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## Managing Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives

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thought out analysis of what matters and what does not in the United Nations Security Council. The authors provide academics and diplomats with an excellent arsenal of options for fine-tuning the operation of the council. Any serious student of the Security Council should consider Russett's fine book a must read.

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Arbatov, Alexei, et al., eds. *Managing Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997. 556pp. \$25

This edited collection of essays is part of the International Security Studies series from the Center for Science and International Affairs. The subject is quite timely: we have the 1999 confrontation in Dagestan, continued controversy within the Russian government on how to handle the crisis, and the sacking of yet another Russian prime minister. The former prime minister (now acting president), Vladimir Putin, took a direct interest in resolving this latest challenge to Russian power in the Caucasus. The Dagestan crisis is in fact yet another lesson in the center's (Moscow's) management of the disintegration of the periphery—an

enduring theme in Russian federalism.

This work illustrates how the post-Soviet Russian government has dealt with would-be separatist governments within the Russian Federation and how other post-Soviet republics have, in their own way, handled separatism. In each instance, a narrative case study and an analytical commentary examine the development and the resolution of the conflict, or conflict avoidance. The pairs of essays are presented within a framework laid out by the leading editor, Alexei Arbatov, the arms control department head of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, and current deputy chairman of the Duma's Defense Committee.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the case studies is that they are presented from a Russian perspective. None of the authors is a member of the present administration or of any nationalist movement. They are researchers affiliated with the Analytic Center of the Council of the Russian Federation (the upper house of the Russian parliament) and so are well placed to tell the story of the continuing breakup of the former Soviet empire. To provide perspective, a written analysis is offered by a Western scholar. There is also a comparison piece on the Yugoslav conflict by Nadia Arbatova; her

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article, in her own words, places history in the "subjunctive mood," asking whether the painful process of either Russian or Yugoslav disintegration could have been more gradual and civilized.

The work lacks adequate maps (a common complaint). A few are provided in the front matter; they are, however, generic political or topographic maps drawn from standard U.S. sources. Proper maps would have been useful as an aid to understanding the cases. One other drawback, albeit one admitted by the editors, is that this work grew out of a series of workshops that took place between 1994 and 1995. Therefore, the cases examined are somewhat dated.

Although there is no direct analysis of more recent events, the book offers general lessons for the way the Russian government has handled nationalist separatism. Russian policy toward nationalism was in fact rooted in Yeltsin's use of nationalism during his struggle with Mikhail Gorbachev's central government for supremacy in the Soviet Union. Yeltsin's encouragement of the centrifugal forces of nationalism evidently made the job of governing the post-Soviet successor states, including the sometimes bewildering multiethnic patchwork of the Russian Federation, much more difficult. Finding a secure situation for the ethnic Russian population in the newly

independent states, as well as in the ethnic areas of Russia, and formulating reasonable laws governing citizenship and language relations, are the keys to resolving ethnic conflict in the long run. Indeed, where this has not been achieved, chronic conflict has almost always resulted. Finally, the stresses placed on the Russian military deployed in the conflict-prone regions have also contributed to the deterioration of the former superpower's military instrument.

This work will be of lasting value to those who are not specialists in nationalism or regional concerns within the former Soviet Union. I found the book useful while observing the Dagestan crisis, and expect it to be just as useful in the next crisis, and the next.

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Rendall, Ivan. *Rolling Thunder*. New York: Free Press, 1997. 336pp. \$26  
Many books have been published describing air combat from a variety of different angles, and it is rare for one to add much to the genre. *Rolling Thunder*, by former Royal Air Force pilot Ivan Rendall, does so, by providing a useful and well organized overview of combat in the jet age. Despite a number of distracting errors, the book should be interesting reading for air-combat