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**T**he Ukrainian component of the nonproliferation problem has two parts. The first is the contribution that exports of material, information, technology, or people from Ukraine might make to proliferation on the part of other countries. The second is whether Ukraine will seek its own nuclear weapon capability.

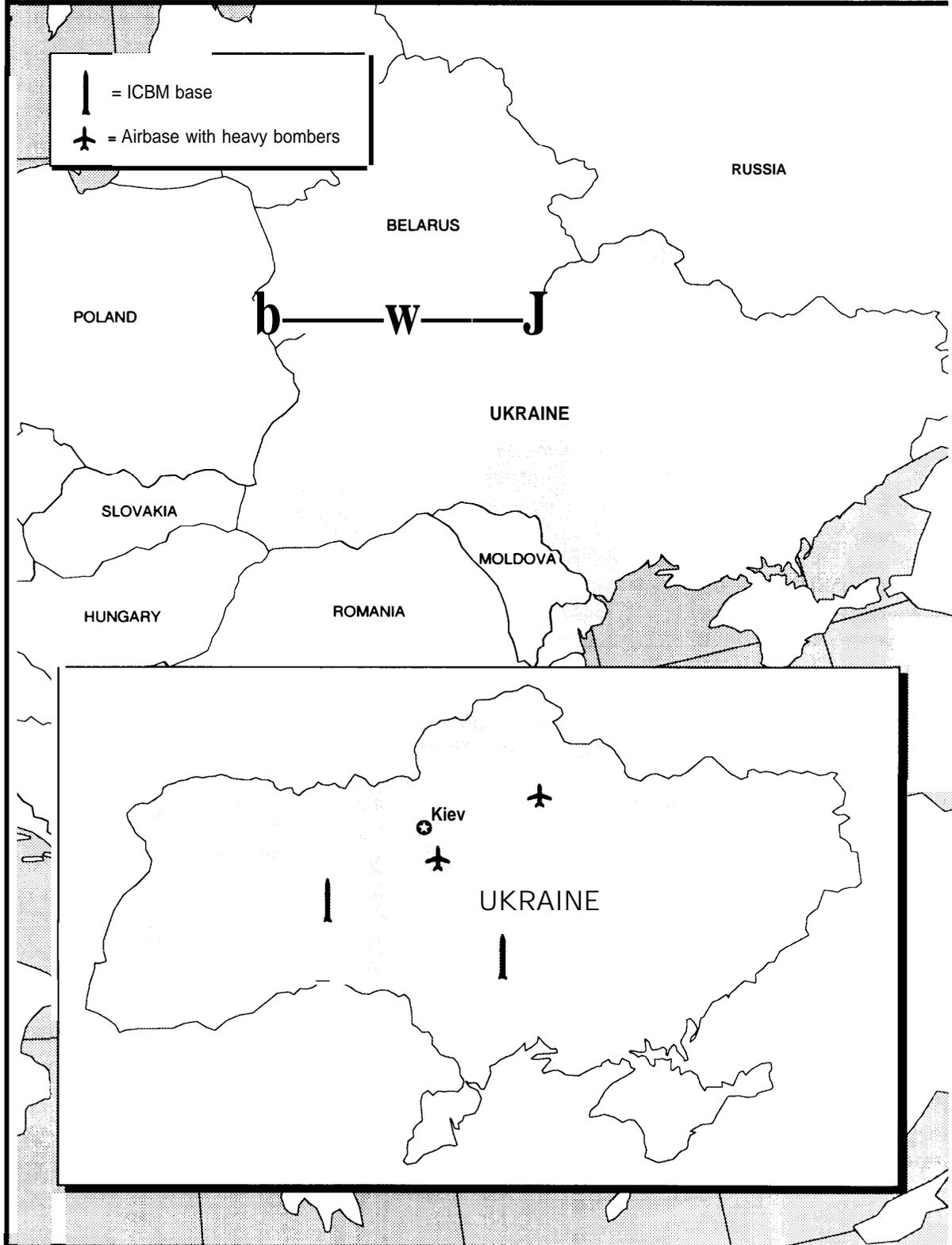
The first set of issues is shared with the other nuclear inheritor states: the need to apply safeguards to nuclear materials on Ukrainian territory, to protect nuclear materials and weapons there, and to prevent the transfer of technology and expertise from Ukraine to non-nuclear-weapon states. Because of the severe economic stresses in Ukraine, the temptation to sell anything for hard currency is understandably strong. Economic disruption in Ukraine is, if anything, worse than in Russia and Kazakhstan; the Ukrainian currency (the carbovanets) is one of the few in the world that is losing value with respect to the Russian ruble. Further, Ukraine no longer has the strong central police control over commercial and other activities that it had had as part of the Soviet Union, and since much of the Soviet expertise in customs and export control is now in Russia, Ukraine does not yet have an effective export control system. Therefore, it is particularly vulnerable to loss of nuclear-related items as well as goods associated with other weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems. Figure 5 shows the locations of relevant facilities in Ukraine.

