



Dmitri Medvedev's Glasnost: The Pudding and the Proof

By Leon Aron

—Слова, все слова! дел не было!..
—Да; но доброе слово—тоже дело.
—Words, all words! but deeds there have been none!..
—Yes; but a good word—is a deed also.

—Ivan Turgenev, *Rudin* (1856)

Although many observers of Russian politics view President Dmitri Medvedev as the pawn of his predecessor, Vladimir Putin, his rhetoric of late suggests that he aims to move Russia away from the central tenets of Putinism. His speeches and writings are laced with references to freedom and fair political competition, a striking contrast to Putin's assertion of Kremlin dominance over national politics. But there is a glaring mismatch between Medvedev's words and deeds. If he aims at more than mere shadowboxing with Putin, he must embrace an agenda of glasnost and a new foreign and defense policy marked by cooperation with the West.

Is Dmitri Medvedev “for real”? That is, does he differ substantively from his mentor, sponsor, and senior partner in power, Vladimir Putin, on key policy issues facing Russia today? This is, of course, the central question of Russian politics (and of U.S.-Russian relations) in 2010. The answer is difficult to come by. Although not as tightly sealed as in the Soviet days, Kremlin politics today are again a proverbial “black box”: we can guess what happens inside only by looking carefully at what gets out. Without a doubt, the most intriguing component of this output has been Medvedev's increasingly sweeping rhetoric.

To be sure, even today Medvedev's speeches and Internet posts are far from free of the cant of Putinism with its bluster and outright fantasies.

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Thus, he solemnly unveils plans to secure Russia's world leadership in medical, telecommunication, and information technologies;¹ avers that Russia

Key points in this *Outlook*:

- Russian president Dmitri Medvedev's rhetoric may portend a break with the policies of his predecessor, Vladimir Putin.
- To prove his words are not mere rhetoric, Medvedev should begin by redressing some of the most conspicuous miscarriages of justice that marked the Putin regime.
- Should Moscow discard its zero-sum mentality in foreign policy and abandon the Soviet-style pursuit of great power status by opposing the United States and its allies, the West would welcome Russia's role as a global actor.

has a “stably functioning multiparty system” that secures the “fundamental rights and liberties of the people;”² and sings praises to Russia and the Soviet Union as noble “protectors of small peoples” and “honest” and reliable international partners in search of a “just” and “balanced” world.³ Medvedev also repeats his mentor’s mantra in decrying the Russia of the 1990s—the freest Russia that ever existed short of February–October 1917—as a time of “paralysis,”⁴ and he holds up Russia’s war with Georgia in summer 2008 as an example of the Kremlin’s might and wisdom.⁵ Most recently, Medvedev proposed a sweeping treaty on European security reminiscent of Soviet propaganda “peace initiatives” in the empty grandeur of its language, the numbing multitude of details, the vagueness of definitions, and the transparency of the Kremlin’s agenda. (In this case, the treaty appears to be aimed at giving an international imprimatur to the Kremlin’s objective of a veto power over the foreign policy and economic orientation of post-Soviet states, which, in the wake of the invasion of Georgia, Medvedev called the zone of Russia’s “privileged interests.”)⁶

Medvedev’s “Glasnost”

And yet, just as unmistakably, Russia’s president not only dissociates himself from many central tenets of Putinism but also, especially in the past five months, challenges and repudiates them—in effect chipping away at the legitimacy of the political and economic order he inherited. Medvedev has described the Russian economy as “chronically backward,” “primitive,” and dependent on raw-materials exports. Most businesses are averse to inventing or manufacturing products and, instead, trade in commodities and imported goods.⁷ Labor productivity is meager, as is the quality of “half-Soviet social services” such as health care, education, and pensions.⁸ It is a system that “largely ignores” the needs of people.⁹ People are all but defenseless against “arbitrariness,” “nonfreedom” (*nesvoboda*),¹⁰ and “disdain” for the law—products of ubiquitous and “chronic” corruption.¹¹ Widespread “paternalistic sentiments” stifle initiative and new ideas in an “archaic society,” where the “big-wigs” (*vozhd*) think and decide for everyone.¹²

