



HELSINKI COMMISSION HEARING

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

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Most of the statistics presented just now by my esteemed colleague is correct, but there is an old saying that there are lies, outrageous lies, and statistics.

I comment on the one remark that only handful of media institution are controlled by state. Yes, only handful. But this handful is three national state TV channels who are the only source of information for 90 percent of the Russian citizens and on which we'll never, never hear any criticism of Mr. Putin.

But I would like to devote the very limited time I have for very important question you, Mr. Chairman, asked Assistant Secretary Daniel Fried. Russians, or Russian officials, or Russian elite are indulging in anti-Western and anti-American perceptions and sentiments.

It's a very important question for the future of our relationship. The Russian security experts are firmly convinced that, in this very dangerous 21st century, the basic strategic geopolitical interest of Russia coincide, rather than contradict each other, whether you mean the challenges of Islamic radicalism or a rising China.

That's why I am more troubled, not by the fact whether our government, elected or appointed by Mr. Putin, but this growing anti-American and anti-Western sentiments in our foreign policy rhetoric and sometimes in our foreign policy action.

Until recently, all opinion polls demonstrated that these sentiments, as in many other countries, these anti-American sentiments are more characteristic for (inaudible) of political elite, those people who buy the very -- sending their children to study at American universities, their wives to give birth in American clinics, and have their accounts in American banks.

But approximately from late 2004, the massive indoctrination by these handful of media (inaudible) of ideas, of perceptions of Western America as a enemy (inaudible) these feelings are penetrated deeply into Russian public consciousness and unconsciousness.

Unfortunately, this campaign was unleashed by famous statements of Mr. Putin in address to the nation after this one. The enormous gap between Putin of 2001, who appeared on TV (inaudible) of the (inaudible) and said, "Americans, we are with you," and Putin on TV screens in September 2004 who said -- I quote (inaudible) literally, because it's very important -- that, "Islamic terrorists, they are just instruments. They are instruments in the hands of more

dangerous, more powerful, more traditional enemies of Russia who still perceive nuclear Russia as a threat and try to weaken and dismantle it."

The worst thing of all, I suspect, that Putin sincerely believes in it, that it's not just rhetoric for internal political consumption. And this is a very serious problem for our relationship.

As all of the panelists, I'm strongly against canceling of G-8 meeting in Petersburg, especially because I think the potential of this institution is not used enough for raising very frank questions.

Both in Russian political elite and Mr. Putin personally, in spite all of the anti-American perceptions, appreciate very strongly Russian membership in this group.

And may I finish with one suggestion for President Bush as a member of this G-8 crop? Many (inaudible) have said that it's necessary to (inaudible) this meeting frank question, like it's customary among friends. The (inaudible) question (inaudible) do you really believe that I am sending terrorists to kill your children?

If it's misunderstanding, please explain to your people, and please, your spin doctors on TV, stop propagating this vision and this perception of America, the power behind the Islamic terrorists attacking Russia, and let's concentrate on these very important security challenges we both share.

But if not, if you really -- if you do believe and they think, in this case, what we are doing here and at other (inaudible)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.