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Erecting the New Wall

Geopolitics and the restructuring of Europe

By Zoltan Grossman

It was in a noisy nursing home in Chicago that my 79-year-old grandmother put the Bosnian war in context. I was holding her hand, talking with her in Hungarian about relatives we had scattered around villages in southwestern Hungary. She mentioned that we also had a few distant relatives in Yugoslavia. "But Grandma," I said, "there is no more Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia has broken up." "Really?" she asked. "Yes Grandma, there are four new countries, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia."

"Bosnia?," she shot back. "Yes Grandma," I said, "Bosnia." "Bosnia?," she asked again. "Yes Grandma" I said again, "Bosnia. And there's a terrible war there now," She then smiled and, out of nowhere, recited:

Stop, stop Serbian dogs
You'll never get Bosnia
The Hungarians won't let you
We'll fight to the last drop of blood
Serbian dogs

Pretty crude, but it rhymes in Hungarian. What Grandma had remembered was a song she learned as a little girl, as the Austro-Hungarian Empire was fighting Serbia, having lost an Austrian archduke to a Serb assassin in Sarajevo. She didn't know that Serb artillery was pounding Sarajevo that week, but could easily remember a nursery rhyme from World War I. The fact that the two conflicts are so similar speaks volumes about the history of Europe.

What Is Europe?

Europe has always been a political and cultural definition. Geographically, Europe does not exist, since it is only a peninsula on the vast Eurasian continent. Before the 19th century, geographers generally referred to it as "Christendom." When colonialism began to spread Western culture and religion to all corners of the globe, some British and German geographers began to delineate the eastern boundaries of a European continent. What they were actually doing was trying to draw the eastern limits of "Western civilization" and the white race. (While Russia extended far into Siberia, only a thin strip was actually populated by ethnic Russians.)

Since they had to give some geophysical explanation for carving off Europe, the geographers offered a variety of natural boundaries. Today, the boundary of Europe is generally agreed to go through the straits of the Dardanelles and Bosporus (next to the Turkish city of Istanbul), the Black Sea, Caucasus Mountains, then up the Caspian Sea, Ural River, and Ural Mountains to Russia's Arctic shores. The trouble with this line is that it includes a number of non-Christian peoples in Europe—from Bosnian Muslims to Kalmyk Buddhists—as well as nations outside the mainstream of Western Christianity.

Throughout history, Western European powers have tried to unify Europe, usually by force. The Roman Empire conquered the Mediterranean coasts of Europe, Asia and Africa. After Christianity took hold in the Empire, the Church split into two halves. The Western Roman Empire adopted a Western form of Christianity, which evolved into Roman Catholicism. The Eastern Roman (or Byzantine) Empire adopted Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The Legacy of this Great Schism of 1054 can be seen today on European street signs, with Western countries using the Roman alphabet, and Eastern Orthodox countries usually using the Greek derived Cyrillic alphabet.

Both the Western and Eastern branches of Christianity battled with Islam throughout the Middle Ages. Crusaders temporarily seized the Holy Land in the 1200s, and Christian armies

drove the Muslims out of Spain by 1492. The Muslim Turks of the Ottoman Empire counter-attacked, conquering most of the Balkans in southeastern Europe. The modern nations of Bosnia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova, and most of Romania were still under Ottoman rule in the late 19th century, when industrialization began in Western Europe. Since they did not make that crucial early jump to industrialism, the Balkan countries still lack what Westerners call a "capitalist ethic." Yet they also preserved their Eastern Orthodox and Muslim traditions.

To the north, the Austrian Empire consolidated control over what is now Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, and parts of Poland, Ukraine, and Romania. It solidified a capitalist ethic and Catholic belief system throughout this region. After Martin Luther founded Protestantism, Swedish and German empires spread it along the Baltic coastal region.

