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BRIEFING TO FOCUS ON SERIOUS CHALLENGES FACING UKRAINE

Friday, May 20, 1994

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Washington, DC

The briefing was held, pursuant to notice, in room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, at 10 a.m., David Evans, Senior Advisor, moderating.

Present: David Evans, Senior Advisor, Moderator.

Also present: Irina Isakova and Adrian Karatnycky.

Moderator **Evans.** I think we're all here now, and I'd like to get started. On behalf of our Chairman, Senator Dennis DeConcini, and our Co-Chairman, Congressman Steny Hoyer, I'd like to welcome you on behalf of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Commission, to this briefing on Ukraine. My name is David Evans, Senior Advisor to the Commission, and I will serve as the moderator of this briefing.

What we will look at today is a very important and increasingly timely subject: Ukraine and the serious economic, political, and regional challenges it faces.

The Helsinki Commission, as many of you probably know, was established in 1976 to monitor and encourage the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and subsequent CSCE commitments.

The Commission has had a longstanding interest, as you also know, in Ukraine. We have conducted a number of visits there, congressional visits, staff visits, held numerous hearings. And most recently three of our staff members, Orest Deychakiwsky, John Finerty, and Heather Hurlburt, traveled to various parts of Ukraine to observe the parliamentary elections. Their report is not back officially from the printers, but copies are on the table outside if you have not yet had a chance to pick one up.

Ukraine's geo-strategic importance is increasingly being recognized by the west, especially as a bulwark against any potential Russian imperialism.

Since independence in 1991, Ukraine faces the daunting task not only of overcoming the legacy of Soviet communist rule, but also of building the infrastructure of a new state. The challenges it faces are indeed immense.

The lack of economic reform and continuing economic decline have raised questions about Ukraine's future as an independent state and possibly encouraged regional divisions.

A recent CIA study even envisaged a possible breakup of Ukraine. Other analysts, while recognizing the severity of Ukraine's problems, believe that Ukraine has enough resilience to maintain its independence and eventually overcome its economic and political difficulties.

Our two panelists this morning will examine the current situation in Ukraine, focusing on regional issues, their influence on the viability of a united Ukrainian state and domestic and foreign implications. Of critical importance, of course, are Russia's interests and actions vis-a-vis Ukraine.

Our guests will highlight the potential flash point of Crimea, which could threaten Ukraine's territorial integrity and pose serious challenges for Ukrainian-Russian relations. And I might mention the report that we just received this morning on the Crimean parliament's vote this morning to restore the 1992 constitution, which would loosen ties with the rest of Ukraine.

Our two panelists are very well qualified to address the issues of Ukraine. Adrian Karatnycky, on my right, is Executive Director of Freedom House. Previously he was Assistant to the President of the AFL–CIO and before that Director of Research at the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs.

Freedom House, as I'm sure all of you know, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that promotes democracy, civil society, and the rule of law, and monitors human rights around the world.

I should add that Mr. Karatnycky has also been a public member on numerous delegations to CSCE meetings, including the 1991 Moscow Meeting on the Conference on the Human Dimension and the 1992 CSCE Review Meeting in Helsinki.

A graduate of Columbia University, Mr. Karatnycky has written widely, among others, for Foreign Affairs, the New Republic, Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post. And he has been interviewed on CNN, NPR, and MacNeil-Lehrer.

He's the author or coauthor of several books, the most recent being *New Nations Rising: The Fall of the Soviets and Challenge of Independence.* Mr. Karatnycky is an expert on Ukraine and has traveled there frequently, most recently last month.

Dr. Irina Isakova, on my left, is currently a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution. She is the Head of the Section for U.S. Policy in European Post-Soviet States at the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, in Moscow.

She is an experienced researcher, senior researcher, at the Institute, formerly Director of International Projects at the Russian Science Foundation as well as having a background in journalism.

Among her research interests are Russian foreign policy and Russian and U.S. policies in Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic States. Most recently Dr. Isakova presented a report entitled "Russian-Ukrainian Relations: ethnicity factor or geopolitics?" at the International Studies Association's 35th annual convention, held last month here in Washington.

I would like to begin with Adrian Karatnycky.

Dr. **Karatnycky.** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Evans. I am delighted to be here, and I'm also delighted to be a part of the Helsinki Commission's process of examining relations within the post-Soviet states.

I think that there is a consensus—and I'm not here to go against the consensus—that Ukraine is in a political and economic mess, that Ukraine's transition is murky, that

inflation last year was out of control, this year there has been a temporary belt-tightening, so inflation rate had subsided somewhat; nevertheless, that all the indicators are of a major economic decline and so forth.

Unemployment statistics do not yet reflect a major climb. Nevertheless, there is a high degree of a furloughing of workers, full-time workers being transferred to part-time assignments, and also the nonpayment of workers for two to three-month periods.

So the severity of that crisis has raised questions about the cohesiveness of the Ukrainian state, especially in the National Intelligence Estimate, which postulates the possibility of Ukraine breaking up into several pieces if it does not move forward to put its economic house in order.

Because Ukraine is a country in transition, it is in transition from a colony of a multinational state, of a kind of a province of a multinational state, into a full-fledged state. It has an economy that is in transition from a direct administrative state-controlled entity into something at the moment murky, but what we assume will have the characteristics of a market system. Its political elite has been shaken by both these transitions. Yet many of the crises are challenging Ukraine's cohesiveness are really derived from this natural process of reconfiguration after the end of empire and the end of the Soviet form of government.

Let me say that there are a number of myths that surround Ukraine. A lot of them are prevalent in Washington, and in a number of Western capitals. Broadly speaking, the level of knowledge about events in Ukraine is rather superficial. And this is equally so in Russia.

That's one of the great dangers; because there are processes occurring in Ukraine in which this lack of understanding can lead to miscalculations. And when we confront the major military force, a major military power, such miscalculations could be threatening to peace and stability.

Let me take on a number of these myths and in attempting to deal with them—try to illuminate the question of whether Ukraine is falling apart, whether its statehood is threatened.

The first impression that I have is that there is a perception that the communists or the left won the recent Ukrainian election. The parliamentary picture is much more complicated than that. We see, really, in the election results: between a quarter to 30 percent of the seats going to what we would call National Democrats and to economic reformers; about 13 percent of the seats going, broadly speaking, to centrists, many of them linked to emerging businesses that have been either privatized or leased on long-term arrangements; and some associated with the bloc headed by the ex-Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma, who represents a reform current within the military industrial complex. About 8 percent of the parliament is made up of agrarian interests; that is, representatives of the Agrarian Party and also collective farm directors.

