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The Implications of a Breakup of the USSR: Defense Assets at Risk

An Intelligence Assessment

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The Implications of a Breakup of the USSR: Defense Assets at Risk

An Intelligence Assessment

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SOV 91-10039X
September 1991

**The Implications of a Breakup
of the USSR: Defense Assets
at Risk (**

Scope Note

This Intelligence Assessment is part of a series of studies on alternative future Soviet security policies and military capabilities. In this paper, we explore the military implications of a partial or full dissolution of the USSR from a General Staff perspective. We do not attempt to project the ultimate ramifications of the failed August coup, but instead consider the stakes for the General Staff of losing assets in peripheral republics. Previous papers in this series include: [

] SOV 91-10009 [March 1991, *Soviet Military Development: General Staff Planning in the 1990s*; and SOV 91-10012X [March 1991, *The Republic Challenge to Soviet Defense Policy and Planning*.

We begin our analysis by considering only the geographic distribution of military assets in the USSR as it stands today. We explore the options the General Staff might consider for relocating forces and replacing fixed facilities, but we do so without tying the breakup of the union and the formation of a new state to any other specific scenario. We consider the scope of transitional problems, but not the defense burden that a new government may be willing to shoulder. We do not attempt to size the potential destruction of military forces or facilities that could occur if the union's dissolution is accompanied by large-scale violence, the internal security implications of a breakup, or its effects on Soviet or republic threat perceptions.

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The Implications of a Breakup of the USSR: Defense Assets at Risk

Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 1 September 1991
was used in this report.*

In the aftermath of the failed August coup, republic independence declarations are forcing the center to evaluate the defense implications of a breakup of the union. Military planners most likely have already considered the effects of secession on those defense forces and facilities currently located in selected republics. To emulate such a General Staff analysis, we have considered three notional successor states to the USSR—one based on the nine-plus-one agreement signed by all but six republics, one drawn along Slavic lines, and one leaving the Russian Republic virtually on its own. Our analysis focuses on the military power that might remain, and does not consider the current turmoil or any future chaos that may accompany the breakup itself.

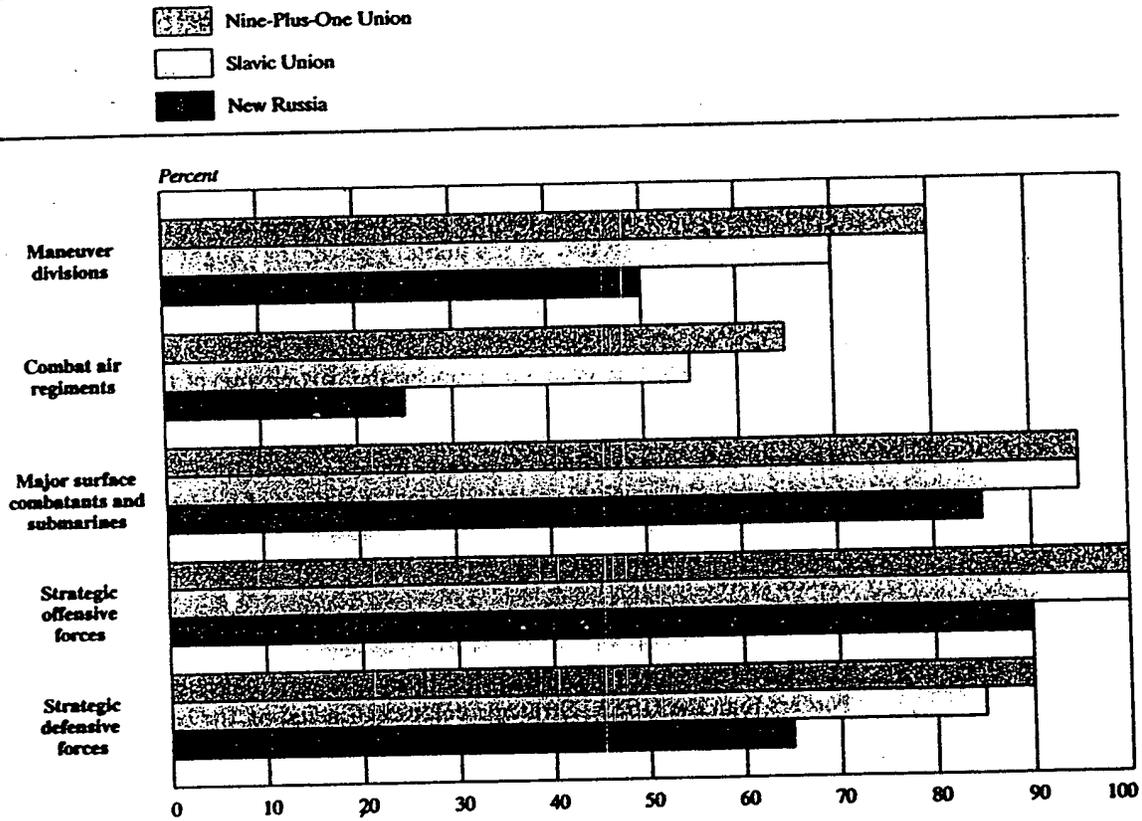
A new cooperative defense union among the participants of the nine-plus-one agreement would contain almost all of the USSR's current military forces and facilities (see figure 1). The most significant losses would be strategic defensive facilities, especially those in the Baltic region. The seceding republics contain relatively small amounts of Soviet ground, air, and naval forces, which would almost certainly be relocated; almost no final-assembly plants for weapons; and no strategic nuclear offensive forces.

A Slavic Union of the RSFSR, Ukraine, Belorussia, and northern Kazakhstan would remain fairly well off militarily and would have shorter land borders than the USSR. Strategic defenses—including the ballistic missile early warning radar network—would be weakened further, relative to those of the "Nine-Plus-One Union," and the space program would be severely hurt by the loss of facilities in Central Asia. Many ground and air force units are currently based outside this notional successor state, although the Slavic Union would have enough empty garrisons to accommodate all of the displaced ground forces it chose to relocate. The loss of production and research and development facilities could disrupt plans to modernize strategic offensive and defensive forces.

In General Staff assessments, an isolated RSFSR (New Russia) would find itself in a qualitatively weaker military position—primarily because it would lose Ukraine. A new Russian state would be much smaller in industry and population, its western land border would be longer, and Moscow would be much closer to the country's border. Many of the most modern ground and air units are now based outside of Russia, and facilities would

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Figure 1
Soviet Military: Assets Remaining Within
Three Notional Successor States



have to be built to accommodate the men and equipment in relocated units. Considerable strategic defenses, and even some strategic offensive forces, are now deployed outside the Russian Republic and would have to be moved. Several important facilities related to strategic offensive and defensive force modernization, and some for conventional force research and development, would be lost.

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The General Staff would probably combine relocating equipment, rebuilding fixed facilities, and negotiating basing rights in the former republics to preserve Soviet military power as much as possible. At the same time, it could recast defense requirements to bring them more into line with unavoidable reductions in capability. The Nine-Plus-One Union could probably muster much the same military capabilities as the current USSR, even if it chose to shun the other former republics. The Slavic Union might be able to do almost as well as the Nine-Plus-One Union, but cooperative agreements would have to play an important role in its security policy. New Russia would almost certainly find cooperative arrangements integral to reliable and affordable security.

Even a New Russia, however, would have devastating nuclear capabilities and the potential to marshal significant offensive conventional capabilities relative to its neighbors. How a New Russia would choose to develop that potential would be determined by its view of the evolving European political environment.