While some Kremlin-sponsored textbooks have gradually reinterpreted Stalinism as an acceptable price paid for the Soviet Union’s alleged greatness and have portrayed Stalin as an “effective manager” forced by circumstances to resort to terror,¹³ Medvedev, in his

most impassioned speech to date, castigated the creeping whitewash of Stalin and Stalinism by declaring that no “state interests” could justify the “destruction of their own people” and “millions of ruined lives.”¹⁴ Echoing the glasnost consensus of 1987–91, Medvedev appears to believe it impossible to inculcate “moral values” and respect for human rights in future generations of Russians without, as a nation, fully recalling and atoning for the Stalinist terror, without recovering and preserving the memory of the perished.¹⁵ “National tragedies,” Medvedev said, are “as sacred as triumphs.”¹⁶

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A “Democratic Modernization”

Medvedev’s most portentous, if little noticed, rhetorical break with Putinism goes to the heart of a debate that has preoccupied Russian elites for almost a quarter of a century. What sort of post-Soviet modernization suits Russia best and what should its foundation be? What role should the state play? What political regime is most conducive to the modernization’s main goals? And by which criteria should success or failure be judged? In every instance, Medvedev’s answers amount to a refutation of the key aspects of Putinism.

The Russian president contends that true and lasting progress can be made only by free and creative citizens, confident of their liberty. The modernization Medvedev envisions will be founded on “humanistic values,” freedom, personal “responsibility,” and individual success.¹⁷ We must prove to ourselves and the world, he declared in his state-of-Russia address to the Federal Assembly last November, that Russia is capable of a different mode of modernization: not by coercion but by persuasion, not by repression but by the flowering of each person’s creativity, “not by fear but by self-interest.”¹⁸

In a sharp break with the national modernization paradigm, in which Western technology was imported but Western values and political culture were painstakingly and brutally blocked from entering Russia, Medvedev appears to welcome the interpenetration not only of economies but of “cultures.” He promises to “do everything” to attract the finest in Western human capital by creating the best conditions for foreign firms to establish research and construction centers in Russia.¹⁹ Medvedev seems to recognize that a truly great modern state cannot be built on petrodollars and that oil and gas cannot be the cornerstones of lasting prosperity or the engines of economic progress. Instead, Russia must develop an “intelligent” (*umnaya*), knowledge-based economy.²⁰ He also rejects another key aspect of the classic Russian modernization policy, which, from Peter the Great to Stalin (with Putin as their self-consciously proud heir), has coupled industrial breakthroughs with ever-greater expansion of state control over society; a sharp diminution of individuals’ political and economic rights and liberties; and even “maximum strain of the totalitarian machine” of the state and the “devastation, humiliation, and extermination of millions of our compatriots.”²¹

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Instead, the most frequent words in his recent speeches and blog postings are *svoboda* and *svobodnyi*, “freedom” and “free,” while his predecessor’s pride and joy, “the vertical of power” and “sovereign democracy” (euphemisms for the Kremlin’s dominance of national politics), are not mentioned once. You must win elections, not secure them “administratively,” he told the undoubtedly stunned delegates at the national congress of United Russia, the “party of power,” of which Putin is the “leader” and which Medvedev called “backward.”²² In short, Medvedev seems to believe that a regime that allows free and fair political competition will be most conducive to a steady and lasting economic progress based on entrepreneurial liberty, not the largess of the state.

The results of modernization, too, ought to be assessed not by how much it contributes to the glory of an ever-stronger state but by the increase in dignity and well-being of the people: by how much closer it takes Russia to “a more humane” and “freer” life, better suited for individual lives and “creative activity,” and to a political system that would be “freer, more just, and more humane.”²³ To describe the Russia he envisions, Medvedev used the words “free and prosperous” before “strong.”²⁴

Shadowboxing with Putin

Thus far, Putin, who continues to be far more popular than Medvedev, has chosen the political textbook strategy of ignoring his junior partner’s critique; he never takes on his protégé directly, publicly upholding the façade of unanimity. Yet Putin’s de facto refutations, in deed or word, come quickly. Thus, at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum this past June, when Medvedev and his top advisers intimated Russia’s imminent entrance into the World Trade Organization, Putin announced within days that Russia would not join except as a member of the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan “Customs Union”—that is, not in the foreseeable future. And on the same day Medvedev posted his “Russia, Forward!” article, Putin described Russian politics and the economy to a group of journalists and experts of the Valdai Club as “fully in line with international standards.”