Then there is a category which could broadly be called the ruling elite, which includes industrialists of state-owned enterprises. It includes representatives of local government and directly functionaries linked to the two major leaders of the old ruling elite; that is, the elite that ruled Ukraine from 1991 to 1994, those associated with President Leonid Kravchuk and ex-Speaker Ivan Plyushch.

About a third of the seats belong to the Left—with the dominant votes belonging to the Communist Party. Yet, the parliament is not fully completed. There are about 114 seats now that are still up for contest.

It is interesting that the chances for economic reformers and for National Democrats in those seats are higher than among those seats that were already elected. So the parliament is likely to shift slightly, but clearly, in the direction of economic reform and the National Democratic agenda.

The current balance has led to the election of Oleksander Moroz, the head of the Socialist Party, as the speaker of the parliament. Mr. Moroz is not a communist. He is someone who has sought to build bridges to groups outside the Communist Party. And although the Communist Party's bloc in parliament represented a major base of his, in order to secure his election, Moroz secured substantial support from a new parliamentary bloc called Unity, which includes representatives of independent business and the emerging independent business sector and representatives of regional interests not linked to the political left to favor economic reform.

He has spoken about a mixed economy. He seeks—I emphasize he, not his party, which is more backward than he is—to play a role in creating a mixed economy. There is evidence that this is a man of considerable intellect with a degree of commitment both to Ukrainian statehood and to an economic transformation.

So, again, the balance of forces that led to his election is not a clear-cut indication of a communist takeover of the parliament or the takeover of groups that are interested in eroding Ukrainian sovereignty or reuniting and reconfiguring a Union structure or a single state from the republics of the ex-USSR.

Another factor was involved in the speakership battle, which is important. The speaker's election unfolded on the eve of presidential elections.

Although the voting was secret, it is entirely likely that some of the support that went to Mr. Moroz came from moderate deputies who were seeking to undermine the Speaker Plyushch in his bid for the presidency and so thought that Moroz's election would block the creation of the parliament into, in effect, an electoral base for ex-Speaker Plyushch.

This was the calculation among many of the supporters of ex-Prime Minister Kuchma, who apparently also gave some support, really split in their vote, but gave a considerable degree of support to Moroz's election.

Now, if we look at the election results as indicators of the growing regional differentiation within Ukraine, we also find, I think, a somewhat mixed picture.

It is clear that the communists did exceedingly well in the Donbas. They did reasonably well in what used to be called Novorossiya: that is to say, what Russian's call the southern Ukraine and the Odessa district. They scored some modest successes in central Ukraine, beyond the outlying eastern regions.

But, really, the bulk, the majority of Communist Party support comes from the main industrial, metallurgical, and coal-mining oblasts Donetsk and Luhansk. That is really the bedrock.

Now, the vote for National Democrats—including Rukh— and for economic reformers who believe in the preservation of Ukrainian statehood demonstrated substantial gains for those forces in central regions of the country, in which the national idea had not been as deeply felt and was not as deeply held before.

The December 1991 referendum in Ukraine, which was widely interpreted as a massive outpouring of support for statehood, was really something more complicated. It was in part reflective of a change of consciousness on the part of many in the Ukrainian population; but in central and eastern Ukraine, two motives operated to yield the result of supporting Ukrainian statehood:

The first factor has overwhelming support in the media and the ruling nomenklatura in behalf of a vote for statehood. The second factor was the belief in eastern Ukraine that the economic crisis that already was manifest in that region in the Soviet period could be alleviated if Ukraine went on its own and tried to put its own house in order.

Clearly, with Ukraine's economic crisis, there has been considerable erosion for the economic argument for Ukraine's independence. However, there has been a marked growth in central Ukraine of a sense of patriotism, national identification, and national consciousness. This in my view is a very significant development because it really creates a cultural basis as well as a political basis for majority support for statehood.

One misconception that I think we are confronting with regard to Ukraine relates to what is going on within the nomenklatura. There is a belief that Ukraine nomenklatura is a unified factor or a unified force in Ukrainian politics. In truth the nomenklatura is really is a very divided force which, I would argue, means that there is a chance of putting together coalitions that could support substantial progress towards economic reform.

If you look at the state nomenklatura structures, first of all, you have a political struggle between the personal ambitions of the ex-parliamentary Speaker Plyushch and President Kravchuk.

Partly this is a dispute based on personalities. Partly it is a dispute based on ambitions for power. Partly it is a dispute based upon differences about how power ought to be divided in Ukraine and on Plyushch's belief that there should be more power devolving to local government, which is one of his bases.

The second dispute within the nomenklatura is within the industrial and the military industrial elite. Increasingly, there are industrialists who believe that they have the wherewithal to function in the conditions of a market economy.

This segment of the military industrial complex which also believes that it has a level of technological development to sustain itself in the conditions of a market. And there you have a divide within the industrial nomenklatura of those who are supporters of the more reform-oriented Mr. Kuchma and those who are supporters of the parliamentary Speaker, Mr. Plyushch or of President Kravchuk.

There is, of course, also the factor of the agrarian lobby, which has been playing a dual role. On the one hand, it seeks to build a coalition in support of the massive subsidies it receives by allying itself with the communist and the left bloc. On the other hand, it seeks to broaden and stabilize its support by being a potential bedrock for the presidential ambitions of the ex-parliamentary Speaker Plyushch.

The collective farm directors in central Ukraine and in western Ukraine clearly have been tilting to Plyushch. They had originally indicated their support for Mr. Moroz as Speaker was conditioned on his backing away from the presidential race.

And so, the agrarian interests, on the one hand, moved leftward in the parliament to assure support for their substantial state subsidies at the level of the legislative and then to secure it through the elected head of state by backing another strong advocate and proponent of subsidies to the agrarian sector who falls outside the left.

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The agrarian bloc in my judgment and in the judgment of a number of experts on Ukraine's economy, is the most active, the most cohesive, and the least divided lobby within the Ukrainian Parliament, within the Ukrainian state, and within Ukrainian political life. It really is the greatest obstacle to some movement towards significant economic reform.

Let me, then, turn a little bit to the questions of regionalism. I believe that we are dealing with three ethnoses in Ukraine—Ukrainian, Russian, and Soviet. Polling that Freedom House has supported and which were conducted by the Socis-Gallup organization and by Democratic Initiatives, a think tank we work with in Ukraine, really demonstrate a high degree of nostalgia about the Soviet past.