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The Implications of a Breakup of the USSR: Defense Assets at Risk (

Background

Soviet military planners currently face greater challenges than at any time in the postwar period. Even before the failed August coup, the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, the reunification of Germany, and force reductions in all services fundamentally weakened the Soviets' geostrategic position and redefined their national security problems. Meanwhile, pervasive domestic disarray called the very idea of long-term planning into question, and resources were becoming increasingly unreliable. Economic chaos was further undermining military budgets. Turmoil in the industrial sector promised a widening technology gap between the USSR and the West. Draft resistance and student exemptions resulted in fewer, poorer quality recruits. Widespread criticism of the military was sapping morale.

The failed August coup—by accelerating at least redefinition, but more likely fracturing, of the union—promises to hasten the decline in central military power. It presents the General Staff with immediate prospects of gaps developing in the center's defense posture. More fundamentally, it changes the political and economic foundation upon which defense posture is built and controlled.

The Staff's problems stem from the fact that its baseline force-building and operational plans are premised on the defense of the 15-republic union.¹ Decades of such planning have created a defense posture in which military forces and industry are deployed to ensure union security. Conventional forces and strategic defense forces are located around the union's periphery and concentrated most heavily in the western USSR. Strategic offensive forces and defense industry, by contrast, are located primarily within the Russian Republic, with special concentrations in the west. Adjusting that posture in response to the republics' demands creates a host of new problems for military planners. To assess the magnitude of possible

disruptions, we have investigated how the disposition of defense assets might be affected by a union breakup by examining three outcomes:

- A successor state to the USSR whose member republics correspond to the signatories of the nine-plus-one agreement. Six republics secede: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Moldova, and Armenia.
- A state in which the 12 non-Slavic republics leave the USSR. This successor state, the Slavic Union, corresponds to the present areas of the RSFSR, Ukraine, Belorussia, and the northern half of Kazakhstan, all of which have primarily Slavic populations.
- A USSR pared back to the Russian Republic. In this successor state, New Russia, the only other territory we have notionally assigned to the RSFSR is the Ukrainian Crimean Oblast.

Even before the failed coup, the General Staff undoubtedly was considering some of the military implications of a breakup. For example, [

] We do not know, however, how extensively the General Staff has planned for large-scale breakups such as we consider here.

We evaluate how the military could relocate forces, replace key facilities, and revise operational plans to be consistent with the changes in resources, threats, and deployments. The impact of secession on force modernization is assessed by examining which weapons final-assembly plants would lie outside a potential successor state. The loss of component plants could be just as disruptive, but [

] and do not consider them here. Of our three scenarios, none is likely to come to pass precisely as described. Collectively, however, they illustrate the probable range of variation in possible outcomes.

¹ See DI Intelligence Assessment SOV 91-1000: March 1991, *Soviet Military Development: General Staff Planning in the 1990s*.

The Nine-Plus-One Union

The Gorbachev administration had been trying to define the relationship among the republics in its attempt to reform the USSR. A step in this program was the signing on 23 April of an agreement between Gorbachev and leaders of nine republics: the RSFSR, Ukraine, Belorussia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkmeniya, and Kirghiziya. That agreement was to form the basis for a new draft union treaty, which would have bound all of these republics into a single entity.

The General Staff may look to the signatories of the nine-plus-one draft treaty as a plausible set of participants in a joint defense union. We assume in this scenario that the republics that signed the 23 April agreement remain willing to work together for a common defense. Republics not signatory to the 23 April agreement do not contribute to the new union's defense.

The boundaries of a Nine-Plus-One Union would enclose almost all of the USSR's physical and industrial resources (see figure 2). By Soviet estimates, in the year 2000 this area will have a population equal to that of the current USSR, assuming no net migration. The removal of the Baltic republics, Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia would leave the Nine-Plus-One Union with land borders significantly longer than those of the USSR. The border changes also would isolate Kaliningrad and part of Azerbaijan from the central mass of the union. The defense of these "islands" could be difficult or impossible in wartime.

Almost all of the USSR's military assets as they are now deployed would reside inside a Nine-Plus-One Union. Strategic defensive capabilities would be most affected by the loss of facilities and bases. Of the general purpose forces that would fall outside of the Nine-Plus-One Union, the majority are deployed in Eastern Europe and are currently slated to be moved back into the USSR over the next few years (see figure 3).

Strategic Forces

All of the USSR's current strategic offensive infrastructure—ICBM silos, mobile ICBM bases, heavy

bomber bases, and SSBN bases—would lie within the Nine-Plus-One Union's borders. These borders also would enclose all of the final-assembly plants for strategic offensive systems that we judge may be in production over the next decade.

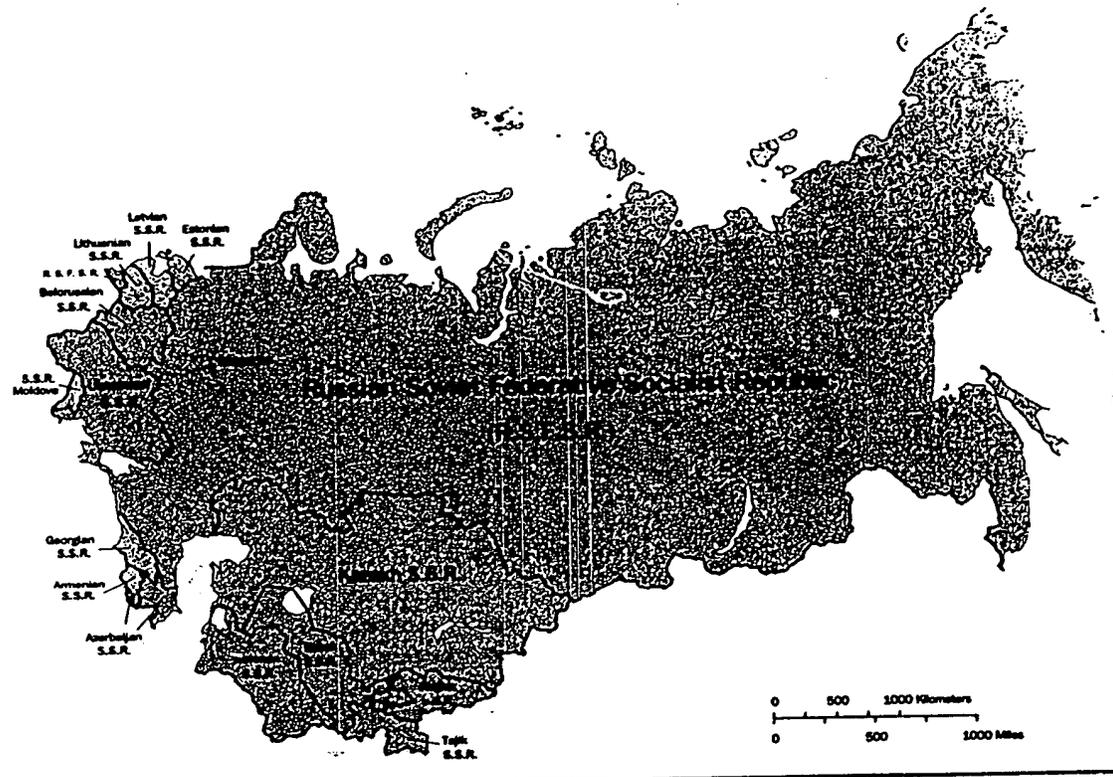
An important ballistic missile early warning (BMEW) radar site located at Skrunda (Latvia) would fall outside the Nine-Plus-One Union. The Skrunda radars cover ICBM and SLBM reentry vehicle (RV) approaches out over the Norwegian Sea. A replacement radar would be expensive and would take nearly eight years to build. The Union would retain, however, satellite-based early warning capability against US ICBMs, and neighboring radars in the Union would cover some of the potential ballistic missile flight-paths from the north and west. We judge that, by the late 1990s, satellite-based warning could provide global coverage.