A clear "fault line" began to emerge down the face of Central Europe. To the west of that line, Catholic and Protestant Christianity prevailed. To the east, Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Sunni Islam still held sway. The conflicts between these regions reflected not so much differences in religious doctrine, but different levels of development and global power.

Crossing the "fault line" has proved fatal to those European conquerors who tried to build a continental empire. Napoleon Bonaparte was turned back on the outskirts of Moscow in 1812, as much by Russia's resolve as by its winter. Adolf Hitler was similarly defeated at Stalingrad in 1943 as he sought *lebensraum* (living space) for his German-controlled *Mitteleuropa* (Central Europe). His adversary, Josef Stalin, took control over the Baltic states, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and East Germany—all Western-oriented countries that would later begin the unraveling of his empire. Even in the 20th century, the Great Schism has proven impossible to bridge.

Western European Integration

In the 1990s, Europe is on its way to becoming one of the world's superpowers. It needn't be in the form of a federal United States of Europe, without national boundaries appearing on the map. What is forming is a transnational European Union—a regional alliance of Western and Central European states around economic, political, and military issues. Europe doesn't have to become one nation, though it could end up that way. The Union is growing out of existing economic alliances, in fits and starts. But despite setbacks in the process of integration, the march toward Union is probably unstoppable.

All of the continent's nations—East and West—are members of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which is not an alliance but a forum for discussing mutual concerns. The real nucleus of the new Europe is in the European Union (EU). The postwar common cause of Western Europe led to the birth of the European Community (EC)—the EU's initial form—in the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Starting with France, West Germany, Italy, and the Benelux nations (Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg), it grew to incorporate the UK, Denmark, and the poorer countries of Ireland, Greece, Spain, and Portugal. Some smaller but wealthy nations—Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland—formed the parallel alliance called the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

Economic union. In a series of decisions in 1988, the EC decided to eliminate most trade and tariff barriers between member states as of January 1, 1993. This economic integration process brought predictions of a European "super-market" and eventual political-economic union. In December 1991, EC nations signed the Treaty on European Union in the Dutch city of Maastricht, creating a new European Union of all EC members. The treaty laid out a roadmap to reach these goals. Despite some close calls in Denmark, the UK, and France the treaty took effect in November 1993.

The first priority of integrating Western Europe is economic and monetary union. This includes the establishment of a European Monetary System (EMS), a European Currency Unit (ECU) by 1999, and a European Monetary Institute (EMI), whose new Frankfurt headquarters is the nucleus of a European central bank.

The obstacles to economic union have been formidable. French farmers launched blockades of Paris to protest lifting protective tariffs. Italy and the UK dropped out of the European Rate Mechanism (ERM) to protest Germany's strengthening of the Deutschmark at their expense. Finally, many Europeans remain resentful of the faceless EU bureaucrats (or "Eurocrats") in the EU headquarters city of Brussels, proposing policies through an undemocratic process. Nevertheless, the lure of a united European economy is proving just barely stronger than the instinct to guard national sovereignty.

At the same time, EFTA nations are lining up to join the EU, now that joining would not violate some EFTA

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members' political neutrality. Austria and Sweden may join soon. In 1991, the EC and EFTA jointly agreed to the establishment of a European Economic Area (EEA), with a total market of 380 million people. By 2000, the EFTA will probably no longer exist.

Political union. The second priority of European integration is political union. The European Parliament is located in the French Alsace city of Strasbourg, rather than in Brussels. Parliament elections have slowly turned from purely symbolic affairs to real hard-fought campaigns, which at times have served as early-warning systems for trends in national elections. In the early 1990s, EU voters turned increasingly toward previously marginal parties—such as regional advocates, extreme-right groups, and environmentalist Greens—rather than the traditional conservative and social democratic alliances. The Maastricht Treaty increased the parliament's powers, as well as the rights of citizens to petition it.