There is very little indication in the Donbas of a desire to separate as a state, or to reunify with Russia. There is no strong attraction to nationalist political figures or political movements in Russia.

As an indicator, for example, we did a poll where we asked "Who are the most popular political figures?" And Bill Clinton emerged as clearly the most popular political figure in Ukraine. Margaret Thatcher was exceedingly popular as well.

But one of the more popular figures was Leonid Brezhnev. He got 37 percent positive, favorable ratings and about a 40 percent negative rating. And his rating was very, very high in the east; whereas, someone like Zhirinovsky received only about a two to three percent favorable rating.

This was a poll was conducted in late February and early March before the bloom had faded off the Zhirinovsky image. At least the bloom had faded in Russia off Zhirinovsky's image.

We also probed Ukrainian attitudes towards particular movements and parties in Russia to see what kinds of sympathies there were, and there really was not any substantial sense of a pro-Russian consciousness or an orientation on Russia beyond Russia as an economic market.

Thus, in the Donbas and in eastern Ukraine, we are dealing with three ethnoses. There is a Ukrainian ethnos. And there is a Russian ethnos, but a very small and limited one. There is what I would argue is a transitional Soviet ethnos, which really wants to turn the clock back, which really doesn't have a sense of loyalty either to a Russian state or to a Ukrainian state. It is an ethnos whose sense of belonging is linked to regional interests and in which any sense of attachment to either a nation state or any sense of loyalty to a currently existing subject of international law is almost unobservable and unmeasurable.

That I think is a very different situation from the situation we see emerging in the Crimea. There, both because of its overwhelmingly Russian ethnic composition, partly because of its history of long-time association with a Russian state entity, the ideas of Russian statehood and of attachment to Russia are more substantial and more considerable than in Eastern Ukraine. And this will complicate the ultimate resolution of the Crimean question.

On the other hand, it is not entirely the case that the consciousness of ethnic Russians in Crimea is entirely unanimous in support of a reunification with Russia. There are other mitigating factors, one of which is that there are considerable economic and industrial interests that do not want to provoke a crisis that would disrupt those economic interests.

Secondly, there is the factor that Mr. Meshkov, Crimea's president, urged a boycott of the parliamentary elections to the Ukrainian Parliament as a means of not giving additional credibility to Ukrainian statehood and Ukraine's claims over Crimea.

That call was largely ignored because the majority of Crimeans went to participate in those elections. As far as I recall. Thirteen out of 23 deputies were elected, or somewhere along those lines. But the voter turnout was about 50 percent in the entire peninsula.

Now, Mr. Meshkov and Mr. Kravchuk have something in common. They share a political predicament, a dangerous political predicament. Both of them came into office on the basis of the promises of smooth economic sailing. They offered the panacea of independence and of their stewardship of a state entity as yielding quick, rapid economic results. And in both cases, their popularity was not based on anything much more than that promise.

In both cases failure to deliver on economic promises has hurt them. Meshkov promised a rapid improvement in the cost of living, the introduction of the Russian ruble, which would lead to a fivefold or tenfold increase in real earnings on the part of Crimean citizens. Those kinds of expectations have not been met since he took office.

Meshkov's popularity has not plummeted, but it has measurably declined. So he doesn't have a majority favorable rating currently. And, clearly, as we know, President Kravchuk's ratings, popularity ratings, are perhaps even lower in Ukraine than Mr. Meshkov's is in Crimea.

And both leaders, I believe, are resorting to the use of nationalism and a sense of crisis and of the consequent need for strong leadership as a means of covering up their other failings in the administration of the state and economy. This is a dangerous and incendiary situation, which we see being played out currently.

There has been a high increase in the concentration of Ukrainian ground forces in the Crimea, which number about 50,000, as I understand it. There have been recent reports about Ukrainian Spetsnaz forces either intervening directly or possibly being involved in some actions to take over control of the Crimea Division of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs. And this has provoked the vote that was taken in the parliament today to take over direct control of the militia to establish the concept of Crimean citizenship and to move in the direction, more in the direction, of quasi-statehood.

Now, this attempt to either create the attributes of a state, which Meshkov is pushing, or eventually to unify with Russia has more of, I believe, a cultural basis in the Crimea and an ethnic basis in the Crimea than it would have in eastern Ukraine.

Again, the polling that we have looked at and the polling that's been conducted in the last year or in recent months, shows that there is a desire for autonomy, for economic autonomy, for a greater degree of economic integration on the part of eastern regions with Russia. Afterall, Eastern Ukraine has traditionally part of a single, highly integrated economic space.

But those sentiments in Eastern Ukraine are really confined to issues of federalism and regionalism, on the one hand, and also issues of socialism versus capitalism. There is higher support in the eastern and central eastern districts of Ukraine for a state-directed economy, rather than for a market-directed economy.

Those are the main factors. And there is not yet the evidence of support for explicitly nationalist movements or movements that would lead the eastern regions to disaffiliation

from Ukraine. Nor do I believe there are any indicators in public opinion that would suggest a base for that kind of movement.

Now let me turn to the economic question, which is linked, of course, to the problems of regionalism. And that is the question of the integration of the Russian and the Ukrainian economies.

If you look at statistics on the part of states that Russia and many of the pro-CIS integration voices often speak of, for example, the integration processes in Western Europe, you will observe a very paradoxical fact.

Economies in countries the size of Ukraine—the populations of Ukraine, Italy, France, and Great Britain—typically have 17, 18, 19 percent of their GNP linked to trade. The Ukrainian economy in the Soviet context had over 40 percent of its economy linked to external trade. That is, it was a provincial, rather than a sovereign state, economy.

So the argument that the Ukrainian economy should increase its integration goes against the laws governing successful modern Western economies, which are integrated, but which are also to a high degree self-sufficient, and which preserve a degree of their own autonomy, even as they surrender limited aspects of their sovereignty. But to surrender aspects of your economic sovereignty in the context of this high degree of economic integration would be to surrender political sovereignty as well.

So Ukraine's problem is to reduce trade dependence to normal, modern European levels, which is to reduce the amount that it trades and to increase its economic self-sufficiency.

So this task flies, really, in the face of many of the pro-integrationist voices, both in Russian political life and increasingly in Ukrainian political life.