About one-tenth of Soviet air defense interceptor regiments, SAM battalions, and aircraft warning radar units would lie outside the borders of the Nine-Plus-One Union. Territorial losses could produce gaps in the Soviet air defense network that would reduce the space and time available for defenders to detect, track, and engage attacking aircraft. The loss of bases in the Baltic republics would probably be the most problematic, because the Soviet General Staff probably anticipates that US strike aircraft, cruise missiles, and SLBMs and NATO tactical aircraft would overfly this region in an attack.² Defensive forces based in

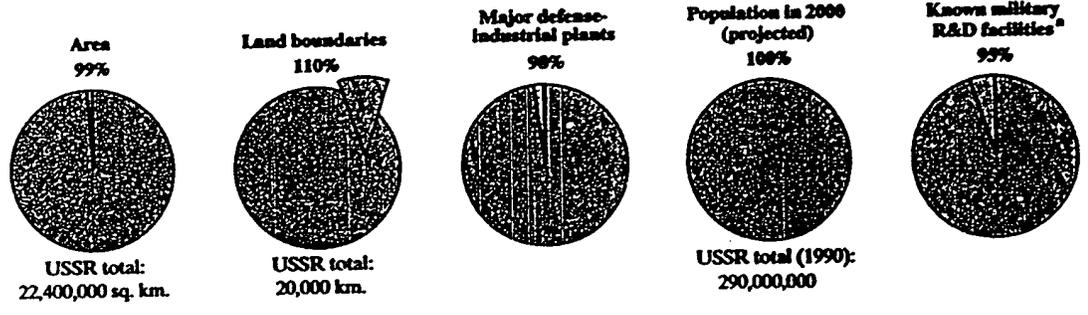
² For a

Figure 2
Nine-Plus-One Union

The United States Government has not recognized the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Other boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



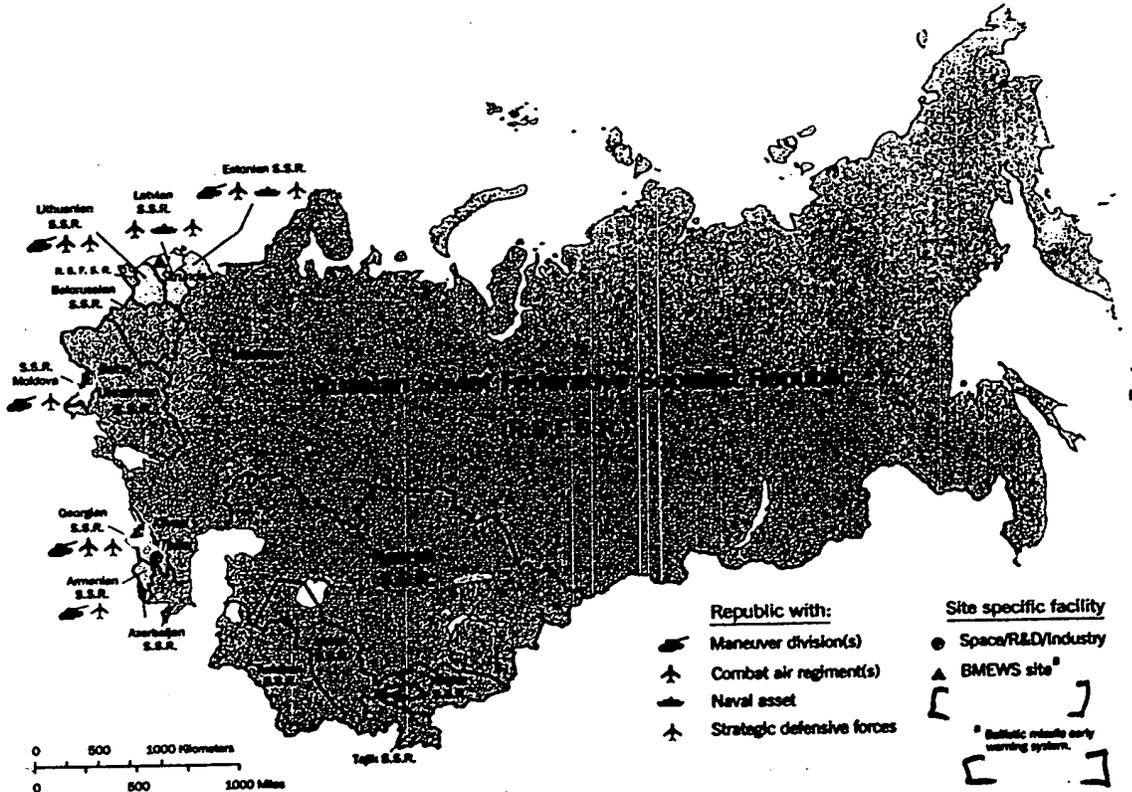
Areal, Economic, and Population Data for the Nine-Plus-One Union



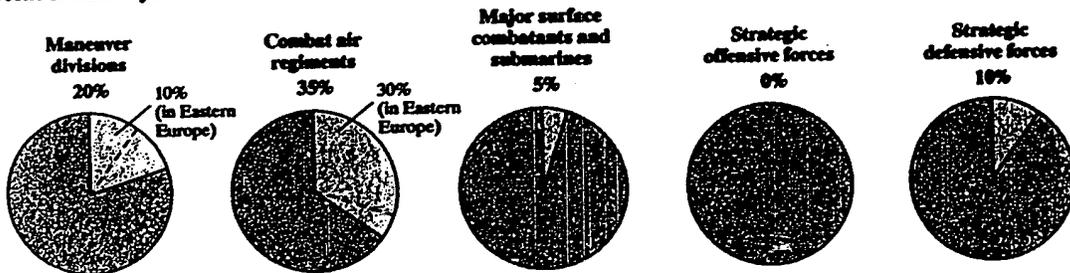
^a Research institutes, design bureaus, and test centers.

Figure 3
Military Assets Outside the Nine-Plus-One Union

The Central Intelligence Agency has not assigned the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Other boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.



Percent of Military Assets Outside the Nine-Plus-One Union



Georgia, Armenia, and Moldova cover approaches from the southwest and from countries like Romania, Turkey, and Iran. The effects of being unable to site forces in those places could be reduced, however, at the cost of providing new bases in the RSFSR for SAMs and fighters. Strategic air defenses also could be supplemented by relocated ground force air defense systems.

General Purpose Ground, Air, and Naval Forces

The remaining Soviet Ground and Air Forces in Eastern Europe, already slated for withdrawal, constitute most of those forces that would fall outside the Nine-Plus-One Union. Including the forces in Eastern Europe, about one-fifth of current Ground Forces and over one-third of the current air force combat strength (light and medium bomber, fighter, fighter-bomber, and ground attack regiments) would be based outside Union borders. The units that are based within the current USSR but would be outside the Nine-Plus-One Union are roughly 10 maneuver divisions and eight assorted air regiments spread evenly throughout the Baltic republics, Georgia, Armenia, and Moldova.