Such rhetorical shadowboxing cannot continue indefinitely. Like Mikhail Gorbachev toward the end of 1986, Medvedev will soon discover that no progress—economic, political, or social—is possible without restoring a modicum of trust between the state and society, the power and the people. This will not be an easy task: the most damaging legacy of Putinism has been the pervasive cynicism born of daily powerlessness before lies, corruption, and cruelty—a cynicism of a scale and depth that may well exceed what Gorbachev confronted in the 1985 Soviet Union. (Then, at least, there was hope that democratization and economic liberalization were certain to lead to a dignified, moral, and prosperous state and society.) The reaction of the Russian independent media (confined largely to the Internet) to Medvedev’s rhetorical offensive epitomizes this attitude: cautiously hopeful comments have been more than counterbalanced by skepticism or even outright dismissal and derision because of the glaring mismatch between words and deeds.

Glasnost in Action: An Agenda

Gorbachev's glasnost began with the release of Andrei Sakharov, the Soviet Union's most famous dissident, from his Gorky exile in December 1986. Liberty for Sakharov was meant to symbolize Gorbachev's sharp break with the political regime he inherited. Since, as Medvedev has often pointed out, lawlessness has been the hallmark of the Putin regime, redressing some of the most conspicuous miscarriages of justice ought to be first among the measures to salve and inspire the society.

Pardon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, formerly the leading Russian entrepreneur and funder of Russian political opposition, who is about to be sentenced by a kangaroo court to up to twenty-two years in jail. For repeatedly challenging Putin's economic policies and refusing to recognize the Kremlin's monopoly on national politics, Khodorkovsky, the former chief executive officer of Yukos—once Russia's largest private oil company—along with his business partner Platon Lebedev, was convicted of fraud and tax evasion in 2005 and sentenced to eight years in prison in a trial marked by outrageous procedural violations, including the dismissal of judges and harassment of the defense. As Khodorkovsky and Lebedev neared—amid increasing abuses by the prison authorities—the middle of their terms (when they would have been eligible for parole), the authorities instigated another suit. This time, Khodorkovsky and Lebedev are charged with stealing 350 million tons of oil between 1998 and 2003. In addition to exceeding the entire Yukos production for those years, the charge explicitly negates the entire legal “theory” behind the first trial, which centered around the nonpayment of taxes on the profits Yukos made from the sale of the same oil.

Bring the masterminds of the 2006 murder of opposition journalist Anna Politkovskaya to justice, no matter how high among the Chechen or Russian authorities an honest investigation leads. A daring investigative reporter for Russia's only remaining national opposition newspaper, *Novaya gazeta*, Politkovskaya was best known for her coverage of human rights abuses by local authorities and Russian troops in Chechnya. She was killed with four shots to the head, execution-style, as she entered her apartment building on October 7, 2006. In February 2009, a Moscow jury unanimously acquitted the three men charged with the murder, but the Supreme Court overturned the acquittals and ordered a new trial

of the original defendants and a fourth man (an FSB colonel), all of whom—even if they were guilty—clearly only followed orders, not gave them.

Conduct a swift public investigation into the torture and, in effect, judicial murder of the lawyer Sergei Magnitsky and prosecute those who ordered them. An outside counsel to Hermitage Capital Management, formerly the largest foreign investment firm in Russia, Magnitsky dared to investigate the illegal takeover of Hermitage and the bilking of the Russian state out of \$230 million in a fraudulent “tax refund.” Charged, like virtually all the opponents of the regime, with “tax evasion,” he died in pretrial detention in horrible pain from pancreatitis and gallbladder disease, which the prison authorities refused to allow to be treated, in an apparent effort by the prosecution to coerce Magnitsky to commit perjury and admit guilt.²⁵ Thus far, Medvedev has fired only prison officials. Yet, just like a “tax refund” scam on so giant a scale, the orders to torture could have come only from officials high up in the tax police, perhaps even from within the Kremlin hierarchy.

Investigate the October 2009 local “elections,” widely reported to be shamelessly rigged to ensure the victory of United Russia. These elections prompted the parliament's minority parties to stage a rare walkout during Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Moscow last year.²⁶ If the plausible allegations of fraud are confirmed, the officials responsible should be identified and prosecuted for the fraud, and new elections should be scheduled as quickly as technically possible.

Audit state corporations. Medvedev should follow up on the promise, made in his address to the Federal Assembly, to audit “state corporations.”²⁷ Created by Putin with a multimillion dollar injection of entire state funds and modeled on Gazprom and Rosneft, “state corporations” are widely believed to be hubs of corruption and mismanagement.²⁸ Moreover, the government sector, which grew enormously under Putin, must open itself to greater scrutiny and accountability.