The second factor, though, is that this reality also flies in the face of the traditional nationalist argument. The nationalists are wrong in their economic orientation away from Russia. For Ukraine will always have Russia as its major or its largest market. It is simply a fact of geography. It is a fact of the existing patterns of economic interrelationships, in particular Ukraine's need for energy.

So that the nationalist argument of moving away from Russia is equally incorrect. It is simply impossible for Ukraine to have, in the foreseeable future, any other economic partner that could replace Russia.

So Ukraine has a twin task: first, to preserve Russia as its major trading partner; second, to reduce the level of its economic dependence on trade.

So that if you were to plan the evolution of the Ukrainian economy or to target Western aid to assist in the evolution of the Ukrainian economy to a pattern similar to successful Western industrial equivalents, it would be to reduce the overall amount of interdependency while at the same time preserving Russia as the largest market. Thus, neither side, unfortunately, in the Ukrainian argument appears to be fully in the right on this question.

Having painted a political picture that is a little more dynamic than the typical one and a little less dire in the sense of regionalisms and disintegration, I'd like to speak a little bit about what the future presages.

It seems to me that the political elite in Ukraine is rattled. It does not have very definite views of which direction to go. And that, it seems to me, is an opportunity for Western engagement and Western dialogue.

There is a bloc in the parliament, there is a bloc of the left, which will resist movements towards the market, but that bloc is not the majority bloc.

If you look at the factions that are developing in the parliament, there is the Rukhled group, which represents about 30 out of the 336 deputies.

There is a bloc called Statehood, which is the more nationalist one, which represents about two dozen deputies.

There is a bloc called the Center, which is an interesting coalition of National Democrats and segments of the old party of power, the old ruling elite. It includes ex-Speaker Plyushch and former First Deputy Speaker Durdynets, who lost out in his bid to be parliamentary Speaker. They have about 40 votes in the parliament.

There is another very interesting bloc called Unity, which has new emerging businessmen, like the leader of the Ukrainian Financial Group, Valeri Babych, and a number of people supported by him, a number of emerging entrepreneurs. But it also has representatives of the Civic Congress which is a pro-integrationist, pro-CIS faction, but which also preserves some belief in pre-market ideas. That group has about another 30 seats.

There is a new bloc represented by ex-deputy prime ministers and economic reformers Lanoviy, Pynzenyk, and Pylypchuk called Reform, which again has about two dozen, 25 to 30 deputies. All the blocs are still in the process of formation.

And then there is a bloc called Communists for Social Justice, which has 95 members. And the Socialist Party doesn't have sufficient strength to create itself into a faction with under 20 seats.

There is also a bloc linked to ex-Prime Minister Kuchma, which has constituted itself as having 21 seats, but it needs to find 4 more people to meet the threshold of 25.

Anyway, that's the current composition. It seems to me that it does indicate that there's a very dynamic process in which there may be possible under the conditions the current crisis to shape a government which could move forward with some degree of both privatization and moderate economic reforms. But, of course, this will depend on the results of the presidential elections, which are still scheduled for June 26th.

I'm not going to predict the outcome of those elections, but it is clear that ex-Prime Minister Kuchma, who comes in first in the polls, and ex-Speaker of the Parliament Plyushch are the two strongest candidates. And if both of them made it into the second round, it would seem that Plyushch would have the better chances.

The third factor in this is the new parliamentary Speaker, Aleksandr Moroz, who, despite the urgings of the agrarian bloc, has not withdrawn from his campaign for the presidency. And, then, there is still the looming presence of incumbent President Kravchuk.

I think I'll conclude with this overview. There is much that was left unsaid. I'll be happy to answer questions when the opportunity presents itself. Thank you.

Moderator **Evans.** Adrian, thank you very much for your very comprehensive and thought-provoking remarks. And I'd like to give the floor now to Dr. Isakova, please.

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, first of all, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity of being here and sharing my views with all of you on the subject. It's certainly a pleasure, and quite an experience for me.

A lot has been already said about the Ukraine and Ukrainian situation, economics, regionalism, and many issues have been addressed that could arise interest as well as concern in the West and as well as in Russia. But I would like to look at the Ukrainian situation or Russian-Ukrainian relations from a different perspective.

Despite all the tensions and disagreements between Russia and Ukraine, on such questions as nuclear issue, on Black Sea fleet, and on the status of Crimea, taking into account the heated parliament debates in both countries concerning bilateral relations, it's important to note of the incredible non-conflict record in bilateral relations.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there has been neither ethnic conflicts recorded between Russians and Ukrainians in both states nor any conflict which could stimulate civil unrest in the other country. This is extremely interesting to note.

To some extent, maybe because both of the states, as any other new independent countries, are passing the same stages of transformation from a post-Soviet era to the new independent status, and this similarity to some extent creates the understanding that the countries have to cooperate, either on parliamentary or if not in the parliamentary, if this is the level of letting steam out, then at least on the governmental and the presidential levels.

One of the similarities is the regionalism that basically means regional tendenciesof autonomy and separatism that are as much typical for Ukraine as for Russia. Many times in various publications on Ukraine, or state of Ukrainian affairs, a separatism of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine is usually mentioned for quite understandable reasons. However, it's less known that the same tendencies occur from the other side of the border, in the central and western parts of Russia.

So what we are witnessing here are not just the tendencies of federal or regional separatism that occur in Russian federation in such areas in Siberia, in Sakha, in Tyumen, that's quite widely known, but also in the bordering regions between Russia and Ukraine, which basically produce the so-called overlapping disintegration and integration tendencies.

One of the symbolic gestures to some extent was the signing of the agreement on July 28th, 1993 on the cross-border, cross-regional integration between Russia and Ukraine. To some extent, it was the option that was taken by Russian as well as by Ukrainian side to neutralize the separatist tendencies from both sides, at the same time not taking the burden of political and financial sponsorship of the other side and hoping to neutralize this domestic opposition in both countries, supportive of the Donbas area clains to be more closely associated with the Russian Federation.

As I understand from the analysis of the economic situation of the coal industry in Russia itself, and the budget deficits, overall financial problems, such a burden as the Ukrainian eastern areas could be vital to the Russian economy and could not be considered appropriate for Russian policies towards the Ukraine.

Neither would the Russian government like to stimulate the chain reaction inside its own federation, especially after reaching a difficult deal with the Russian parliament and autonomous republics and republics on the same regional/federalism issues.