Soviet naval forces would be less affected by resubordination to a Nine-Plus-One Union. The two largest fleets—the Northern and Pacific—are based in Russian ports. The Black Sea Fleet is based in the RSFSR and Ukraine. A large number of Baltic Fleet surface combatants, submarines, auxiliaries, and repair and storage facilities are, however, located in the Baltic republics, as is a major submarine crew training facility at Paldiski, Estonia. The ships and submarines could be split between ports in Leningrad and Kaliningrad, although additional support facilities would have to be built for this. Operationally, the Soviet Navy would worry that forces in the Leningrad area could be bottled up in the Gulf of Finland, that naval forces based in Kaliningrad would be placed in an exposed and vulnerable position, and that the loss of airfields in the Baltic region would hamper naval air operations there.

Almost all Soviet defense industry is located within the postulated Nine-Plus-One Union. The major final-assembly plant that would be outside is an aircraft plant in Tbilisi (Georgia)

The Slavic Union

The image of a Slavic Union appeals to many Russians. A Slavic Union would retain approximately 85 percent of the USSR's current territory and industrial capability (see figure 4). Eighty percent or more of the USSR's energy resources also would fall inside the Union's borders. By the year 2000, this area will have a population equal to about 80 percent of the current USSR.

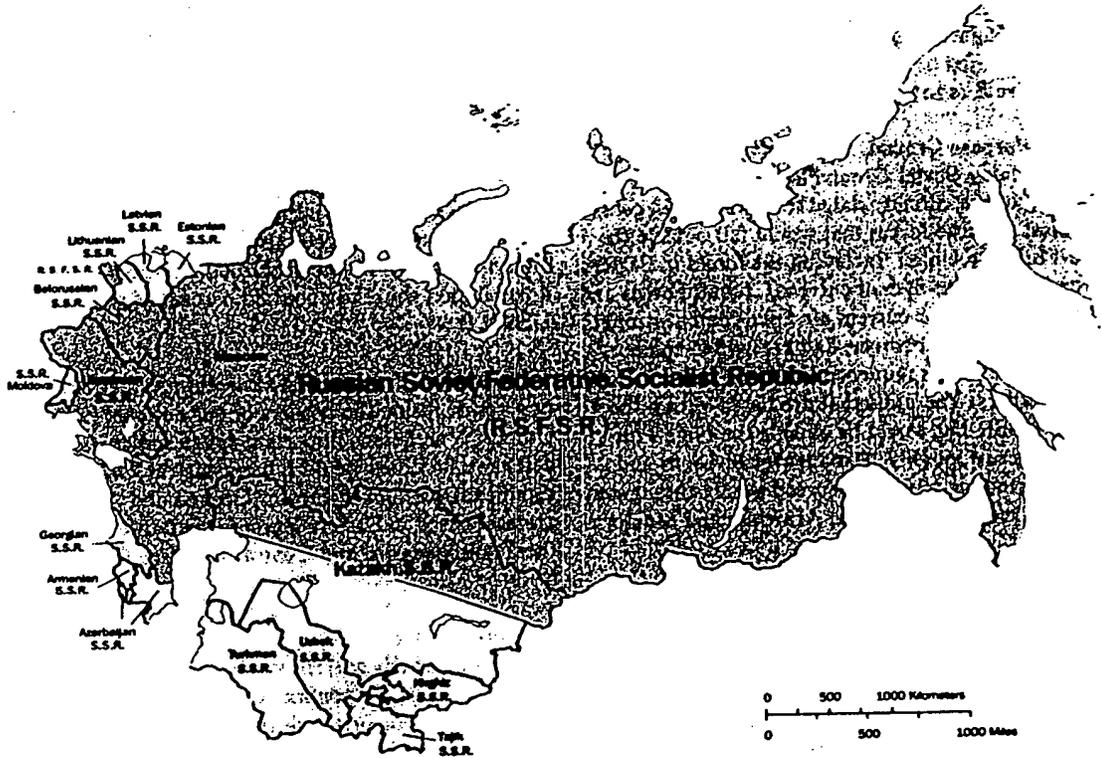
The majority of the USSR's current military assets now reside inside the borders of our notional Slavic Union. Nonetheless, important space and strategic defensive facilities would fall outside the Union, and significant portions of theater Ground and Air Forces are now based in Eastern Europe, the Baltic republics, the Transcaucasus, and Central Asia (see figure 5).

Strategic Forces

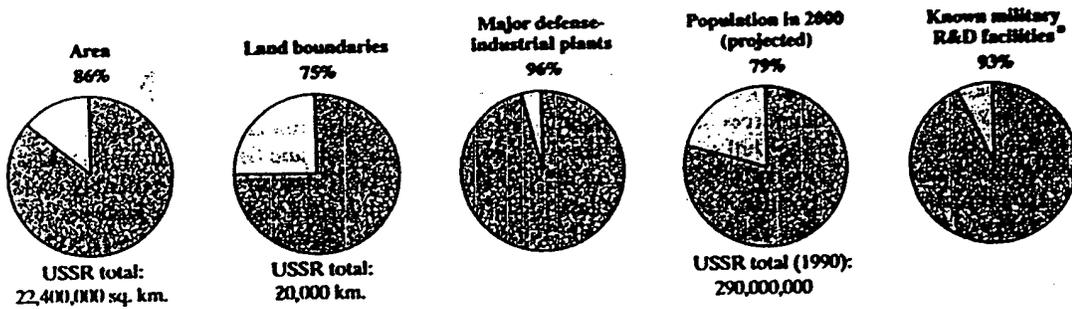
All of the USSR's current strategic offensive forces would lie within the confines of the Slavic Union. But some facilities important to the modernization of these forces would lie outside of its borders:

Figure 4
The Slavic Union

The United States Government has not recognized the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Other boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



Areal, Economic, and Population Data for the Slavic Union



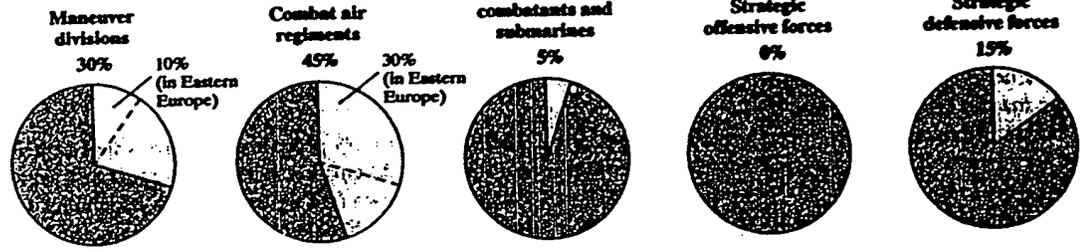
* Research institutes, design bureaus, and test centers.

Figure 5
Military Assets Outside the Slavic Union

The United States Government has not designated the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Other boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



Percent of Military Assets Outside the Slavic Union



As compared with the Nine-Plus-One Union, two additional ballistic missile early warning sites would lie outside the Slavic Union. These sites, located at Lyaki (Azerbaijan) and Saryshagan (Kazakhstan), cover ICBM and SLBM RV approaches over the Indian Ocean and western China. This widespread loss of warning capability against SLBMs could lead to changes in strategic force operations.

About one-seventh of Soviet air defense interceptors, SAMs, and aircraft warning radars are now based outside the borders of the notional Slavic Union. The loss of these bases would increase the vulnerability of attack from the south. Coverage against shorter range aircraft, such as from Western Europe and China, would be less affected, but the General Staff would expect any attackers to exploit these gaps.

A major strategic defense training and RDT&E facility, at Saryshagan, also would fall outside the Slavic Union.

Re-creating the infrastructure built up during decades of testing at Saryshagan would at best be difficult and extremely expensive and would take many years.