The second issue of concern is the reluctance of Ukraine to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In February 1994, the Ukrainian parliament endorsed the tripartite declaration that the presidents of Ukraine, Russia, and the United States signed on January 14, 1994, committing Ukraine to remove all nuclear weapons from its territory within seven years. The nuclear situation



FIGURE 5: Selected Sites in Ukraine

SOURCES: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Montevideo Institute of International Studies, May 1994





Former Soviet Bear H intercontinental nuclear bombers such as this one are based in Ukraine.



Former Soviet Blackjack intercontinental bomber now displaying Ukrainian Air Force markings.

there is still problematic, however, because many politicians—despite this decision—want Ukraine to seize the Soviet nuclear weapons on its territory and declare itself a nuclear-weapon state. This sentiment appears to have the support of a large segment, although probably still a minority, of the public, as well as of a significant proportion of the parliament. The parliament refused to ratify the NPT on the same day it finally ratified START I.

Ukraine is a relatively large European country with a size and population similar to France. At the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it had on its territory 46 SS-24 ICBMS ( 10 warheads each, in silos), 130 older SS-19s (six warheads, silo-based), and about 30 Bear H and Blackjack bombers with air-launched nuclear cruise missiles (perhaps about 500 in total).<sup>1</sup> If these 1,700 to 1,800 warheads were to come under Ukrainian control, they would make Ukraine the world's third-largest nuclear power. In addition, in the civilian sector, Ukraine has 14 active nuclear power plants (including three remaining at the Chernobyl complex) with large inventories of spent fuel

containing plutonium. At present, Ukraine does not possess a reprocessing capability for extracting the plutonium from the spent fuel, nor does it have means of enriching uranium. There are also some small research reactors with small quantities of highly enriched uranium. Beyond this, Ukraine has facilities that produce heavy water in large quantities.<sup>2</sup>

### UKRAINE AND THE INTERNATIONAL NONPROLIFERATION REGIME

As of this writing, the Ukrainian parliament (or Rada) has not ratified the NPT, although on February 3, 1994, it ratified START I without the crippling reservations that it had attached the previous November. Over the past several years, government officials and politicians have retreated from an October 1991 statement by the Rada—predating the dissolution of the Soviet Union—that Ukraine would become a “nuclear-free zone” by 1995. Most of the recent revisionist pronouncements alleged that the 1991 statement was somehow coerced by the Soviet government and was

<sup>1</sup> The nuclear bombs for these planes are thought to have been returned to Russia.

<sup>2</sup> G. Allison et al., “Cooperative Denuclearization: From Pledges to Deeds” (Cambridge, MA: Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, January 1993), and W. Potter, “Nuclear Profiles of the Soviet Successor States” (Monterey, CA: Monterey Institute for International Studies, May 1993). Heavy water is used in a class of nuclear reactors that is fueled with natural uranium, rather than low-enriched uranium. Such reactors can be used to produce plutonium.

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not freely made. However, the October 1991 Rada statement was far from an isolated event. Other commitments by Ukraine to achieve non-nuclear status include:

- the Minsk statement, made during the organization of the Commonwealth of Independent States in December 1991, which promised that Ukraine would remove its strategic nuclear weapons by July 1994;
- President Kravchuk's signing of the Lisbon Protocol to START I on May 23, 1992, which committed Ukraine to accede to the NPT and to ratify START I, and
- statements by Kravchuk (May 7, 1992), Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov (April 14, 1992), and other high-ranking government officials.