Besides the regional separatism, there is also another similar problem that both Moscow and Kiev have, and this is the managing of vertical control and power channels, basically meaning the limits of Moscow's or Kiev's control of local elites. A similar question

arises—to what extent the leftist local elites could be controlled by the central or federal government.

For instance, the last development in Ukraine showed that it was one of the consensus issues that brought together Kravchuk and Kuchma, to some extent even Plyushch, who admitted the necessity of giving economic autonomy to the regions and republics, but the political autonomy of the regions even as a possible issue that should not and would not be discussed in Kiev.

To some extent this policy and this approach have seemed to find understanding in Moscow due to its own domestic political problems it has to face the same problems with the regions and local elites, especially considering all the difficulties of negotiations of the federal government with the State Duma and the Council of Federation.

It seems like in the last four or three months, a number of researches in Russia have produced several scenarios of political and economic developments in Ukraine.

And it seems like consensus has been reached in political elite that disintegration of Ukraine or either the worsening of the economic situation in Ukraine is not beneficial for Russia and is not beneficial for Russian-Ukrainian relations.

Certainly the nuclear issue has been mentioned in that respect, it seems that with the help of the trilateral agreement, the nonproliferation regime could be implemented in Ukraine.

This argument became very important in accepting the necessity of keeping stability in Ukraine without disintegrating or influencing the disintegration process in Ukraine itself.

Certainly, few other issues have been under consideration, like, as I mentioned before, the disintegration of Ukraine would certainly raise the question of bringing economic subsidies to the eastern end, southeastern parts of Ukraine. Under the current economic and political situation in Russia, it is highly probable.

The other issue which was mentioned in all of these scenarios or options considering the developments in Ukraine was the issue of Crimea. It seems like even on this issue, Kiev and Moscow have found an understanding: first of all, that Crimea is an integral part of Ukraine.

In accordance with all the international and bilateral agreements, Russia would like to see Crimea as part of Ukraine. However, to many of us, there is also the issue of the Muslims influence or the issue of possibility of increased influence of Turkey on the Crimea Peninsula.

It seems that, even from the Russian perspective as well as for Ukrainian interests, it's more interesting to cooperate on bilateral issues with Ukraine than to see the influence of Turkey in that peninsula.

The issue of Crimea is also important in respect to the Black Sea fleet nas evoked numerous questions. It seems that Crimea might become independent—and I must note that considering the last polling that has been made by a Crimean independent firm and according to some strategic studies, made by institutions based in Kiev shows that approximately one-fifth of the population of Crimea would vote to be included in Russia or vote for more closer relations with Russia.

Less than one-fifth want to be just an integral part of Ukraine. And two-thirds indecisively but would to some extent vote for independence of Crimea. Considering this polling,

Kiev and Moscow positions are more similar, more close than it could have seemed from a distance.

However, if I go back to the issue of status of Black Sea fleet, there are a few important points that I would like to make. Definitely the things that happened recently in Crimea, considering the tensions that have been raised there just a few days ago, first started on May 15, 1994, with a small conflict between the Ukrainian National Guard located in Simferopol and Crimea militia, which is basically subordinate to Meshkov, President of Crimea. The tensions are starting to unfold on their own. They have their own tendency of intensifying.

However, there are a few motives for the tensions to be there. And it seems like one of the possibilities of the tensions, first of all connected with the Black Sea fleet. Starting from February 1992, negotiations on its status, the Black Sea fleet has found itself belonging to all and neither of the sides. And the questionable status raised many questions.

Being financed from September 1st of 1992 from Russia through the National Bank of Ukraine and at the same time being supplied with water and other products from Crimea, it found itself in a dubious positions, not to mention the sentiments that always have been there in the Black Sea fleet toward Russia.

However, the question it raises is not just a political issue. It certainly suggests a strategic aspect and to some extent the economic issue.

As I understood the last disagreement between Crimea authorities, especially Meshkov and Kiev, has been raised on the issue who will get the payments of the rent money coming from the leasing of Russian bases in Crimea. So, again, this is the issue of economics, both economics in internal Ukrainian politics and the distribution of taxes, economic supplies, and receiving the renting payments.

Crimea is also quite an important place for foreign investment, and it seems like it's the most favorable foreign investment place in Ukraine and certainly central authorities in Kiev are interested in gaining the profits from foreign investment that could be attracted to Crimea, as well as the "local" authorities in Crimea.

To some extent, these questions are still there. And the third party may be helpfu and may not be in the discussions of the Black Sea fleet in the bilateral negotiations between Kiev and Moscow.

It seems also that the issue of decision, consensus has been reached by both sides that the issue of division of fleet and its basing will be also postponed until after the decision on whether there will or will not be the elections on June 26 in Ukraine. There are possibilities of coming back to the issue of the division of the Black Sea fleet, either after the elections, which would, be staged on June 26 this year, or to coming back after the elections would be postponed: in case of implementing presidential rule in Crimea, which in cases of tensions in the peninsula may be declared or by the agreements with the parliament, according to the petition of the parliament.

There is also certainly an issue of economic interdependence. I would not take much of your time addressing this issue, but it's still quite interesting to note that 80 percent of the industrial production in Ukraine is not a closed cycle.

Basically, Crimean production also depends on the supplies, either raw materials suppliers or parts coming from new independent states. And this unclosed cycle certainly creates a lot of problems for Ukrainian economy, at the same time creates possibilities for integration for new independent states.

Even the defense industries, which basically take 40 percent of national industry in Ukraine, produce only 3 percent of the needed supplies and equipment for Ukrainian armies.

Even such potential areas for hard currency profits as arms sales could not be addressed in Ukraine separately from Russia, or other NIS, for reason of this tremendous interdependence. So these are another set of arguments for integrating with Russian economic chains of development and production.

However, if we look at the lobbying groups or at the interest groups from both sides, we would see that either in a military industrial context or agrarian parties, it would be as much similar interests in cooperation as much as competition.

For instance, not long ago agrarian parties were seen as the potential partners voting and supporting integrating the Russian and Ukrainian markets. To some extent, it is still the case.

However, in some areas due to the drop of possibilities of Russian citizens to purchase goods, some areas of Russian agrarian sector have produced non-purchased additional products: the possible market—the new independent states. To some extent, even the agrarian lobbies could be considered also a comparative or, let's say, limited partners in the new independent regions. The same thing could be said towards the industrial lobbying groups.