The world's largest spaceport (Tyuratam), as well as several space tracking facilities and operations areas, also lie in southern Kazakhstan—these include recovery areas, for cosmonauts and reconnaissance satellite film capsules. Tyuratam supports:

- All geosynchronous launches—this capability supports early warning, navigation, and military and civil communications satellites.
- All semisynchronous geopositioning satellites.
- The Energiya heavy-lift launch vehicle, the modified Energiya-M, and the Shuttle orbiter.
- The manned space program.
- Planetary exploration and deep-space launches.
- Military reconnaissance, surveillance, and antisatellite (ASAT) programs.

Many of the facilities, such as those for the manned space program and Shuttle orbiter.

Launches are unique to Tyuratam. These could, in theory, be relocated at enormous

expense; however, relocation could compromise the Soviets' ability to launch satellites into some orbits.

General Purpose Ground, Air, and Naval Forces

Significant numbers of ground and air units are currently based in Eastern Europe or within the USSR but outside the borders of our notional Slavic Union. This pool of forces represents about 30 percent of current forces—many of them of the most modern types. These divisions, one-third of which are units to be withdrawn from Eastern Europe, could be based at currently existing ground force garrisons in the postulated Slavic Union.

Approximately 40 combat air regiments currently are based outside the notional Slavic Union. New and expensive runways, hangars, and towers would have to be built or existing ones upgraded to ensure the units' mission capabilities at their new locations. The ground-based maintenance and weapons handling infrastructure of these units would also have to be moved.

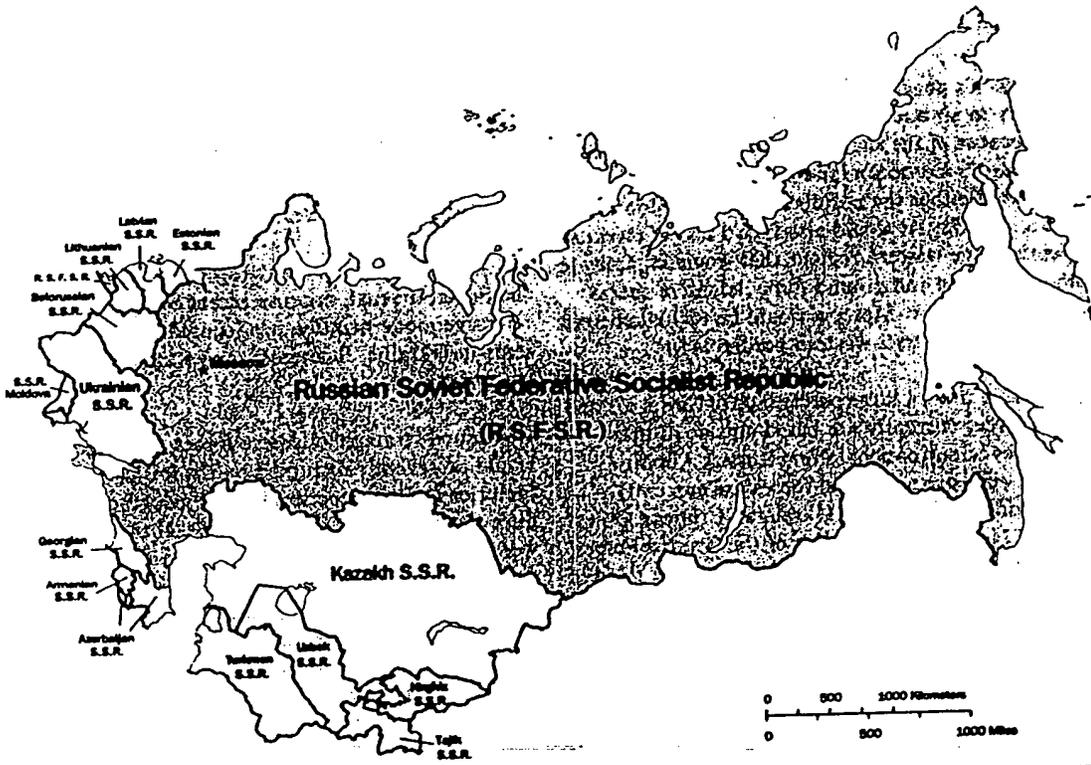
A Slavic navy would face the loss of facilities associated with the Caspian Sea Flotilla. This small naval detachment has no large surface combatants but contains a number of large amphibious vessels. A produces significant numbers of naval torpedoes, although this production could probably be taken up at factories within the RSFSR.

A New Russia

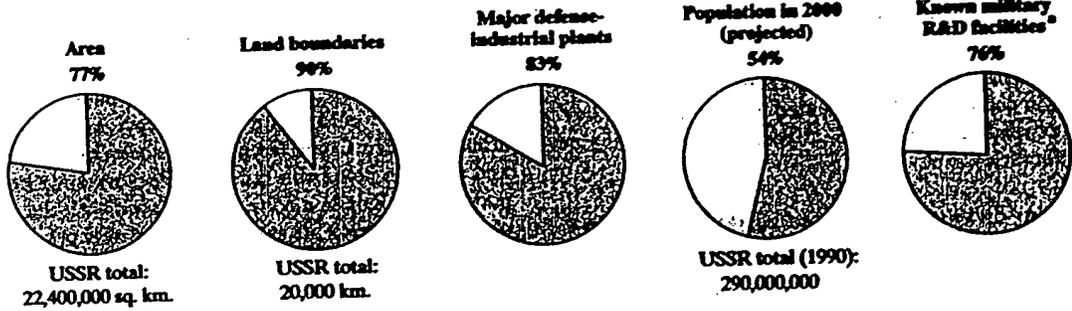
The Soviet military probably recognizes that centrifugal forces could entirely shatter the union and leave Russia on its own (see figure 6). With its smaller resource base, a Russia that chose to maintain forces roughly as capable as those of the current USSR would face a staggering military burden. Russia has

Figure 6
New Russia

The United States Government has not designated the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Other boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.



Areal, Economic, and Population Data for New Russia



^a Research institutes, design bureaus, and test centers.

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nearly 85 percent of major Soviet defense production facilities, but accounts for much less of the USSR's overall industrial output. It is, however, self-sufficient in all major energy resources. Russia in 2000 is projected to have about half the people the USSR has now.¹

New Russia's geography would contribute to its vulnerability to air and ground attacks, especially in the west. Because of the shape of the European landmass, New Russia's European land border would be longer than that of either the postulated Slavic Union or of the USSR today. It would also face a loss of territorial depth in the western regions that would complicate both air defense and ground force defensive operations. In particular, Moscow would be 650 kilometers closer to the country's western border.¹

At the same time, a large percentage of Soviet air and ground forces currently are based outside of the boundaries of our notional New Russia. Almost all strategic offensive and naval forces are currently based inside (assuming the Ukrainian Crimean Oblast is part of New Russia), but half of the Ground Forces, three-fourths of the theater Air Forces, and a third of strategic air defenses are located in Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Belorussia, and other republics outside of New Russia (see figure 7).

Strategic Forces

A small but significant portion of the strategic offensive forces is currently based outside the confines of the postulated New Russia:

- Three divisions of SS-25 mobile ICBMs are in Belorussia. One division could be accommodated at a former SS-20 facility at Drovyanaya. Other SS-25s could be accommodated at some expense by expanding existing SS-25 bases, or by building new facilities.
- Four divisions of silo-based ICBMs fall outside—two divisions equipped with SS-19 and SS-24 ICBMs are in Ukraine and two SS-18 ICBM

¹ This population would support about a 2-million-man armed force, using the same conscript structure as the current army. Shifting to a volunteer professional army could leave New Russia with substantially smaller armed forces.¹

divisions are in Kazakhstan. The Soviets probably plan to deactivate some of these SS-18 and SS-19 ICBMs under START. The rest of the missiles could be moved into existing silos within Russia.