Despite these positions, Ukraine did not ratify the Lisbon Protocol and START I until February 1994. The political reality is that, although the government of Ukraine appeared to want to see the NPT ratified, much of the parliament did not.<sup>3</sup> The issue has thus become inextricably intertwined in the power struggle between the president and the Rada.

While it is now likely that the newly-elected Rada will, in fact, finally ratify the NPT, that outcome is not yet certain.<sup>4</sup> It is, therefore, useful to outline some of the arguments in the Ukrainian debate to understand better the motivations of Ukrainians skeptical towards the NPT, and to review possible arguments that may make them more receptive.

### THE ROLE OF RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

Many arguments presented within Ukraine for becoming a nuclear-weapon state and for rejecting

the NPT appeal to prevalent nationalist sentiments. Even some who do not necessarily advocate becoming a nuclear-weapon state are quite hesitant to ratify the NPT. Many Ukrainians feel that nuclear weapons are essential to national survival and that they have a vital role in deterring the Russians from reclaiming Ukraine as part of a new, greater Russia.

In fact, various nationalist Russian parliamentarians, and not only the most extreme among them, have made irredentist statements regarding much of the former Soviet Union, especially Ukraine. Ukraine is a special target of Russian nationalism because of the unique historical, ethnic, and linguistic links between Russia and Ukraine, because of Ukraine's size (50 million people), because of its agricultural and industrial wealth, and because of conflicting claims to the Crimea and the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

The Crimean issue is a particularly thorny one. The Crimean peninsula, on the northern shore of the Black Sea, had never belonged to Ukraine before 1954, when Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev made a gift of it to Ukraine for internal Soviet political reasons. At that time, it was part of Russia, having been annexed from the Ottoman Empire by Russian Empress Catherine the Great in the eighteenth century. A majority of the Crimean population (nearly 70 percent) is ethnic Russian.

Sevastopol, the Crimean home port of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, is a powerful symbol for countless Russian nationalists, including the former vice president of Russia, Alexander Rutskoi. In July 1993, the Russian parliament, against the wishes of President Yeltsin, declared the city of Sevastopol to be under Russian jurisdiction. Both Yeltsin and Kravchuk denounced this action as

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<sup>3</sup>In September 1993, the American Association for the Advancement of Science held a seminar in Kiev that included U.S. experts in nuclear weapons and nuclear strategy. Many mid-level officials from the Ukrainian Defense and Foreign Affairs Ministries participated. It is possible that, after learning some of the negative aspects of maintaining a nuclear **arsenal**, these participants were able to affect positively the Rada's decision on START I and the tripartite accord.

<sup>4</sup>The election of Leonid Kuchma as president on July 10, 1994 may have changed the prospects slightly. Kuchma is somewhat less wedded to NPT ratification than was Kravchuk, and he has expressed the wish to proceed slowly, pending more financial aid from the West for dismantling weapons.

null and void, but this behavior, demonstrating the depth of feeling in Russia on the matter, greatly aggravated tensions between the two states.

The election of Yuri Meshkov as president of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (within Ukraine) in January 1994 may further strain relations between Russia and Ukraine. Meshkov, a nationalist Russian candidate for president of Ukraine, had argued during the campaign for closer integration of Crimea with Russia. After his election, however, he softened this point of view and now argues for economic integration—rather than political assimilation—with Russia.

Most Russian politicians advocate closer cooperation with Ukraine, particularly economic cooperation, rather than annexation. However, the most extreme elements in Russia (such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his Liberal Democratic Party) would like to reabsorb Ukraine. Ukrainians fear that these elements may one day rise to power, or that events in a flashpoint such as Crimea could run out of control, causing open hostilities that neither side desires.