So looking at Russian-Ukrainian relations, one might see as many limited partnerships as much as limited competitiveness. And it seems like, despite the tensions that sometimes do occur, the future of Russian-Ukrainian relations is not so doomed as sometimes it has been discussed or promised.

I would like especially to finish with that point, and I would like to answer any of your questions. Thank you.

Moderator **Evans.** Thank you very much, Dr. Isakova, for your very interesting and, again, thought-provoking remarks.

I'd like to open up our program now for questions from the audience. We have two microphones on either side. If you would please go to the microphone and identify yourself. Yes, over here, please.

Ms. **Pereyma.** Marta Pereyma from USIA. I have a question, actually. Neither of our speakers addressed the issue of the Crimean Tatars, their role, their influence, and their political prospects for the future.

Moderator **Evans.** Do you want to start that?

Mr. **Karatnycky.** Well, first of all, I think that it's clear that the Crimean Tatars are facing a difficult environment with the coming to power of the Meshkov administration. There have been increasing reports of pressures against the Tatars. There's a high degree of intolerance in the local media towards this "outside" group, which has really been a traditional historical presence on the Crimea.

The influx of returning Crimeans was reasonably well-handled in the first couple of years under Bagrov's administration. And so tensions were not rising. But Crimean Tatars have increasingly placed their political fate on the side of association with the Ukrainian state.

Now, this may be a temporary phenomenon or a tactical phenomenon, but they behave and play a political role in support of Crimea as an integral part of Ukraine.

In that sense they are in a political conflict with the administration, with Meshkov, and with the political forces around him, but their degree of political mobilization is actually far higher than the degree of political mobilization on the part of the ethnic Ukrainian population.

I mean, as you know, about 70 percent of the Crimean Peninsula is Russian, ethnically Russian. And the Crimean Tatars I think constitute at this point something like 250,000 to 300,000 and have a potential of growing to as much as 400,000 or so if all of the likely migratory processes are completed. So they will be a substantial factor there, but they will never approach, I believe, more than 15 percent of the population in the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, because they are on the side of the argument for statehood or at least their leadership is supportive of linking itself up to the Ukrainian state, they're in a political conflict with the Meshkov forces. And there is also the added overlay of the rise of racist and hate sentiments within parts of the Slavic population.

Moderator **Evans.** Dr. Isakova, would you like to say a few words on that question?

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, yes, just a few words. Crimean Tatars have differing communities. Some of the minority supports Meshkov, but mostly for political reasons because I guess there is a division for struggle for power among the Tatar community as well, as well as in the local parliament.

However, in today's session, the parliament adopted a resolution that basically comes back to the constitution of 1992, it was approved by the majority of parliamentarians in Crimea except for 14 deputies directly connecting themselves with Tatars constituency.

So, basically, the majority of Tatar population is supportive of an autonomy of Crimea, but only economic autonomy. So, basically, they support Kiev's policy towards Crimea, at least for the time being.

Moderator **Evans.** Are there other questions?

Ms. **Chopivsky.** Larissa Chopivsky. I have two questions, one for Ms. Isakova and one for Mr. Karatnycky.

I would like to comment on Ms. Isakova's analogy at the beginning of her presentation, where she compared the regional separatists in Russia to the separatists in eastern Ukraine. I would like to comment that I don't think that this analogy is entirely correct because the regional separatists in Russia are non-Russian nationalities desiring independence; whereas, the separatists in Ukraine are from areas where a high percentage of the population is Russian and, therefore, there is a very strong Russian influence. And they are interested in unifying those areas with Russia.

I don't think there are cases where there are Ukrainians living in areas of Russia where they are demanding to be unified with Ukraine. So I don't think that this analogy is entirely correct. Could you comment on this, please?

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, first of all, the separatist tendencies are not just occurring in the eastern and southeastern Ukraine. The same tendencies of separatist autonomies are quite characteristic for Transcarpathian region.

Basically, the first claim for an autonomous republic came from the western part of Ukraine. And according to the polls of 1991, the same polls that basically supported the independence. Seventy-five percent of the population in Transcarpathia voted also for the Transcarpathian autonomous republic.

So these tendencies of separatism, regional separatism, is not only characteristic for eastern parts of Ukraine. These are quite typical for Ukraine.

Now, coming back to Russia, basically the Ukrainian population is scattered all over Russia except for two areas. In a bordering area, bordering regions mostly of the 4 million Ukrainians, there are Ukrainian origins. The second area is Tyumen region, where according to the rough statistics from 300,000 to 450,000 of Ukrainians live, most of them migrated to this area to work and live, not mentioning the, let's say, workers that came to the area of Tyumen and Siberia for not permanent, but for just short work contracts. And, as you know, those areas demand their separatism also.

So considering these elements as for economic separatism and also as well as for the possibility of distancing from the central or federal authorities, I believe these tendencies could be compared.

Now, if we look at the declarations, coming from the regions we would see that basically, first of all, they are interested in the idea of economic integration, less political. So to some extent I think you can compare these tendencies.

Mr. **Karatnycky.** Could I comment about this question, too? Because I think that you have raised some very interesting points that I think ought to be examined in greater detail.

If you look at patterns of recent local voting in Russia, the areas, you know, from Stavropol, Belgorod, Kursk, in that region which abuts Eastern Ukraine, there is a "red belt" that is being created. There is a very strong base of support for the old communist candidates and for the old communist order. And you see it on the other side—the Ukrainian side—of the border, as well.

I think that when earlier I spoke about this idea of a Soviet ethnos, I would say that it applies to the problems of building a Russian national consciousness as well.

And I think that part of the reason that Russia has tempered and abandoned its project of emphasizing a kind of ethnically based sense of patriotism and national loyalty has been because it met with some of this resistance at the level of Soviet consciousness and partly as a result of non-Russian ethnic minority regionalisms.

Many analysts observing Eastern Ukraine are focusing on the Russian media in terms of Ostankino having a high degree of influence on the region—and a lot of people watch those programs. But a lot of people also watch regional television. There is a regional cultural integration and a regional political mutual interdependence between, I would say, the Soviet era communist elites on both sides of Eastern Ukraine's border.

And that, I think, is an area that deserves greater attention than it's given. I'm glad that you pointed out that there are these trends on both sides of the border.

Moderator **Evans.** Yes. And I think you had a—

Ms. **Chopivsky.** Is there time for another question for Mr. Karatnycky? I wanted to ask how you might propose that Ukraine continue its strong trading relationship with Russia and at the same time maintain its sovereignty and develop its economic independence.