- Four heavy bomber regiments are based in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Maintaining the bombers' mission availability while requiring them to operate from new bases would call for significant modifications to the heavy bomber infrastructure, activity that could include expensive new construction and upgrading of runways and nuclear weapons storage facilities.

These systems are in many cases the most modern in the Soviet arsenal, because recent Soviet strategic offensive modernization has focused heavily on systems in Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan.

Continued strategic offensive forces modernization would be severely disrupted by the loss of Ukrainian factories in Dnepropetrovsk and Pavlograd that produce the SS-18 and SS-24 ICBMs. If these facilities were lost today, the losses could delay (for at least five years) modernization of the SS-18, SS-24 [

] or disrupt these programs entirely.

The Russians could compensate temporarily by keeping some older systems, such as the SS-19 or SS-18 Mod 4, in their inventory to keep force levels from declining. The Semipalatinsk Nuclear Weapons Test Center (Kazakhstan) would lie outside New Russia, but the Soviets say they are planning to transfer nuclear testing away from Semipalatinsk entirely to Novaya Zemlya in the RSFSR.

The majority of ballistic missile early warning radars and many satellite control facilities lie outside Russia. New Russia would retain BMEW coverage only across Eastern China from the Mishelevka radars, and over the pole from radars at Pechora and Olenegorsk. New Russia also would be faced with the loss of about a third of its satellite control network and would quickly have to make significant changes to preserve effective satellite control []

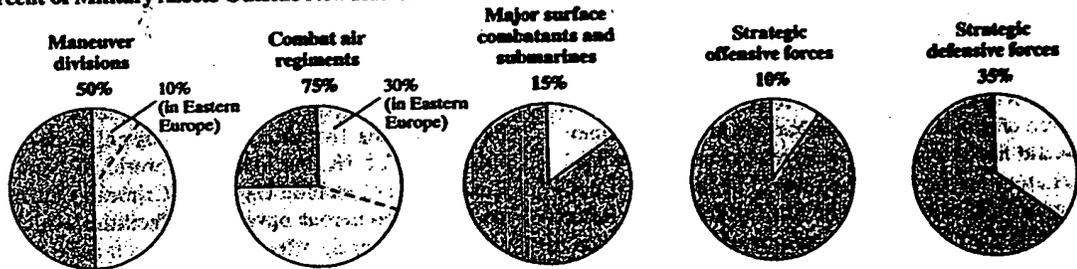
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Figure 7
Military Assets Outside New Russia

The United States Government has not recognized the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the Soviet Union. Other boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



Percent of Military Assets Outside New Russia



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Over one-third of current air defense interceptor regiments, SAM battalions, and radar units are based outside New Russia. Furthermore, strategic defensive modernization plans would be affected, because factories in Kiev that produce SA-10 SAMs and air-to-air missiles (AAM) would fall outside New Russia.

If the Russians chose to replace these facilities, it would prove very expensive.

General Purpose Ground, Air, and Naval Forces
Roughly 50 percent of Soviet Ground Forces are currently deployed outside the boundaries of the notional New Russia. Without access to the Ground Forces infrastructure built up within Ukraine and Belorussia, New Russia would have to build new facilities or expand existing ones to house relocated men and equipment.

About three-fourths of the current Soviet Air Forces combat strength lies outside New Russia. Large amounts of airfield construction or modification would be necessary to accommodate these units within New Russia. In addition, about one-fourth of the current pilot training infrastructure lies outside Russia.

As in the Slavic Union scenario, naval forces of a New Russia that included the Ukrainian Crimean Peninsula would be largely unaffected. However, if Crimea, home to the Black Sea Fleet, were not incorporated in New Russia, about another 10 percent of the current force of major surface combatants and submarines would have to relocate. Any relocation to Russian territory on the Black Sea would be difficult, if not impossible, because of a lack of suitable ports. Relocation to other fleet areas would require construction of new support facilities at already crowded naval bases. The loss of the Crimean naval bases and shipyards probably would mean that the Black Sea Fleet would be greatly reduced in size, and it would shift its focus to a greater extent onto coastal defense operations.

Military shipyards at Nikolayev and Kiev in Ukraine would not be part of New Russia. These yards currently produce frigates, major surface combatants, and naval auxiliaries and also provide valuable repair space for large ships. If New Russia intended to pursue naval missions requiring large ships, the loss of construction and repair capacity could be significant. The Soviets already have indicated, however, that Nikolayev Yard 445 and the Kiev yard are to be transferred to exclusively civilian production, and that carrier production will cease after the current carriers are finished.

Near-term ground and air force modernization efforts would not necessarily be threatened by this breakup, because the final-assembly plants supporting the ground and air force modernization lie primarily in Russia. Some disruptions of production will almost certainly accompany the breakup of the union, but these might be limited by consolidating already produced equipment (much of it moved in from outside New Russia) into a smaller force. The most significant loss would be factories in Khar'kov (Ukraine) and Minsk (Belorussia) that produce tanks, APCs, and artillery. Given the recent downturn in production of these systems, however, New Russia could make up for these losses by expanding output at existing plants located within the RSFSR.

Longer-term modernization would be hampered by the loss of a number of major RDT&E facilities. Emba MTC, in northern Kazakhstan, is an important development center for mobile tactical SAMs. The Vladimirovka Weapons Test Range (part of which lies in Kazakhstan) is the primary Soviet center for integration testing of aircraft-carried weapons. A major supplier of military optical devices, BELOMO, is located in Belorussia. Ukraine is home to the Ye. Paton Welding Institute, a technological leader not only in the USSR, but also in the world.

The table on page 13 summarizes the assets at risk for our three notional states.

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Cumulative Assets Outside Our Notional Successor States

	Assets Currently Outside the Nine-Plus-One Union	Additional Assets Currently Outside the Slavic Union	Additional Assets Currently Outside New Russia
Strategic Offensive Forces	None	None	3 mobile ICBM divisions 4 silo-based ICBM divisions 4 heavy bomber regiments
Strategic Defensive Forces	120 SAM battalions 5 fighter regiments 10 radar brigades/regiments 1 BMEW site	60 SAM battalions 10 fighter regiments 20 radar brigades/regiments 5 miscellaneous other aircraft regiments 2 BMEW sites	210 SAM battalions 10 fighter regiments 10 radar brigades/regiments miscellaneous other aircraft regiments 3 BMEW sites
Ground Forces	25 maneuver divisions (tank, motorized rifle, machinegun, artillery, and airborne) 1 other division (artillery, AAA, rear security, or coastal defense) 10 district training centers, armament and equipment storage bases, and equipment storage bases	15 maneuver divisions 5 other divisions	25 maneuver divisions 10 other divisions 40 district training centers, armament and equipment storage bases, and equipment storage bases
Air Forces	30 strike, fighter, and bomber regiments 15 miscellaneous other aircraft regiments	10 strike, fighter, and bomber regiments 10 miscellaneous other aircraft regiments	30 strike, fighter, and bomber regiments 40 miscellaneous other aircraft regiments
Naval Forces	40 major surface combatants and attack submarines 3 miscellaneous naval aircraft regiments	Caspian Sea Flotilla	50 major surface combatants and attack submarines 15 miscellaneous naval aircraft regiments
Nuclear weapon storage sites	20 sites	10 sites	65 sites
Space	None	Saryshagan Missile Test Center Tyuratam Missile and Space Test Center Numerous tracking facilities	None
Defense Industry/R&D	Tbilisi	Taboshar Solid Motor Production Plant Tashkent (Il-76, Il-78, A-50 aircraft)	Dnepropetrovsk (SS-18 ICBM) Pavlograd (SS-24 ICBM), Kiev Nikolayev Shipyards Kiev Shipyards Emba Missile Test Center Semipalatinsk Nuclear Weapons Test Center Vladimirovka Weapons Test Range Khar'kov (tanks, armored vehicles, artillery) Minsk (artillery)

