[68] Lassi Heininen, Alexander Serguinin, and Gleb Yarovoy. "Russian Strategies in the Arctic: Avoiding a New Cold War," Foundation for Development and Support of the Valdai Discussion Club, September 2014. http://www.uarctic.org/media/857300/arctic_eng.pdf