Mr. **Karatnycky.** Well, the point that I was arguing was that the former Soviet republics will remain the principal trading partners of Ukraine since there is nothing else on offer.

Clearly, there are steps that can be taken to diversify or to reduce the level of trade by reorienting industry to be more close-ended; that is to say, to be more self-sufficient.

I mean, the whole pattern of Soviet era economic planning was to create these dependencies across borders and to reinforce the unitary state structure.

So it seems to me that this is a long-term task, but it also has to be factored in. I would say that it's impossible to lose—Ukraine should not seek to lose—the Russian market. It should use market mechanisms. And if it is in its economic interest, it should continue trading with Russia.

But, on the other hand, there are steps. For example, there has been a discussion between Deputy Prime Minister Landyk and Russia's gas ministry—Gazprom—to sell part of the Ukrainian gas pipelines to Western Europe as part of the deal to cover Ukrainian debts for gas.

Well, those pipelines could very easily be sold to West European interests, which would be interested in having some influence over their maintenance and their reliability. And then that cash could be used to pay off that debt to Russia.

There is no reason to fashion policy in a way that reinforces dependency when, through market mechanisms, you can diversify. In the end the result would be the same. Ukrainian pipelines would be sold to a third party or part of the pipelines would be sold to a third party. The cash would reduce the debt. But that would be a process that would not increase dependence on Russia or Russian control over Ukraine.

So it seems to me that it requires a degree of statecraft. It requires a higher degree of Western attention. The point that I would make is that Western aid should be focused on creating greater internal self-sufficiency for the Ukrainian economy to make it similar to the self-sufficiency that most economies, modern industrial economies, have.

Moderator **Evans.** Yes, another question?

Mr. **Rowny.** Yes. Ed Rowny, former arms controller.

I was in Ukraine recently to observe the elections. While there I wanted to look into what the status was of the arms control agreements. And in my own way of finding out what was going on, I had the impression that Ukraine was complying with the arms control agreements and with the recent agreement between Clinton, Yeltsin, and Kravchuk.

However, there seems to be a widespread opinion the Ukraine is violating or not complying with these agreements. And as late as last week former Secretary Baker criticized Ukraine for not living up to its agreements.

I would just like some factual information from one of the two speakers or somebody else here. Am I missing something? Is Ukraine complying or is Ukraine not complying with its arms control agreements?

Moderator **Evans.** Adrian, do you want to start off?

Mr. **Karatnycky.** As far as I know, there has been a flow of strategic nuclear weapons from Ukraine to Russia for dismantling, and I have seen no evidence that that flow has been disrupted or interrupted in recent days nor does the current composition of the new parliament suggest that they would approach in a radically different way the problem of adherence to the agreements made by the three presidents.

Moderator **Evans.** Dr. Isakova, would you like to comment?

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, basically, I don't have any documented proof that Ukraine violated the agreements. So I can't comment on that.

Moderator **Evans.** Good. Another question over here, please.

Ms. **Gawdiak.** My name is Natalka Gawdiak. I'd like to make the comment that it's very interesting that we are concentrating on the problems facing Ukraine in Ukraine but not concentrating on some of the problems that are facing Ukraine that occur in the Western public debate in the media and so on.

So in this capital where lobbies for many different interests are very active, there's been kind of a trend on the part of those who support the reintegration of Ukraine back into Russia to espouse a number of different points.

And, for instance, early on after the breakup or before the breakup of the Soviet Union, there were talks about how if the Soviet Union broke up there would be a bloodbath. Then especially if Ukraine left, there would be a bloodbath. Then there was a great talk about the huge army of Ukraine and how dangerous it was, and that went on for quite some time.

Then there was a great debate about the nuclear missiles, and that hasn't stopped yet, you know, that Ukraine was pictured by certain elements in academia and the press as being a trigger-happy nuclear entity and so on and so forth.

And now it seems to me that the spokespeople for an integrationist point of view have changed tactics. And I find it very interesting that they now perhaps see that it's better for Ukraine to be a sovereign country and to become economically stable, with a lot of help from the West, because a lot of that economic progress that will be made in Ukraine will have to go to Russia in any case in order to pay for its debts. So it's an interesting evolution.

I would like, in closing, just to ask you, Ms. Isakova, about pressures on Turkey not to cooperate with Ukraine and pressure on the Black Sea countries not to form a bloc with Ukraine. There seems to be kind of a xenophobic attitude.

For instance, you said before in your speech about linking Ukraine and Russia, and you said it was more interesting to deal with these two countries than with, for instance, Turkey, but some people have stated that if Ukraine had closer ties with Turkey and these other countries or the Arab states, that it might be a good thing for its economic health.

Thank you.

Moderator **Evans.** Please.

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, first of all, Ukraine-Russia has relations with Turkey, even in Black Sea Economic Cooperation Union Council, besides just mentioning bilateral relations and especially some developments in bilateral relations with Turkey and Russia that have been achieved recently on political, economic, and military issues.

There also has been the issue—and it's inevitable you cannot stop countries from dealing with each other as much as you cannot stop countries from expanding their trade with each other.

For instance, as the figures have shown from Summer of 1993, the economic trade Ukraine with Poland was only one percent of its overall trade, which is abnormal for the neighboring countries.

And, certainly, the increase in trade is beneficial as much for Ukraine as for Russia because the transfer of goods in the open market is usually beneficial, especially in the current economic situation.

However, yes, you are certainly right that the Baltic-Black Sea confederation idea, which was discussed for quite some time now, both in Lithuania, sometimes less in Lat-

via, to some extent in Poland, and certainly in Ukraine, has arose suspicion and to some extent uneasiness in Moscow for many quite understandable reasons: first of all, Russia doesn't want to be excluded from the European Community nor does it want to see a new buffer created between east countries and western countries; neither it wants to find itself isolated from, let's say, bilateral relations with those countries.

To some extent the idea of central European initiatives is understandable. And the problem is to what extent it should not been seen as threatening to Russia. It seems that if we could see here the overlapping economic and security arrangements, then it would not be so.

Besides, to some extent, it seems to me that the developments of relations with Byelorussia to some extent, were stimulated by this threat of Black Sea-Baltic confederation, that could create some difficulties for Russian transients, for Russian cooperation with western countries.

However, it seems like the Black Sea-Baltic confederation is not the only issue that raises concern in Moscow. Certainly the other issue raises the concern, is the issue of how the Partnership for Peace arrangements would influence the inclusion of those states in the security arrangements and not exclude Russia from those arrangements.