Relocation and CFE Limits

CFE ceilings on Ground, Air, and Air Defense Forces equipment would allow the USSR to withdraw forces into its interior in anticipation of a breakup. How CFE limits would apply to a successor state would depend on negotiations among the seceding republics, or the successor and current CFE signatories. Equipment destruction requirements would also have to be satisfied. (

CFE ceilings are structured to limit the amounts of ready forces around the USSR's periphery, but would not significantly hamper the relocation of forces into its interior. The CFE ceilings apply only to the defined ATTU zone, so a successor state willing to bear the costs could relocate forces to areas east of the Urals. Within the ATTU zone, special restrictions limit active and stored equipment around Leningrad, in the non-Russian republics, and in the Russian Caucasus. Because CFE zonal and subzonal boundaries overlap current republic borders, newly independent republics would have to strike deals to divide up forces without violating CFE limits.

If secession from the union was orderly and newly independent republics wanted to become participants in the CFE Treaty, the republics, the center, and other CFE nations probably could find ways to

overcome implementation problems—possibly by modifying the agreement to expand participation. The Baltic republics, for example, have agreed that they would sign the CFE Treaty once their independent status was assured. Because CFE was negotiated between the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances, the forces of a newly independent Ukraine, Belorussia, Transcaucasion, or Baltic state would count against the Warsaw Pact's holdings. Within alliance ceilings, national forces were established by negotiations within the alliances. It is unlikely that the countries of the former Warsaw Pact would reduce their forces in order to accommodate those of a new state, since the Warsaw Pact no longer exists.

If critical differences erupt between the republics and the center over equipment allotment or over destruction and inspection responsibilities, however, or if the union dissolves into separate republics with little interest in fulfilling previously signed agreements, the CFE Treaty could be rendered irrelevant or invalid. For example, at an extreme, a post-Soviet state might argue that the forces in independent republics would disrupt the force balance in Europe so much that new limits would have to be negotiated to take them into account, or else abandon the Treaty.

General Staff Options for Coping With a Breakup

The Soviet General Staff probably would assess the feasibility of retaining as much of its current combat strength as possible within a successor's borders.

There are three approaches to preserving the military forces and facilities threatened by secession:

- Relocate forces to storage or (new) operational bases.
- Build new facilities and weapons to replace any left behind.
- Negotiate to maintain forces and installations in newly independent republics.

The General Staff would probably also reexamine defense requirements and tailor them to reflect the changed military situation and reduced resources.

Relocating Assets

The General Staff could relocate units from seceding republics or put their equipment into storage. It is already moving equipment to meet anticipated CFE limits (see inset). Either approach would require different levels and types of resources. To relocate units, supporting facilities must be found or built. For example, the Air Forces would need runways, hangars or bunkers, weapon storage facilities, and air traffic control systems; the Ground Forces would need maintenance facilities, ammunition storage, and training areas. Ideally, personnel would require quarters and medical and recreational facilities, but these are already

inadequate to meet the needs of troops being withdrawn from Eastern Europe.]

New Russia could by far face the largest task in relocating ground and air units. Much of the forces the Nine-Plus-One Union might need to move are in Eastern Europe, already slated to be moved. For the Slavic Union, the completion of the East European withdrawals will leave a significant amount of forces still to be relocated from former Soviet republics. For New Russia, the forces slated for withdrawal from Eastern Europe are only about one-sixth of all the ground and air forces that would have to be moved. New Russia also would face the largest requirements to build new accommodations for relocated air and ground forces. Depending on the course of the break-up, New Russia might even end up moving some units twice—the Ukrainian President, for example, said before the failed coup that Ukraine would receive half the troops removed from Eastern Europe.

All three notional successor states would have to move significant amounts of strategic defensive forces. New Russia would once again face the largest burden. To re-create along its new border the same kind of dense, overlapping air defense barrier the USSR now deploys in the west, a successor state would require substantial new site construction for forces that are moved. Such a shift would require years to complete and could not compensate for the loss of defensive depth. Alternatively, assets from the republics could be redeployed only at existing defensive sites. This cheaper but less effective option would limit defenses to key military, industrial, and political targets and abandon barrier defenses.

New Russia is the only case in which secession poses questions about strategic offensive force control. The current pattern of strategic deployments still involves modernization at many units outside the RSFSR. Some Soviets nevertheless have discussed over the past year the desirability of shifting all strategic offensive forces into the RSFSR, in part to move

Relocating Defense Industry

For most of the large, fixed assets at risk, such as C³ sites, BMEWS radars, space launch sites, and some industrial/R&D facilities, relocating the facility is essentially the same as building it elsewhere. Other defense facilities, however, may have only small amounts of unique instrumentation or tooling. In those cases, the research, design, or production expertise of the staff may be the most important asset to be relocated

When major defense-industrial plants are considered, there appears to be sufficient redundant capacity to make up for the few general purpose weapons final-assembly plants that would be lost to the center, even in the New Russia case. The industrial base supporting strategic modernization is smaller and would be seriously compromised in the New Russia scenario. The final-assembly plants for ICBMs in Ukraine are unique assets, and

] Relocating their personnel and equipment to newly constructed quarters would significantly disrupt production capability.

forces out of areas of ethnic unrest or regions where conventional defensive operations could take place.

Rebuilding Assets

A post-Soviet state might decide to rely on new production and construction rather than relocating some critical defense facilities and weapons. Military facilities such as large radars and test ranges are not easily moved and might have to be rebuilt within new borders (see inset). A successor state might not relocate all weaponry from seceding republics—it might leave, trade, or lose control over some weapons to newly independent governments. The General Staff might wish to produce new equipment to replace what it could not retrieve.

Reproducing Forces

The table below compares the total number of various weapons that would be left outside our notional post-USSR states with the USSR's 1990 weapons production. Air defense interceptors are included in combat aircraft. "Military aircraft" includes training support, transport, and reconnaissance aircraft. (S NF)

	Estimated USSR 1990 Production	Number Outside		
		Nine-Plus-One Union	Slavic Union	New Russia
Tanks	1,300	9,000	20,000	30,000
APCs/IFVs	4,100	9,000	20,000	30,000
Artillery	1,900	6,000	10,000	20,000
Combat aircraft	600	1,200	1,800	3,100
Military aircraft (all types)	850	2,100	3,500	7,500
Strategic SAM battalions	35	130	200	430

Considering only the location of final-assembly plants, the USSR's 1990 production is a reasonable surrogate for amounts the Nine-Plus-One Union and the Slavic Union could produce. New Russia, on the other hand, would probably be hard pressed to match these rates.