Investigate the murder of Alexander Litvinenko. A former KGB and FSB officer, Litvinenko claimed to have been given an order to assassinate Putin's avowed political foe, the Russian tycoon Boris Berezovsky. Instead, he confessed his orders to Berezovsky, went into exile in London, and joined Berezovsky-led and funded

opposition to the Putin regime. Three weeks after meeting former KGB and FSB officer Andrei Lugovoi on November 1, 2006, Litvinenko fell ill and died from poisoning with radionuclide polonium-210, which almost certainly came from Russia. In May 2007, British authorities submitted a formal request for Lugovoi's extradition. Russian authorities refused, citing the ban on extradition in the constitution, and, instead, directed the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia to include Lugovoi in the list of candidates for the December 2007 Duma election. Duly elected, Lugovoi now enjoys deputy immunity from prosecution. Using the evidence collected by Scotland Yard as a starting point, an honest investigation should be launched to establish Lugovoi's role in Litvinenko's murder. If there is sufficient evidence to bring Lugovoi to trial, a Duma vote to strip Lugovoi of his immunity should not be hard for the Kremlin to obtain. The trial should be conducted with all the openness and respect of the defendant's rights guaranteed in any modern civilized court.

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Investigate honestly and fully the September 1999 apartment building bombings. From September 4–16, 1999, nearly three hundred people were killed in explosions in four apartment buildings in Buynaksk, Moscow, and Volgogradsk. Critics of the Putin regime have alleged that the explosions were engineered by the secret services to justify the reinvasion of Chechnya and boost Putin's popularity.²⁹

Relax and then abolish the Kremlin's censorship of television. The Putin regime shut out its leading critics from national television, which is by far the most important source of information for the majority of the country's population. The networks' executives and talk show hosts are closely watched by the Kremlin to make sure forbidden topics are not broached in any form and black-listed individuals are not interviewed. The violators are immediately dismissed and their shows closed down.

With only a small minority of Russians capable of, or interested in, seeking their news on the Internet, the situation, again, is reminiscent of the state of affairs before 1987: fed only government-approved information, most people are unaware of the true state of affairs in their country, including the extent of the economic crisis, human rights violations, the subversion of law, and the authorities' incompetence and corruption. Just as glasnost provided broad-based support for perestroika (structural, political, and economic change), so the relaxation or abolition of censorship has a chance of inspiring the popular support Medvedev needs to implement the reforms he talks about.

Breaking with the Zero-Sum Mentality in Foreign Policy

Medvedev supplied a fairly complete description of the emotional core of Putin's foreign policy when he called for an end to the era of "petulance, haughtiness, the inferiority complex, mistrust, and hostility" in relations with leading democracies³⁰ and for the reversal of confrontation, self-isolation, nostalgia, and prejudice.³¹

A change of political regime almost always precipitates an alteration in at least some important elements of a country's foreign policy. This is so because new values mean a new ideology—new ideas about how the nation should live and what it should strive for. In turn, ideology defines priorities and priorities shape policies.

As readers have been reminded on several occasions in these pages, it is hard to find a better illustration of this axiom than the transformation of the Soviet Union's and Russia's behavior in the past quarter-century, with the transitions from Konstantin Chernenko to Gorbachev, from Boris Yeltsin to Putin, and from what has been labeled in these pages as "Putin-1" to "Putin-2" and "Putin-3."³²

After his reelection in 2004, and especially following his speech in Munich in February 2007, Putin's foreign and defense policy increasingly looked as if guided by a zero-sum mentality: if the United States or its allies won, Russia lost. In the Kremlin's steadily expanding definitions of wins and losses, the alleged defeats came to include more democratic and Western orientations in the foreign and domestic policies of post-Soviet states, especially the prodemocracy "color" revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, which were perceived as U.S. plots.