The internal politics of EU states is being shaped like never before by the "European question." The resignation of anti-union Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in November 1990 removed a major obstacle to fuller UK involvement. Italy, France, and other countries are shedding traditional political parties in favor of newer but more tumultuous alliances. Their move not only is an effort to stem extreme corruption and alienation from government, but to abandon the party-centered political system imposed on them after World War II. Leaders such as French President Francois Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl see the European Union as a guarantee of future political stability.

Military union. A similar process is taking place in Europe's military integration. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has linked the U.S., Canada, and most of Western Europe against the Soviet Union. With the Soviet collapse, the impetus for NATO has diminished. Since 1955, EU nations have participated in the Western European Union (WEU) military alliance, which in the Cold War years was indistinguishable from NATO. In 1992, however, a Franco-German corps was founded as a nucleus for a future European army. Also, French and British troops have operated somewhat independently in Bosnia, despite U.S. insistence that any intervention be under the NATO umbrella. Both issues set off alarm bells in Washington, always wary to what Henry Kissinger once called the "decoupling" of Europe from the U.S. The Maastricht Treaty called for increased "joint actions" by European Union states.

Some nations have proposed that NATO expand to the east, starting with Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. These countries would have to upgrade their militaries to NATO levels, and their domestic and foreign problems would then become NATO's problems. NATO membership is also no guarantor of democracy, given past dictatorships in member states Portugal, Greece, and Turkey. In the meantime, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) provides a loose forum on military affairs for all NATO, ex-Warsaw Pact, and ex-Soviet states.

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But a European military will be slow in coming. WEU nations have not arrived at a common position on the largest European military conflict since the 1940s—the war in Bosnia. The UN-sponsored naval blockade of Yugoslavia in 1993 was a joint operation of European warships under the WEU and U.S. warships under NATO. Interestingly, despite the extremely high level of militarization in Europe since the 1940s, the Adriatic Sea blockade was the first real military operation ever by either alliance. NATO may be on its way out, but it will not be as sudden a change as the unraveling of the Warsaw Pact. As Europe grows stronger, it will not only want to defend itself, but U.S. taxpayers will insist that it does so.

The break-ups inside the union. As Europe grows larger

and more powerful, its components are ironically growing smaller. The growing integration of nation-states can give more breathing room to regions within each country. As multiethnic countries in Eastern Europe break up, the multiethnic and multiregional countries of Western Europe are breaking up too. Before European integration, Scots would be out in the cold if they had seceded from the United Kingdom. Now, an independent Scotland would not only be economically tied to the UK, but to other EU countries as well. Just as the USSR splintered into 15 countries, the UK could break into four countries. (Besides England, Scotland, and Wales, Northern Ireland could become an independent state, or join the Republic of Ireland—perhaps with an autonomous Protestant region.) The united Europe will be a union not so much of countries, but of the historic regions that predated and formed the countries in the first place. The Maastricht Treaty created a committee of regions (or "subnational governments") to consult on legislation—perhaps a precursor to a more powerful parliamentary "house of regions."

Nation-states such as Italy and Germany only formed in the late 19th century. Now, Italian northern regions are voting the right-wing autonomist Northern League into power, and eastern Germans are strongly resenting arbitrary rule by western Germans. Spain's ethnic minority regions of Catalunya and Euzkadi (formerly Catalonia and the Basque Country) could become independent members of the EU, not to mention the traditional Spanish regions of Andalusia, Galicia, Castile-Leon, and others. The relatively well-off northern regions of both Spain and Italy want to be seen as part of Europe's industrial heartland, not its less developed south.

Other long-standing ethnic conflicts could splinter nation-states within a united Europe. Belgium could split into French speaking Walloonia and Dutch-speaking Flanders. The island of Corsica and the Celtic peninsula of Breizh (Britanny) have long sought real autonomy from France. Even in peaceful Switzerland, French-speaking voters have been more amenable to joining the EU than the German-speaking Swiss majority, who are historically mistrustful of Germany.