Given the mutual suspicions between Ukraine and Russia, the arrogation by Ukraine of the Soviet nuclear weapons on its territory could prove to be an exceptionally dangerous act. If Ukraine were on the threshold of seizing all the nuclear weapons on its soil, Russia could be strongly tempted to preempt this threat to its own security by launching a conventional attack upon Ukraine, attempting to disarm Ukraine's nascent nuclear capability. This would precipitate a major conflict in an already unstable region: several minor conflicts are now under way in Central Eurasia (Armenia-Azerbaijan, Abkhazia-Georgia, Tajikistan) and several potential civil wars are still sputtering (Moldova-TransDniester, Chechnya). A major war in the area would have the potential for creating or widening other, related conflicts in its wake. Moreover, maintaining secure control of nuclear weapons in the midst of armed conflict

would be difficult, increasing the chances of their diversion.

The disposal of the weapons to be removed from Ukrainian territory as part of the START I reductions also affects Ukraine's security concerns. START does not require any weapons to be removed specifically from Ukraine. However, Russia and the West wanted to take some of the START reductions from Ukrainian-based forces, with the eventual goal of reducing those forces to zero.<sup>5</sup>

Ukraine claimed it was worried that the weapons might really not be dismantled, as announced by Russia, but rather be kept for possible future use or threats against Ukraine. Attempting to defuse this issue, then-U.S. Ambassador-at-Large Strobe Talbott (whose portfolio included the broad scope of relations with the former Soviet republics) and then-Secretary of Defense Les Aspin suggested in May 1993 that Russia, Ukraine, and a third party (probably the United States, by implication) share custody of the weapons until their verified dismantlement in Russia. Ukraine was receptive to this suggestion (although the pro-nuclear element in the Rada was not satisfied, preferring dismantlement in Ukraine). However, Russian officials were distinctly negative on the idea of sharing custody over Soviet weapons with a party outside the FSU.

## COST ISSUES

Another argument presented by advocates of nuclear-weapon status and opponents of the NPT (and even START I) is economic. Environment Minister Yuri Kostenko, in charge of the parliamentary committee considering nuclear arms control issues, has frequently argued that the cost to Ukraine of maintaining the nuclear weapons on its territory as a deterrent force is less than the cost of developing the conventional forces that Ukraine would otherwise require. Further, while initial

<sup>5</sup> In fact, this will be accomplished under the presidential tripartite declaration of Jan. 14, 1994.

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Ukrainian cost estimates for complying with START I's rocket and silo dismantlement provisions totaled about \$175 million, which the United States soon offered to supply as an incentive for START I ratification, recent Ukrainian estimates have increased by a factor of 20 to \$3.5 billion. This number may not be a realistic estimate; some observers consider such a high figure to be tantamount to blackmail and others note it includes the cost of a large amount of infrastructure only peripherally associated with dismantlement. Nevertheless, the initial estimates were almost certainly too low.

Ambassador Talbott indicated U.S. willingness to be more forthcoming financially during his May 1993 visit to Kiev, and President Clinton announced in February 1994 that he would double the \$175 million to \$350 million.<sup>6</sup> In October 1993, the United States offered an additional \$155 million for economic aid as part of a larger package of assistance to Ukraine, and in March 1994, during a visit to Washington by President Kravchuk, the total amount of aid for the current year was raised to \$700 million.

The negotiations between Washington and Kiev over dollar figures probably can be resolved, and they are not central to the issue of whether Ukraine becomes a nuclear-weapon state. The other financial dispute, over the cost to Ukraine of maintaining adequate conventional armed forces versus that of making operational and maintaining the nuclear weapons on its territory, is still an issue in the minds of some Ukrainian political figures.<sup>7</sup> A convincing economic analysis by a respected outside party might usefully affect the debate within Ukraine. The experience of the United

States is relevant. During the 1950s and later, the United States hoped that reliance on nuclear forces could permit substantial savings on conventional forces. However, the reduction in its conventional forces due to the presence of nuclear weapons was not as large as some originally claimed, and in the end, considerable forces of both types were developed.

Related to this issue is the ownership of the nuclear material in both the tactical weapons that Ukraine transferred to Russia in 1992 and the strategic weapons still on Ukrainian soil. Russia and the United States have agreed to the purchase by the United States of the highly enriched uranium (HEU) in Soviet weapons dismantled under the parallel Bush-Gorbachev dismantlement initiatives.<sup>8</sup> Arguments among the former Soviet republics regarding the distribution of profits from the sale of the HEU were a major roadblock holding up the finalization of the U.S.-Russia purchase agreement, but at least in the case of Ukraine these issues appear to be on the way to resolution. According to the January 14, 1994 agreement between Russia and the United States, up to 500 tonnes of HEU from Russian weapons will be sold to the United States over the course of 20 years, as well as up to 50 more tonnes of HEU originating in Ukrainian-based weapons.<sup>9</sup> This purchase will net the Russians roughly \$12 billion and the Ukrainians some one-tenth that.