A very similar mentality shaped the Soviet Union's foreign and defense policies until Gorbachev's "new political thinking," with its "de-ideologization of international

relations,” its emphasis on “pan-human values” instead of the “class” dogmas of Marxism, and its rejection of the “ideology of revolutionary messianism.”³³ Within a few years, “perestroika in foreign policy” led to the elimination of intermediate-range nuclear-tipped missiles (the “zero option”); the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; the nuclear test ban; and the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, which sharply reduced the deployment of Soviet and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) weaponry (including the elimination of the Soviet Union’s overwhelming preponderance in tanks) and established a system of mutual verification procedures to prevent future crises.³⁴

In November 1990, the Soviet Union voted for United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 678, which authorized the use of force against Iraq, a major Soviet client and arms importer, and paved the way for the U.S.-led Operation Desert Storm, which ousted Iraq from Kuwait. Similarly, in 1995, Russia banned sales of missiles to Iran.³⁵

A New Foreign Policy Agenda

If, as his rhetoric might suggest, Medvedev’s goal is regime change rather than window dressing, changes in foreign and defense policy are likely to follow the regime evolution, just as the transformation of domestic politics under Gorbachev and, after the August 1991 revolution, under Yeltsin were responsible for the “radical turn” in Russian foreign policy.³⁶ Far from being a favor to the United States, a similar evolution will greatly advance Russia’s strategic goals. Faced with enormous political, economic, social, and geostrategic challenges, Russia will soon have to make a choice between what leading Russian foreign policy thinker Dmitri Trenin called “modernization” and “marginalization”: between dynamism, openness, freedom, and prosperity on the one hand and authoritarianism, isolation, poverty, and even a breakup on the other.³⁷

The former option presupposes much higher levels of trust and cooperation than exists today between Russia and the West. Indeed, as a group of foreign policy intellectuals close to Medvedev suggested recently, given the overlap in long-term strategic interests between Russia and the United States, such a choice may lead to a “new entente” with Washington: “It is in Russia’s interests,” they wrote, “to join a community of nations with a democratic political system, respect for human rights and free enterprise, and honest courts. . . . A political and defense alliance with the United States will be a key step

in such a joining-together of democracies.”³⁸ Should Moscow discard its zero-sum attitude and abandon the Soviet-style pursuit of great power status by opposing the United States and its allies, the West would welcome—rather than view with concern—Russia’s role as a global actor.³⁹

Faced with enormous political, economic, social, and geostrategic challenges, Russia will soon have to make a choice between “modernization” and “marginalization.”

Iran. Russia is undoubtedly sincere when it says that it finds the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran very troubling. Yet policymaking is about choices, and in the Kremlin’s strategic calculus the benefits of opposing the United States on the Iranian issue thus far have outweighed this concern significantly, making progress on the issue difficult with Putin at the helm. A departure from this policy would be demonstrated by:

- Announcing the cancelation of the currently “suspended” delivery of S-300 surface-to-air missiles to Tehran.
- Suspending all technical assistance and technology and materiel transfer to Iran for being in direct noncompliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) “demand” for “an immediate halt” to uranium enrichment at the Qom facility.⁴⁰
- Voting with the United States, Great Britain, and France in the UN Security Council.

Afghanistan. The Taliban’s retaking of Afghanistan and the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia would be a serious strategic setback for Russia. Yet Moscow appears concerned that a decisive victory by U.S.-led NATO forces (the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF) would boost U.S. influence in the region, which Russia considers firmly within its sphere of “privileged interests.” Thus, while assisting the ISAF’s efforts since 2001, Russia’s support has waxed and waned, dipping significantly in 2007, when the zero-sum rationale became the unchallenged doctrine of Russian

foreign policy.⁴¹ Following several recent steps in the right direction, Moscow should demonstrate a further change in its zero-sum strategy by:

- Helping secure the most effective—fastest and cheapest—transit routes for lethal (by air) and nonlethal (by air and ground) supplies to Afghanistan and working with the United States and NATO to expand the transportation of lethal supplies by air over Russian territory, per the June 2009 agreement.⁴²
- Using Russia's influence over Central Asian states to help ease the establishment, or expansion, of U.S. and NATO bases and facilitate the purchase of local supplies, especially fuel, by the ISAF.
- Increasing assistance to Central Asian states in the interdiction of the Taliban-sponsored narcotics transit—93 percent of the world's heroin is made from opium produced in Afghanistan⁴³—over Afghanistan's border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan and aiding in the training of Afghan counternarcotic agents and Afghan police in general, as NATO has requested.⁴⁴
- Expanding Russia's materiel assistance to the Afghan armed forces, especially by donating used helicopters and small arms.⁴⁵

Ukraine. Ever since the 2004 prodemocracy “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine demonstrated a powerful alternative to Putin's authoritarian “sovereign democracy” and the “vertical of power,” Moscow has applied political and economic levers to denigrate the Ukrainian people's choice, delegitimize the Ukrainian democracy, and reverse Ukraine's increasingly pro-Western political and economic orientation. Among the steps Russia may take to redress the situation:

- End the brinkmanship with Kiev over the Russian Black Sea fleet and Crimea.
- Issue a statement confirming Russia's intention to fulfill its obligations under the May 31, 1997, Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine and, by 2017, withdraw the Black Sea fleet from the Sevastopol naval base, currently leased from Ukraine.