However, European integration will hardly be a godsend for the smaller cultures of the continent. Already, the market for Finnish books in Finland is being overwhelmed by books in English and German. A multilingual society builds a basis for cultural understanding, but also contains the dangers of cultural homogenization, American style. While minority peoples may break free from nation-states, they may grow even more dependent on their economies and media. A European superstate would crush any genuine movements for cultural change.

The new European Union challenges the basic rationale behind the nation-state. The U.S. State Department Office of the Geographer recognized as much in its quarterly *Geographic and Global Issues:* (Spring 1993): "Changing concepts of territorial sovereignty and even of the state are bringing more variation in the functions of international boundaries and a tendency for decline in the number or level of functions a boundary may perform. A single international boundary symbol no longer will suffice for the world political map. Examples of this variation are the boundaries proposed for a new, united Western Europe which will become less of a barrier than they were. . . . An international boundary on land traditionally controlled the flow of both people and trade. Increasingly, modern economic communities or bilateral trade agreements have retained control over the movement of people but have reduced or dispensed with many of the controls over trade. The European Community has begun the process of dismantling Western Europe's borders. As the EC evolves in the decade ahead, it plans gradually to eliminate all intra-EC barriers to the flow of people, goods, services, and capital."

Central European Expansion

Mikhail Gorbachev's vision of a "common European home . . . from the Atlantic to the Urals" echoed writers from Victor Hugo to E.P. Thompson. But will all of Europe be united in the EU? Who else will be admitted into the New Europe? Who will be left out or kicked out?

As long as Warsaw Pact nations remained in the Moscow-led Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), there was no question of a Western European alliance expanding to the east. As long as Europe was split, there was no question of building a true continental union. But with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, both questions were reopened.

The "fault line" between Western and Eastern Christianity is fast becoming the frontier of the new European superpower. From Murmansk on the Barents Sea, to Dubrovnik on the Adriatic, a New Wall is being built across the continent. The wall is not "new" at all, since it dates back to the Great Schism and the Crusades. What is new is the recognition that it never really went away.

In the west, mainly Catholic and Protestant coun-

tries of Western and Central Europe will be part of this new economic giant. To the east, Eastern Orthodox and Muslim nations will be left out, seen as a reserve of cheap labor, cheap resources, and debt repayment. The most likely candidates for full EU membership are thus Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Baltic states, Slovenia, and Croatia.

The appeal of joining a European economic superpower-in-the-making was extremely tempting to citizens of Communist Party-ruled countries, as they stood in line for basic consumer goods. It was especially tempting to those ethnic groups who did not share a cultural-religious heritage with Russia. It is no accident that the period between 1988 (the EC decision for a single market) and 1993 (the target date for EU economic integration) saw the upheavals in Eastern Europe. The Western-oriented nations in Central Europe (or at least their elites) were not only rebelling against Communist rule, but for being in a position to join the new Europe. The uprisings had as much to do with the West as with the East.

The reunification of Germany in October 1990 pushed the frontiers of the EC toward the east, as East German voters dissolved their country. While some voters looked toward a glorious future for Germany alone, most favored a united state within the context of an integrated Europe. European leaders such as French President Francois Mitterrand see a stronger EU as the best check on any future German resurgence, and a stronger EU means an expanded EU that encircles Germany.