In addition to participating in the HEU deal, Ukraine originally sought reimbursement for the plutonium in the weapons and for nuclear material in the tactical weapons already removed from Ukrainian territory. The Russian position is that they would be willing to share the proceeds from

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<sup>6</sup> He also repeated that security guarantees would be given Ukraine after accession to the NPT, although the nature of these assurances has not been publicly specified. RFE/RL Military Notes, Feb. 11, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Just what would be adequate in terms of size is **subjective**. Ukrainian nationalists would like to have a large standing army of several hundred thousand, due both to their suspicion of Russia and to the feeling that their **military** capabilities should be commensurate with those of other nations in Europe with similar sized populations (e.g., My, France, the United Kingdom). Other observers, both inside and outside Ukraine, consider that an army of that size is not necessary.

<sup>8</sup> Press Release, United States Enrichment Corp., Jan. 14, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> RFE/RL Notes, Feb. 11, 1994.

the uranium in strategic weapons, but that the tactical weapons' nuclear material is no longer an issue. Moreover, they assert that the market value of the plutonium is zero under current conditions. This last point is consistent with the valuation placed on plutonium by U.S. analysts (who, in fact, assign it considerable *negative* economic value<sup>10</sup>), but it conflicts with the Russian attitude expressed in other fora that plutonium recovered from weapons is a valuable resource to be stored for future use in energy generation.

### INCENTIVES TO UKRAINE TO MAINTAIN NON-NUCLEAR STATUS

What might induce Ukrainian advocates of nuclear-weapon status to forgo this ambition? The foremost motive for keeping the weapons, as noted above, lies in Ukraine's concern for its survival as an independent state. Its desire for nationhood, having been suppressed by other powers and peoples (except for very brief intervals) for so long, is presently a major political imperative there. Following 300 years of Russian domination and a genocidal famine induced by Stalin in the 1930s, Ukraine's confidence in Russian security guarantees is understandably limited. The position consistently enunciated by President Kravchuk since 1992 has been that, as part of any agreement to get rid of the nuclear weapons on its territory, Ukraine must receive firm security guarantees from Russia and the other major powers.

But it is still not clear what guarantees would satisfy Ukrainian needs. Russia, the United States, Britain, and France provided letters containing guarantees to Ukraine during the course of 1992. The contents have not been made public, but reaction across the political spectrum in Ukraine indicates they were not satisfactory to any major faction. Reportedly, the U.S. guarantees only included a recognition of Ukraine's borders

as guaranteed by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE); given the current situation in CSCE member Bosnia, it is understandable that Ukraine might question the effectiveness of such support. In 1993, the United States offered further assurances that included military cooperation agreements and, apparently, more specific security guarantees. Additional security guarantees are said to have been given (conditional upon Ukrainian accession to the NPT) as part of the tripartite declaration of January 14, 1994, but their details are not yet clear and the issue is still a major focus of debate in Ukraine.

In summary, many in Ukraine consider nuclear weapons to be a vital deterrent to any possible Russian attempt to reassert sovereignty over any part of Ukrainian territory. Nevertheless, other elements might be satisfied with some form of security guarantees or assurances from the West.

Ukraine would welcome a bilateral mutual defense treaty with the United States. This is very unlikely to happen, as Ukrainian officials understand, since the United States would be extremely reluctant to risk nuclear war with Russia over a dispute in Russia's backyard. Further, any U.S. attempt to wage a conventional war in defense of Ukrainian sovereignty would be strongly disadvantaged by the obvious geographical and logistic considerations, as well as the low likelihood of achieving NATO agreement for military intervention. At most, a cutoff of economic aid and an attempt to organize a worldwide economic boycott might be expected.