- Issue a statement affirming Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea, including Sevastopol, and pledge to refrain from any support of the Russian separatists in Crimea.

Georgia. The November 2003 “Rose Revolution” in Georgia sharply changed the country's domestic political and foreign policy orientation away from Russia—a development that Moscow could not reconcile itself to and tried to reverse by all means, including economic boycotts, the economic and military sponsorship of the breakaway Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and a brief war with Georgia in August 2008. The change of course here might entail:

- Ending the insulting and belligerent rhetoric directed at Tbilisi.
- Reassuring Georgia publicly that the war between Georgia and Russia ended in 2008 and that Russia is prepared to normalize Russo-Georgian relations.⁴⁶
- Using Moscow's influence on its clients Abkhazia and South Ossetia to begin reducing tensions between the breakaway provinces and Georgia.
- Fulfilling Russia's obligations under the six-point agreement negotiated on August 12, 2008, by Medvedev and French president Nicolas Sarkozy by withdrawing Russian troops from all Georgian territory outside of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, beginning with the withdrawal of troops from the Georgian village of Perevi, where Russia continues to maintain checkpoints.⁴⁷
- Beginning to draw down the 7,000 Russian troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and cancel the deployment of an additional 1,800 troops currently scheduled to arrive in Abkhazia this year.⁴⁸
- Beginning talks with Georgia on reducing tensions in the Black Sea, where Georgia's interdiction of vessels headed to Abkhazia and Russia's commitment to protecting them may escalate into an armed conflict.

Missile Defense and Arms Control. Russia's vehement opposition to missile defense against attacks from rogue states like Iran and North Korea has been among the

main irritants in U.S.-Russian relations. This resistance, in the main, has been driven not by any substantive threats that missile defense might pose to Russia but by the same zero-sum mentality that permeated other aspects of Russian foreign policy. To signal an evolution of its policy away from this *modus operandi*, Medvedev might consider:

- Abandoning the propaganda fear-mongering about Russia's alleged inability to retaliate against an utterly inconceivable U.S. nuclear missile attack on Russia, if the United States deploys an area missile defense.
- Adopting a less rigid posture with respect to the link between the reductions in offensive nuclear arms and missile defense.⁴⁹
- Embracing strategic global missile defense as extremely beneficial to Russian security and cooperate, in good faith, with the United States and NATO on its research and deployment.⁵⁰

From Glasnost to Perestroika

As with Gorbachev before the end of 1986, no one can tell today what Medvedev's real agenda is or whether he will be able to act on it. Yet, if the Russian president is indeed determined to follow in Gorbachev's momentous footsteps, his rhetoric should be a prologue to actions. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and Medvedev's attempt at *glasnost* (moral renewal through truth) must be followed by *perestroika* (policies)—or fade into irrelevance.

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Notes

1. Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii" [Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation] (speech, Moscow, November 12, 2009), available at <http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/5979/print> (accessed December 1, 2009).

2. Ibid.

3. Dmitri Medvedev, "Rossiya, vperyod!" [Russia, Forward!] *Gazeta.ru*, September 10, 2009, available at www.gazeta.ru/

[comments/2009/09/10_a_3258568.shtml](http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/5979/print) (accessed December 2, 2009).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Kremlin, "Proekt Dogovora o evropeyskoy bezopasnosti" [A Draft Treaty on European Security], proposal sent to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, November 29, 2009, available at <http://kremlin.ru/news/6152> (accessed December 2, 2009); and Leon Aron, "The Georgia Watershed," *AEI Russian Outlook* (Fall 2008), available at www.aei.org/outlook/28922.

7. Kremlin, "Proekt Dogovora o evropeyskoy bezopasnosti."

8. Dmitri Medvedev, "Rossiya, vperyod!"

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii."

13. See Leon Aron, "The Problematic Pages," *The New Republic*, September 24, 2008, available at www.aei.org/article/28586; and Leon Aron, "The Politics of Memory," *AEI Russian Outlook* (Summer 2008), available at www.aei.org/outlook/28503.