Poland and Hungary. Poland and Hungary were always the Warsaw Pact states most oriented toward the West. The military repression of popular workers' movements in Hungary in 1956, and in Poland in 1981, turned many Hungarians and Poles away from state socialism. In both countries, the Communist leadership cracked down on dissent, but at the same time instituted capitalist managerial practices. The anti-labor policies of the Communists became indistinguishable from the policies of capitalist countries that at least had more press freedom and consumer goods. In 1989, Poland elected a Solidarity-led government, and Hungary opened its borders—the two events that sparked the collapse of Soviet Communism. Both countries are first in line for EU membership (a status not changed by the resurgent strength of ex-Communist parties), and have formed the Central European Free Trade Alliance (CEFTA) together with the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia. The 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia similarly embittered Czechs and Slovaks toward Socialist government. After they ousted the Communist Party in 1989, they elected liberal playwright Vaclav Havel as president. But their choices of prime minister were more revealing—the capitalist technocrat Vaclav Klaus in the Czech capital of Prague, and the ex-Party official and right-wing nationalist Vladimir Meciar in the Slovak capital of Bratislava. The two men—without majority support—broke the country in two by 1993. Klaus felt that without Slovakia, the more prosperous Czech Republic could succeed at quicker capitalist "shock therapy" and EU membership. Meciar wanted to keep intact Slovakia's central economy, military industry, economic ties to Russia, and domination of its Hungarian minority. All these will stand in the way of Slovakia's EU membership, but its integration with Prague is still so strong that Bratislava will eventually be carried along.

The Baltics Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had been independent of Moscow in 1940, only to be forcibly reincorporated into the Soviet Union. They were the first to secede from Mikhail Gorbachev's Soviet Union in 1990-91. While Estonia has cultural-religious ties to Finland, Latvia and largely Catholic Lithuania have a long history of trade ties with Western nations on the Baltic Sea. With the most recent memories of independence of any Soviet republics, the Baltic states were the most repulsed by Russian rule. With their Catholic and Protestant heritage as their entry card, they were also the most attracted to the new integrated Europe.

Slovenia and Croatia. The ex-Yugoslav states of Slovenia and Croatia were traditionally part of the Austrian sphere of influence. As such, they were Catholic and more developed than the Orthodox and Muslim parts of Yugoslavia. Their other traditional ally, Germany, pushed hard in 1991 for EC recognition of both states. However, Western European states did not intervene in the ensuing Serb secession from Croatia, nor in the Bosnian war that began the following year. To spill Western European blood in either region would imply that Eastern Orthodox or Muslims are welcome to join the new Europe. This is at the time when Muslim immigrants are being attacked throughout Europe. In the eyes of British or French politicians, strong intervention in ex-Yugoslavia would also create a precedent for intervention further in the ex-USSR. They would rather admit Slovenia and eventually Croatia, preferably without its Serb minority.

The Balkans. An oversimplification of the Balkan crisis might go as follows. The Orthodox elites of the Balkan heartland (Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians) are reasserting their power against the more prosperous Catholic north (Croats, Slovenes, Hungarians), and the less prosperous Muslim south (Bosnians, Albanians, Sanjak Muslims, Turks). This three-way struggle—as well as the economic stagnancy of the southern Balkans—naturally discourages European powers from admitting any Balkan nation to the EU. Romania and Bulgaria are receiving associate status in the EU, and Turkey is trying to, but almost certainly none of them will receive full membership. Much as Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic said about Europe's attitude toward Muslims in 1993, "We are a nuisance to the West. They just wish we would go away. We embarrass them. They would like to forget us."

Greece. The scenario of the New Wall has one major hitch. Greece is already a member of the EU, as its sole Orthodox member and has even assumed the rotating EU presidency. Yet Greek-EU relations have recently (and not surprisingly) been strained. Greece has always had differences with the West, over Middle Eastern

politics, Soviet relations, and an alleged NATO tilt toward its arch rival Turkey. But the Yugoslav war—in which Greece has tilted toward Serbia—has especially caused a stir. Athens objects to the name of newly independent Macedonia, since the adjacent region of northern Greece is also called Macedonia. Greek fears that the new Slavic state would renew an old claim on its territory were not calmed by the compromise admission to the United Nations of the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." All other EU members favor recognition of Macedonia, and the U.S. has put "tripwire" troops on its border with Serbia. Greece was originally admitted to the EU to encourage its transition from military rule to multiparty democracy. But its continued membership tacitly opens the door to other eastern nations. Whether or not Greece remains a member will be a major litmus test of EU intentions toward all other nations east of the New Wall.