There is also quite an interesting development considering, for instance, the CFE agreement. I have heard opinions some time ago in Russian, let's say, military circles that if the Black Sea fleet would not have the same abilities or the same functions that it always had in the southern flank of Russia, then to some extent Russia would be obliged to change its interest in CFE considering these elements.

So the agreements between Russia and Ukraine, even on that issue, create a lot of implications, let's say, circles on the water for international security and international arms control agreements.

Moderator **Evans.** Adrian, would you like to comment on that? And then we have time only for one more question.

Mr. **Karatnycky.** Yes, actually, I would like to comment. I would also like to comment on a couple of other remarks that Dr. Isakova made which I take to be very promising indicators of changes in Russia's attitudes to Ukraine, but I would like to raise a couple of provisos.

Number one, I believe that as long as the Yeltsin-Kozyrev foreign policy is intact, I think that the relations between the two states can be managed and regulated and will not erupt into something that is threatening. They are guarantors of a certain degree of ability and stability in those relations.

On the other hand, we have results of shifts in Russian public opinion. And because Russia now is subject to democratic changes in its governance, it seems to me there are a number of waring trends not simply represented by Zhirinovskyism, but also by the growing support for what we would call the national communism that is embodied in the views of the head of the Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov.

So it seems to me that if Russian public opinion continues to shift in that kind of a direction in the longer term, there are potential dangers. We cannot assume the stability of a current kind of stewardship of foreign policy.

The second issue is that there is a temporary lowering of the political temperature between Russia and Ukraine. And partly I believe it is attributable to Russian calcula-

tions that the chances of Leonid Kuchma would be improved by such a more accommodating stance.

I think that that's also partly a Russian miscalculation about the kind of foreign policy Mr. Kuchma would put into place because I believe he would put into place a foreign policy that strongly protects and asserts Ukraine's sovereignty.

Nevertheless, I think that the current change of the tenor of the discussion about Ukraine is partly attributable to the efforts to influence the internal political developments in Ukraine.

Moderator **Evans.** We have time for one more question. And I know Mr. Karatnycky has a time deadline. So, please, if you would?

Mr. **Zviglyanich.** Zviglyanich, George Washington University, to Dr. Isakova.

You mentioned that juridical interface with the situation with the Russian attitude to the Crimean question is quite okay and all the resolutions are in force, but at the same time we know that last year the old parliament adopted several resolutions referring to Crimean civil status.

And my question relates to the unofficial position of certain persons maybe or groups in today's Russian political elite. And do you see the possible scenario that, for example, Crimean parliament holds for secession from Ukraine and appeals to Russia and Kravchuk introduces presidential rule and so on? And what will be the possible reaction for this of unofficial circles?

Moderator **Evans.** Before Dr. Isakova answers that question, Mr. Karatnycky has a plane to catch. So we're going to let him go to do that. Thank you very much, Adrian, for participating and for your stimulating discussion. Thank you.

Yes, please go ahead.

Dr. **Isakova.** Well, it's an extremely difficult question. First of all, frankly, I was looking at the situation that developed right now in Crimea and the possibilities of Kiev to respond to elections on June or, for instance, to use the amendments to the constitution, to Article 114, that was discussed just recently and to impeach President Meshkov from his position as the President of Crimea, this as a result could force, let's say, the postponement of the June 26 elections, meaning the postponement of not only presidential but also local elections. I doubt, however, that this will have any reaction, basically, on Russian-Ukrainian relations.

On the question of Russian expectations towards Kuchma, I don't see any disillusionment: some Russian circles certainly are eager to see people like Kuchma coming to power in Ukraine who would be more interested in pragmatic relations than in just trying to balance between east and west, between economic reform and trying to stabilize the status quo.

If the situation would develop differently, if, for instance, the presidential rule will be introduced in Crimea, then certainly President Yeltsin as well as the presidential team will be put under tremendous stress coming from domestic political circles as well as from the forces of the Black Sea fleet, who are not interested in the presidential rule in Crimea.

Basically, I think that such resolution would only dismiss the positive effects of the tendencies of Russian-Ukrainian relations and will be quite difficult for Kiev to take into account that Donetsk, Lugansk, and other areas would certainly have the abilities to support Crimea. So we would have some specific domestic internal crisis in Ukraine as the result of it.

Now, the third option, which is less desirable, is certainly the Black Sea fleet to some extent getting involved in the Crimean puzzle, getting practically involved in the conflict, either by some local units or by coincidence or by, let's say, the effect of events.

To that extent I think that the critical situation would certainly occur in Crimea as well as in the Russian-Ukrainian relations, which could undermine the position of, let's say, democratic national forces in Moscow as well.

There's also just one point that I would like to mention considering the entry statements. I don't think that Russians have misperceptions concerning Kuchma. It seems like his record of being stable, reasonable, but at the same time a very pro-Ukrainian leader.

As we remember, the first offer to look at the leasing of bases in Ukraine came from Kuchma. The first idea of receiving substantial support for Ukraine for nuclear disarmament also came from Kuchma. So he is the person who is actively looking for the Ukrainian side of the deal, but at the same time he also was the person who signed this inter-border region to some extent.

It had not produced much results, one of the reasons the functions and the status of the regions differ from the Ukrainian side and from the Russian side, basically, giving some obstacles for cooperation.

But at the same time, as I mentioned, he was the man for a pragmatic, reasonable approach on bilateral relations. And to some extent Kuchma and Chernomyrdin are men from "one club," I would say. To some extent it makes easier for them to reach an agreement or to negotiate.

So no matter who will be in Kiev, there will certainly be a party who would be interested in Kiev's integrity, would be looking for Ukraine's interests, and who would be having, let's say, a difficult but I hope pleasant time with Russia in negotiations.

Moderator **Evans.** Thank you very much. I'm afraid we have reached the end of our allotted time. I want to thank Dr. Isakova very much for being here and contributing to this very stimulating discussion and question and answer period that we've had.

In closing, I would like to mention that the Commission will be holding a hearing next Tuesday morning from 10:00 to 12:00 in this same building, Room 2226, on Russian foreign policy toward the former republics of the Soviet Union and the implications for U.S. policy. There are announcements of this hearing on the table outside, and I would be very glad to see all of you here at that hearing.

Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, the foregoing matter was concluded at 11:35 a.m.]