14. Dmitri Medvedev, "Pamyat' o natsional'nykh tragediyakh tak zhe svyashchenna, kak pamyat' o pobedakh" [The Memory of National Tragedies Is as Sacred as the Memory of Triumphs], Dmitri Medvedev's Videoblog, October 30, 2009, available at <http://blog.kremlin.ru/post/35/transcript> (accessed December 2, 2009).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Dmitri Medvedev, "Rossiya, vperyod!"

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii."

21. Dmitri Medvedev, "Rossiya, vperyod!"

22. Ellen Barry, "Medvedev Says 'Backwardness' Undermines Party," *New York Times*, November 22, 2009.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. "Iuridicheski nevinovnyi chelovek umer v tiur'me samym sred-nevekovym obrazom" [A legally innocent person has died in prison in the most medieval way]. Quoted in "Ot redaktsii: Zalozhniki sledstviia" [Editorial: Hostages of Investigation], *Vedomosti*, November 18, 2009, available at <http://zeki.su/publikacii/2009/11/18010715.html> (accessed January 8, 2010). See also Ellen Barry, "Russia to Investigate Fund Lawyer's Death," *New York Times*, November 24, 2009; and "Doklad ob obstoiatel'stvakh smerti Sergeia Magnitskogo" [Report on the Circumstances of Sergei Magnitsky's Death], *Obshchestvennoi*

nabliudatel'noi komissii [Public Oversight Commission], available at www.rb.ru/inform/127947.html (accessed January 8, 2010).

26. Guy Faulconbridge, "Russia's Medvedev Snubs Opposition in Election Row," Reuters, October 15, 2009.

27. Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii."

28. Medvedev declared the "state corporations" to be "without future" and suggested that they be gradually transformed into joint-stock firms and eventually privatized. See Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii."

29. Helen Womack, "Russian Blast Deaths Blamed on Terrorism," *The Independent* (London), September 10, 1999.

30. Dmitri Medvedev, "Rossiya, vperyod!"

31. Dmitri Medvedev, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniyu Rossiyskoy Federatsii."

32. See Leon Aron, "Russia's New Foreign Policy," *AEI Russian Outlook* (Spring 1998), available at www.aei.org/outlook/8990; Leon Aron, "Is Russia Really Lost?" *AEI Russian Outlook* (Fall 1999), available at www.aei.org/outlook/15088; Leon Aron, "Putin-3," *AEI Russian Outlook* (Winter 2008), available at www.aei.org/outlook/27367; and Leon Aron, "The Button and the Bear," *AEI Russian Outlook* (Summer 2009), available at www.aei.org/outlook/100055.

33. See, for example, Georgy Shakhnazarov, "Vostok-Zapad. K voprosu o deideologizatsii mezhdgosudarstvennykh otnosheniy" [East-West. On the Question of the De-ideologization of International Relations], *Kommunist* 3 (1989): 67; V. Dashichev, "Evropa otkrytykh dverey" [A Europe of Open Doors], *Komsomol'skaya pravda* (February 20, 1990): 2; and Viktor Sheynis, "Perestroika na novom etape: opasnosti i problemy" [A New Phase of Perestroika: Dangers and Problems], in *Postizhenie*, ed. F. M. Borodkin, L. Ya Kosals, and P. V. Ryvkina (Moscow: Progress, 1989), 375.

34. Alexander Bovin, "Perestroika i vneshnyaya politika" [Perestroika and Foreign Policy], *Izvestia* (June 16, 1988): 5.

35. See, for example, "Yeltsin Says Russia Will Not Sell Missiles to Iran," *Moscow Interfax*, March 12, 1997, available at www.fas.org/news/iran/1997/970312_03.htm (accessed on January 8, 2010); and "Russian-Iran Ties Remain Issue at Gore-Chernomyrdin Meeting," *Arms Control Association*, September 1997, available at www.armscontrol.org/print/249 (accessed January 8, 2010).

36. Michael McFaul, "Revolutionary Ideas, State Interests, and Russian Foreign Policy," in *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the States of Eurasia*, ed. Vladimir Tesmaneanu (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), 29.

37. Dmitri Trenin, "Medvedev Is Tasked with Modernization," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 6, 2010, available at <http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24656> (accessed January 7, 2010).

38. Sergei Dubinin, Evgeny Savost'yanov, and Igor Yurgens, "Novaya antanta" [A New Entente], *Gazeta.ru*, November 16,

2009, available at www.gazeta.ru/comments/2009/11/16_a_3287423.shtml (accessed January 11, 2010).