Another possibility would be for Ukraine to join NATO, making it an integral military part of the Atlantic alliance. This poses several problems, not the least of which is Ukraine's professed intention to become a "neutral" state.<sup>11</sup> Further, NATO is undergoing its own identity crisis, and there is considerable ambiguity on its part regarding an

<sup>10</sup> Plutonium's negative economic value derives from the fact that, even if the plutonium itself were free, processing it for use in nuclear reactors would cost more than purchasing and processing an equivalent amount of uranium fuel.

<sup>11</sup> The principles of non-nuclear status, nonalignment, and nonmembership in military blocs are presented in the Ukrainian Rada's Declaration of State Sovereignty of July 16, 1990.

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expansion of membership at this stage. Even if NATO were to decide to admit members from the East, several Eastern European states contiguous to NATO members would have a prior claim to membership (e.g., the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland).

Russia would consider extension of NATO membership to Ukraine to be a provocative, if not hostile, act. Furthermore, by accepting Ukraine as a member, NATO might put itself in a position where a Russian-Ukrainian conflict could force NATO either to wage war on Russia or to dissolve in embarrassment and confusion. NATO membership for Ukraine does not appear to be a realistic near-term option.

A policy issue for Ukraine and the West is whether there is any set of security arrangements, agreements, or assurances, short of NATO membership, that would persuade a majority of the Rada to ratify the NPT. Attempting to satisfy the desire of many Eastern European states, including Ukraine, to join NATO, while at the same time trying not to inflame Russian nationalists or give rise to Russian fears of military encirclement, NATO has created the "Partnership for Peace." This mechanism allows for military contacts and coordination with NATO states, with the possibility of full NATO membership at some point in the future, but does not guarantee military intervention on NATO's part in the event of external aggression. Ukraine, along with Russia and many other Eastern European states, has already joined the Partnership.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to offering Ukraine some sort of security assurances, the United States could emphasize the costs and uncertainties to Ukraine of attempting to establish a nuclear deterrent, especially one that Ukraine had not created and probably could not adequately maintain, control, or operate for many years. Already mentioned is the risk that Russia may decide to preempt Ukrainian seizure of Soviet nuclear weapons by a military strike. Barring such an action, Ukraine also would have to consider the possibility that a very few nuclear weapons may not deter a Russian conventional attack. Even one nuclear weapon launched at Russia could stimulate a retaliatory strike, using only a small fraction of the Russian arsenal, that would destroy the entire Ukrainian nation. Even if Ukraine could break the launch codes on the strategic nuclear weapons on its soil (its Kharkov Institute, according to some reports, had a role in devising the Soviet weapon release codes\* 3), it may not be possible to direct either the intercontinental ballistic missiles or the cruise missiles in its possession to most targets in Russia. The ballistic missiles have intercontinental range and could not be aimed at nearby targets without much revamping and testing. The guidance systems for the cruise missiles reportedly have been removed by the Russians.<sup>14</sup>

The United States could remind Ukraine that it would have to spend considerable sums to maintain the weapons and their delivery systems in safe

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<sup>12</sup> All of the former Warsaw pact countries of Central and Eastern Europe have announced their intention to participate, as have Russia and most other states of the former Soviet Union. See the White House Fact Sheet on Partnership for Peace, Mar. 2, 1994. Most of these states, including Russia, have since joined.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, W. Potter, "Nuclear Profiles....," op. cit., footnote 2, p. 84, and W. Kincade, "Nuclear Weapons in Ukraine: Hollow Threat, Wasting Asset," *Arms Control Today*, July/August 1993, p. 16. Further references are found in the latter work.

<sup>14</sup> W. Kincade, *ibid.*, p. 15, and T. Kuzio, "Nuclear Weapons and Military Policy in Independent Ukraine," *The Harriman Institute Forum*, vol. 6, No. 9, May 1993.

operating condition.<sup>15</sup> Although Ukraine has many rocket and nuclear weapon experts who participated in Soviet strategic weapon production and operation, it lacks the infrastructure for maintaining and operating the strategic nuclear weapon systems on its territory. In fact, a major argument made by President Kravchuk in urging the Rada to endorse the tripartite declaration was that the lack of maintenance was creating danger of an explosion that would scatter radioactive debris over a wide area.