Trouble Along the New Wall

One can almost project future conflicts along the New Wall, by identifying the religious minorities stuck on the wrong side of the continent's division. New wars along this line are merely part of the shaking out of who will and won't be part of a united Europe.

Croatian Serbs. The Eastern Orthodox minorities stuck on the western side of the wall include the Serbs in Croatia, who have already revolted to maintain their ties to Serbia. They were originally brought in as mercenaries by the Austrian Empire to guard the frontier against Ottoman expansion. Today, though Western European countries such as Germany back Croatia, they would just as soon admit a Croatia without its Serb minority.

Baltic Russians. The only other major group is the Baltic Russians, including the minority populations in Lithuania (9 percent), Estonia (30 percent), and Latvia (34 percent). While the Russians are mostly concentrated in the capital cities (many are families of retired Soviet military officers), they also make up a majority around the Estonian city of Narva, adjacent to the Russian border. All the Baltic states are requiring Russians to learn the national language as a prerequisite for full citizenship, or at least those Russians who settled since Stalin's 1940 annexation. In addition, the Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad is part of Russia, but is cut off from the rest of the country. Part of German East Prussia before 1945, Kaliningrad is a strategic port populated by Russians. Pentagon planners claim to worry that a Slavic nationalist alliance may one day invade the Baltic states—both to "protect" ethnic Russians and to secure a corridor to Kaliningrad.

Bosnian Croats. A potentially greater problem exists with the Catholic and Protestant minorities stuck on the eastern side of the wall. The Catholic Croats in Bosnia-Hercegovina have already launched a war against the Muslim-led government, in order to link their secessionist state of "Herceg-Bosna" with Croatia. All of Bosnia-Hercegovina was part of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia in World War II. After the latest war started in 1992, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic complained that Croatian President Franjo Tudjman was pressuring him to unite all of Bosnia into a confederation with Croatia. Soon after Izetbegovic refused, Bosnian Croat forces began to turn against their Muslim "allies" on the battlefield.

Hungarian minorities. Another potential flashpoint are the Hungarian minorities in Yugoslavia, Romania, and Ukraine, which have been a source of friction with the Hungarian government. In the northern Serbian province of Vojvodina, ethnic Hungarians have protested Serbian harassment and forced recruitment into the Yugoslav army. In the Romanian region of Transylvania—once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—Hungarians and Romanian nationalists have openly been at odds since the 1989 revolution. The conflict has included attacks on the large Hungarian population, which has increased its influence in Romanian national politics. In the Transcarpathian region of western Ukraine, Hungarians are included in a mixture of Ukrainians, Slovaks, Romanians, and others. At various times part of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the region is now a relatively calm example of ethnic tolerance. But all it would take is a worse economic crisis for a nationalist government in Budapest to more openly call for "liberating oppressed Hungarians" in all three regions. Recent jet fighter purchases have made Hungary's neighbors even more nervous.

Uniates. A lesser known minority is the Ukrainian Catholics, or Uniates, who live in western Ukraine. Soviet rulers mistrusted the Uniates as a possible fifth column for the Vatican. Moscow encouraged allied Orthodox clergy to take over Uniate assets, and convert the population. Yet with the advent of perestroika in the 1980s, the Uniates reemerged, having practiced their faith underground. The Ukrainian independence movement was strongest in the Uniate region, yet some Orthodox clergy still resented the sudden growth of a rival church. Though independent Ukraine is one of the most peaceful of the ex-Soviet states, there has always been the underlying threat of ethnic strife between ethnic Ukrainians and Russians in the eastern region. But as the Uniate faith grows, the possibility also exists of Orthodox-Catholic strife between Ukrainians in the west.