39. Frederick W. Kagan, conversation with the author, December 17, 2009.

40. See Helene Cooper and William J. Broad, "Russia and China Endorse Agency's Rebuke of Iran," *New York Times*, November 27, 2009.

41. Stratfor Global Intelligence, "Russia: An Opportunistic Helping Hand in Afghanistan," December 2, 2009, available at http://74.125.47.132/search?q=cache:BJE6YEEYy55gJ:www.stratfor.com/analysis/20091202_opportunistic_helping_hand_afghanistan+russia+afghanistan+shipment&hl=en&gl=us&strip=0 (accessed December 23, 2009).

42. During the April 2009 Obama-Medvedev summit in London, the Russian president offered lethal transit through Russia to Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Air Transit Agreement, allowing 4,500 military flights and an unlimited number of commercial charters, was signed in Moscow at the July 6 Moscow summit. Thus far, Russia has approved twenty-three overflight requests and has denied one. As of January 26, 2010, the United States has flown four military and eight commercial planes under the agreement, although some of the approved flights were diverted for urgent operational needs elsewhere or canceled for mechanical reasons. U.S. officials cite the "difficulty of meshing two very different bureaucracies" to "get the process and procedures" in place as the reason for relatively few flights over Russia thus far. Yet the Pentagon remains "hopeful" that the overflight agreement will continue to contribute in major ways to logistical efforts commensurate with the troop-level increase in Afghanistan. As regards ground transit of non-lethal supplies, then-president Putin offered ground nonlethal transit to NATO at the April 2008 NATO Summit, and the U.S. TRANSCOM began transporting nonlethal supplies through Russia in late February 2009. This cargo included primarily food, water, and building materials. As of January 2010, approximately 5,000 containers have transited through Russia. With respect to a lethal ground transit, U.S. officials describe this as a good option to have "in principle," adding that "it is not something that has been formally requested of Russia. (The author is most grateful to Celeste A. Wallander for this update on a crucial aspect of U.S.-Russian relations. Celeste Wallander, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia, conversation with the author, January 25, 2010. See also Oleg Shchedrov, "Only One U.S. Cargo Flown to Afghanistan via Russia," Reuters, October 7, 2009, available at www.reuters.com/article/idUSL7580723 (accessed December 23, 2009); and "Russia, U.S. to Sign Military Cooperation, Afghan Transit Deals," RIA Novosti, July 3, 2009, available at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090703/155424800.html> (accessed

December 23, 2009); Michael Schwartz, "Pact to Allow Cargo to Afghanistan through Kazakhstan," *New York Times*, January 28, 2010; and Stratfor Global Intelligence, "Russia: An Opportunistic Helping Hand in Afghanistan.")

43. Ahmed Rashid, "The Afghanistan Impasse," *The New York Review of Books*, October 8, 2009

44. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, interview by Aleksei Venediktov and Nargiz Asadova, *Echo Moskvy*, December 16, 2009, available at www.echo.msk.ru/guests/640817-echo (accessed February 10, 2010); and Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO and Russia, Partners for the Future" (speech, Moscow State Institute for International Relations, Moscow, December 17, 2009), available at www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_60223.htm (accessed February 10, 2010).

45. *Ibid.*; and Clifford J. Levy, "At Kremlin, NATO's Chief Seeks Military Help in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, December 17, 2009.

46. Frederick W. Kagan, conversation with the author, December 17, 2009.

47. European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM), "On Anniversary of Initial Withdrawal: EUMM Calls on Russian Authorities to Honour Commitments under Six-Point Agreement and Withdraw from Perevi Checkpoint," news release, November 12, 2009, available at www.eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/1804 (accessed December 22, 2009).

48. Matt Robinson and Amie Ferris-Rotman, "Georgia Peace Fragile One Year after War," Reuters, August 4, 2009; and Samantha Shields, "Russian Presence Grows in Abkhazia," *Wall Street Journal*, December 14, 2009.

49. On June 20, 2009, Medvedev stated that Russia "could not agree to the American plans of creating a global PRO [anti-missile defense]" and that "under any circumstances" Russia would insist that the "linkage" between offensive and defensive arms be "clearly spelled out in the [new strategic arms control] treaty. See Pavel Fel'gengauer, "Trebuem politicheskogo samoubiystva" [We Are Demanding a Political Suicide], *Novaya gazeta*, June 24, 2009.

50. Frederick W. Kagan, conversation with the author, December 17, 2009.