The Nine-Plus-One Union would have to rebuild only a few large, important facilities—one BMEW radar site and two C³ facilities. The former is probably the most significant. Although the Soviets undoubtedly would approach the prospect of a temporary gap in ballistic missile early warning with great apprehension, a replacement radar located farther inland than Skrunda would improve the quality of impact prediction estimates, Moscow ABM battle management performance, and attack assessment capabilities. The Slavic Union would lose two additional BMEW radar sites and facilities such as Saryshagan and Tyuratam. The geosynchronous launch capability from Tyuratam could not be rebuilt within the Slavic Union's borders without a penalty in maximum payload. [

New Russia, with its smaller resource base, would have to replace three additional BMEW radar sites as well as a number of weapons test ranges. Equivalent BMEWS coverage might be established with fewer radars. The selection of new sites for these facilities would be complicated by the RSFSR's weather and geography. Many test and R&D facilities were built in the southern USSR to take advantage of its generally clear weather as well as its isolation. There are fewer suitable sites within the RSFSR. And given the generally noxious, if not toxic, nature of the activities at such sites, their relocation could run afoul of the growing environmental activism in the USSR.

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The numbers and types of equipment based outside the notional successor states suggest that rebuilding forces is not a reasonable solution to the overall problems caused by a breakup (see inset on page 16). The amounts of materiel that could potentially be lost generally represent many years' production at 1990 rates. The Nine-Plus-One Union and the Slavic Union might muster higher production rates, but New Russia, with its smaller conventional and strategic production capabilities, probably could not make wide use of this option. The continuing downward economic pressures on weapons procurement, however, make it unlikely that any successor state would rely more heavily on reproducing forces than on relocating them.

Negotiating Access

A successor state's political leaders could alleviate some of the pressures on the defense establishment by negotiating access to critical assets. Such an approach could obviate the need to rebuild expensive facilities and move some forces.⁴ If, however, the processes of separation are violent or largely out of the center's control, a successor state might be reluctant to leave equipment behind and most likely would rely on unilateral strength for its security. In addition, a successor state simply might not be willing to pay the costs of retaining access to lost facilities.

Strategic facilities outside of successor states are probably the most critical. Access to the BMEW radar sites alone would be significant. Maintaining access to air warning data from the excluded republics would be a big boost to air defense performance for the Slavic Union or New Russia. Access to space launch and R&D facilities in the south would be critical to maintaining superpower attributes such as a manned space program and high-technology weapons research. For New Russia, the fate of the strategic offensive and defensive systems and their production facilities would be of key interest. Negotiating status-of-forces agreements, especially for ground troops and air force regiments now in place, could

⁴ For evidence



reduce the relocation effort and, especially for a New Russia, potentially increase the defensive depth. (S NF)

Many republics would most likely view large military presences as politically or ecologically unpalatable. Although some fixed facilities like factories, C³ facilities, and radars might be less threatening than forces, even radar stations and airfields have been a focus for popular opposition in the USSR. Antinuclear sentiments and nationalism will certainly be a factor in negotiations of status-of-forces agreements. But republics may find it useful even to achieve some temporary agreement as a way to extract other concessions from the center. The Kazakh Republic government, for example, negotiated with the USSR central government—before the failed coup—over the use of Tyuratam.

Revising Requirements

The center's reassessment of its security policy could suggest ways to make better uses of the residual equipment left to a successor state. A lowering of mission requirements that would decrease the amounts of general purpose equipment needed would be consistent with the recent trends in Soviet thinking toward a defensive posture and Moscow's concurrence with weapons ceilings established in the CFE Treaty. Some possibilities might be:

- The significant losses of strategic defensive deployment areas, even in the Nine-Plus-One Union, and the cost of rebuilding air defense capabilities could place the traditional mission of the Air Defense Forces under greater scrutiny. This could lead to a change in mission away from comprehensive strategic defense against nuclear attack and toward early warning and a more limited defense against conventional threats.
- Strategic offensive forces in all of the successor states continue to play a prominent role in defense planning. Budget debates on the relative roles of strategic and general purpose forces could lead to greater reliance on strategic forces and further reductions in standing conventional capabilities.

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Implications

Even if a post-USSR state is denied access to resources outside its borders, the distribution of the defense infrastructure shields some military capabilities from the effects of a breakup. Strategic offensive forces stand out in this regard because they are already concentrated largely in the RSFSR. Even New Russia might muster force levels at or near those we currently project for the USSR as a whole—the detailed force mix could be different, especially in regard to bombers, but New Russia would wield devastating nuclear capabilities. Only a breakup of the RSFSR itself would threaten these capabilities.

With or without breakup, the changes that have already taken place in Eastern Europe and compliance with CFE will leave the USSR or a successor state with significantly smaller conventional forces than the USSR had in the mid-1980s. These smaller forces would require substantial mobilization before they could execute large-scale offensive or counteroffensive operations. The losses the Nine-Plus-One Union suffers from secession would further erode its immediately available capabilities for offensive and counteroffensive operations. The Slavic Union does not appear to face any insurmountable structural deficiencies to maintaining strong conventional defensive capabilities. Force relocation could be very costly for New Russia, which would also lose facilities key to near-term modernization and RDT&E. These losses would most likely weaken New Russia's large-scale conventional defensive capabilities.

Strategic defensive capabilities, in contrast, would be significantly compromised even in the Nine-Plus-One Union. The detrimental effects of losing bases in the Baltic region and the southwest could be fully negated only if Soviet forces acquired basing rights on the same scale they enjoy today. Strategic defensive modernization capabilities would be progressively weakened by secession, and New Russia ultimately could lose access to vital factories. This suggests that the role of strategic defenses could be called into question in a post-USSR state.

From the Soviet General Staff's perspective, retaining Ukraine probably is the key to maintaining military potential. The Nine-Plus-One Union and Slavic

Union both would incorporate much of the USSR's present military capability. The Nine-Plus-One Union could probably continue much like the USSR, even if it severed ties to its former republics. It would face an uphill battle to shoulder unilaterally the burden of replacing the lost fixed facilities while relocating currently deployed ground, air, and strategic defensive forces within its borders. The Slavic Union would have larger problems than the Nine-Plus-One Union, but these, too, appear amenable to a creative mix of relocating forces, rebuilding facilities, and negotiating access to key facilities. The willingness to support high force levels will be determined by the political perceptions of the foreign threat and the economic and social pains that large forces entail, in addition to the costs connected with the breakup of the union.

Russia alone, if it remained committed to maintaining forces to meet the threat of a massed conventional attack from the West or to multiple theater defensive operations, would be in a position the General Staff would view with some alarm. New Russia would inherit the strategic nuclear capabilities of a superpower, but strategic force modernization plans could be sharply affected by the loss of Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan. Conventional force modernization does not appear to be as threatened, but standing conventional forces and capabilities could be severely compromised. The Russian military's concern would be heightened by New Russia's longer European land border and decreased depth. The relocation of strategic defensive, ground, and air forces while rebuilding lost facilities would place a staggering burden on a shrunken and distorted economy wracked by the social turmoil of secession.

Negotiating long-term access to critical military assets outside of the RSFSR would be valuable but possibly difficult for New Russia. It would have to deal with new actors on its borders—including Ukrainian or Belorussian states, for example. Access to facilities in the former republics would be least likely if New Russia emerged from a violent devolution of power to the republics.

A New Russia would probably find that the best path of its security would be in cooperative arrangements along lines that had been already sketched out by the

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Gorbachev regime. Even New Russia, however, could field a formidable military force. Its strategic forces could still wreak devastation against any country. It would still be conventionally superior to any of its neighbors, except China, and could still project diminished but still potent offensive military power beyond its borders. /

In sum, even a Russia without Ukraine and the other republics would retain the potential of a major military power. The way in which Russia's military potential would be developed and used in the world would depend mainly on the political system established in the country and the newly existent international constellation that the Soviet republics' transition will have helped to shape.