Poles and Lithuanians. The western regions of Ukraine and Belarus are also home to small pockets of ethnic Poles. The area was part of Poland in 1919-39. When Moscow annexed eastern Poland (in return for Poland receiving much of eastern Germany), these Poles became Soviet citizens. While Warsaw is not demanding the return of these lost territories, it does still carry on an ancient political rivalry with Ukraine. (In addition, Lithuania and Belarus claim parts of each other's territory, and some Latvians and Estonians can be found in Russia.)

Karelian Finns. The final region of contention is Karelia, an ethnic Finnish autonomous republic in northwestern Russia. Finland was part of the Russian

Empire until freed after the Bolshevik Revolution. Most of it then gained independence, but lost more territory to Moscow in the 1939-40 Russo-Finnish War. Some Finnish nationalists favor the independence or annexation of Karelia, and Karelians claim some Russian lands outside their Republic. Russia, however, would strongly resist any territorial losses in an area so near the strategic Murmansk and St. Petersburg naval bases.

The New Pecking Order

The European New Wall is not the moving of the concrete-and-steel Iron Curtain further east. Its presence will be felt more like the barbed wire fences along the Rio Grande. The new Eastern Europe will be to the new Western Europe what Latin America is to the United States. More "reliable" Eastern European guest workers will replace the Africans and Asians from the ex-colonies. But even this immigration will be limited within Europe's terms.

The attacks on Turks, Arabs, and Africans in Western Europe, like the attacks on Vietnamese, Mozambicans, Gypsies and others in Central Europe, are only one aspect of the immigration crisis. Even socialist politicians (such as the French ex-premier Edith Cresson) are jumping on the bandwagon of anti-immigrant hysteria, which now even extends to native-born children of immigrants or guest workers. It used to be that Hungary had watchtowers looking over its border with Austria, preventing Hungarians from leaving. Now it is Austria that has erected towers, to keep out refugees and economic migrants from Romania, ex-Yugoslavia, Turkey, and points further east.

Economically, Europe will grow more integrated. Politically, it will be united as a continent, but each national component will split into smaller regions. Culturally, it will be both more homogeneous and more isolated from its former colonial domains of the Third World.

Europe will not be a single union, but a series of concentric rings. At its core will be German-dominated Central Europe, consisting of Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, and perhaps Hungary. Around it will be the other prosperous industrial countries, including the northern parts of Italy and Spain. Around that will be the poorer regions of Ireland, the Baltics, Poland, Slovakia, Portugal, and southern Spain and Italy. At the outer fringe will be a zone of exploitation, where cheap labor, cheap resources, and a dumping ground market will prevail. North Africa and Turkey are already on this outer fringe, but they may be slowly joined by the Balkans, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. As the strong vote for Russian nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky has already shown, this arrangement can only lead to decades of resentment and reaction. Z

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Challenges To Moscow

Ethnicity threatens Soviet "unity"

By Zoltan Grossman

Until this March, Tannu-Tuva was know only to collectors of old globes or stamps. In 1921, Tannu-Tuva was declared an independent Turkic Republic, tucked in between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. Tannu-Tuva was swallowed up by Josef Stalin in 1944, later becoming the Tuvinian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within Russia.

Today, the autonomous Republic of Tuva is the newest candidate for the tide of "most likely to secede" from the Russian Federation. Tuva Parliament Chair Kaadyr-ool Bicheldei has said that an independence referendum may be held in the near future, commenting that if Russia is collapsing, "why do we have to go down together with it?."

The autonomous regions of Russia are a legacy of Lenin's public stand for the "self-determination of oppressed nationalities" and against "Great Russian chauvinism." Many of the old Soviet republics contained their own ethnic sub-regions, known as Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) or Autonomous *Okrugs* (Districts). Stalin used the ethnic areas in his strategic calculations, drawing their boundaries so they contained more than one ethnic group, including large ethnic Russian populations. In this way, he planted time bombs around the country, due to explode if the dominant ethnic group in an autonomous region tried to form a country. Today, many of his bombs are going off.

In the Russian Federation, there are 21 autonomous Republics (most of which are former ASSRs) and 10 autonomous *Okrugs*. Of the 21 republics, 19 signed a Federation Treaty with Moscow on March 31, 1992. The autonomous ethnic regions are concentrated in four areas of the country—in the North Caucasus region, in central Russia, along the Arctic coast, and along the Mongolian frontier.

The eight North Caucasian Republics include Chechenia, which declared independence in 1991, and ejected Russian paratroopers before they even got off their planes to occupy the capital's airport. Chechenia was part of Checheno-Ingushetia, but the Ingush ethnic group wanted to stay in Russia, and seceded from the secessionists. Some nationalists in the largely Muslim North Caucasus have declared a federation that also includes Georgia's Republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, the "federation" is already divided by ethnic fighting, between the Ingush and North Ossetians.

The six Republics inside central Russia include secessionist Tatarstan, inhabited largely by the Crimean Tatars forcibly relocated in the 1940s. Adjacent Bashkortostan, also an oil-rich Turkic Muslim Republic, has flirted with independence. It decided to sign the treaty, partly to try to gain a territorial corridor linking it to the new Central Asian states.

The 11 ethnic regions in northern Russia include the Republic of Karelia, bordering Finland and inhabited by relatives of the Finns. They also include Sakha-Yakutia, a huge republic that contains much of Russia's coal reserves, and the Chukotka *okrug* across the Bering Strait from Alaska The six ethnic areas near Mongolia include not only Tuva, but the Republic of Buryatia and *okrugs* of Aga and Ust-Orda. They are inhabited by Buryats, ethnic kin to the Mongols.

If all or even part of these ethnic areas seceded, they would effectively cut off the Siberian Russians from European Russia. These Russians on the "frontier" may even wish to chart their own political course, much as European colonists once did in the Americas. Whatever the case, an ethnic splintering of Russia would finish it as a Eurasian power.

The developing Russian break-up somewhat mirrors the 1991 Soviet break-up. The first to leave the Soviet

Union were the Baltic states, which had the most recent memories of independence. Similarly, Tuva today has the strongest historical case for separation from Russia. In 1991, the Baltics, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova were not only pulling away from Moscow, but moving toward a stronger Europe. Similarly, the example of the independent Muslim Central Asian states, known collectively as Turkestan, are attractive to Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and even Uygurs and Kazakhs in China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region. The example of an independent Mongolia must be attractive to Buryatia, as well as to China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Both President Yeltsin and his opponents alternately court and threaten the Republics. Like Stalin and the Czars before them, they see a threat in the possible growth of neighboring powers. In their eyes, a Greater Mongolia or Greater Turkestan is not the only potential future threat to Russia. A reshuffling of boundaries could take place around the former Soviet periphery, with Karelia trying to join Finland, ethnic Azeris in Iran trying to join Azerbaijan, or Tajiks in Afghanistan opting to join Tajikistan. From Moscow's vantage point, secession could possibly resurrect old rivalries with the Finns (echoes of the Russo-Finnish War), with Turkic states backed by Turkey (evoking the Crimean War), or even with the Mongols or Chinese.

But from the vantage point of the ethnic minorities, true autonomy or independence from Russian domination has been a long time in coming. Just as it would have been dangerous to hold together the splintering Soviet Union, it would be foolish for the West to back Russia's territorial integrity. If the aspirations of indigenous peoples anywhere are blocked, it merely delays the inevitable drive for sovereignty.

Moscow would do well to hold Russia together not by force, but by turning the country into an equal confederation of nations, with representation from more than the groomed Russified elites in the Republics. A true Parliament of Peoples could concentrate on solving inter-ethnic strife. It could even serve as an example for the European Community or Organization of African Unity to head off more ethnic strife in their comers of the globe. Intensified Russian nationalism, even if approved by the West, will not prevent further violence. Z

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