The disadvantages of becoming a nuclear state could be, and presumably have been, explained to senior Ukrainian officials in detail, but such arguments have not yet been effectively brought to the attention of the Ukrainian public and many members of parliament. Support for declaring Ukraine a nuclear-weapon state appeared to rise during 1993, with different polls indicating different results. The Ukrainian government is still attempting to deal with the issue by floating various ideas and suggestions to mollify a majority of the Rada without alienating the international community.

On July 2, 1993, the Rada declared ownership over nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory, but forswore their use operationally or as a deterrent. Although Ukrainian officials denied that they had plans to bring the weapons under their operational control, Russia still reacted negatively.<sup>16</sup> Later that same month, then-Defense Minister Morozov suggested that Ukraine might accede to the NPT, neither as a weapon state nor as a non-weapon state, but as one in transition (presumably to the latter).<sup>17</sup> However, the NPT makes no such distinction. The United States has not supported this

viewpoint, both because of the precedent it would set and because it would allow future Ukrainian governments to reverse or freeze the direction of transition. But this proposal at least indicates that the Ukrainian government realizes that failure to resolve the nuclear weapon issue will isolate Ukraine from those international quarters it needs most for economic survival: Western Europe and the United States. Officials from both have noted frequently, sometimes in a heavy-handed and possibly counterproductive fashion, that large-scale economic aid is contingent upon accession to the NPT.

More recent U.S. statements and policies have been rather more flexible, emphasizing carrots rather than sticks. For example, Ukraine has begun to dismantle 10 of the 130 old SS-19s on its territory; in response, the United States agreed to obligate the \$175 million of Nunn-Lugar money intended for this purpose. These funds previously had been declared to be contingent on Ukraine's accession to START I and the NPT.<sup>18</sup> In November 1993, Ukraine began to dismantle some SS-24s as well, in part because of safety concerns related to maintenance and storage of the missiles, as well as the refusal of Russian experts to provide all necessary assistance subsequent to Ukraine's assertion of administrative control over the weapons.

## U.S. POLICY OPTIONS REGARDING UKRAINE

The Ukrainian case is more difficult for U.S. policy to affect than those of Belarus and Kazakhstan. Ukraine is the only state of the three that still

<sup>15</sup>Of course, Ukraine could simply seize the nuclear weapons, disassemble them, mine them for plutonium and highly enriched uranium, and embark on its own independent weapon program. Such a strategy, however, would also entail significant cost, as well as a long period during which Ukraine would not have a nuclear deterrent against any Russian military attempt to neutralize the seizure of the weapons (assuming, as appears to be the case and as Ukrainian officials repeat, that Ukraine does not now have operational control over the nuclear weapons on its territory).

<sup>16</sup>Interview with Prime Minister Kuchma in INTERFAX, Aug. 10, 1993, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-153-A, Aug. 11, 1993.

<sup>17</sup>See J. Perlez, "Ukraine May Ask Special Status in Atom Pact," *The New York Times*, July 26, 1993, p. A8.

<sup>18</sup>See M. Gordon, "U.S. Says Ukraine Has Been Dismantling Nuclear Missiles," *The New York Times*, July 28, 1993, p. A8. Contingencies on \$200 million for economic aid have similarly been relaxed by the United States.

## Findings Regarding Ukraine

- There are about 1,800 nuclear warheads in Ukraine, making it potentially the world's third-largest nuclear power. Many elements within Ukraine advocated retaining these weapons. However, the president and senior cabinet officials resisted this position, and the tripartite declaration apparently has decided the issue in favor of getting rid of the weapons. The final decision on the NPT probably will be made by the new Rada.
- Many civilian nuclear facilities are located in Ukraine, as well as a heavy water production facility
- Economic stresses in Ukraine are even more severe than in Russia.
- In addition to the contribution to proliferation that Ukrainian weapons, nuclear materials, information, technology, and expertise might make if transferred elsewhere in the world, Ukraine's failure to ratify the NPT makes it a proliferation risk in its own right
- No Ukrainian nuclear facilities are yet under international safeguards, although Ukraine and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have negotiated a draft agreement to place all Ukrainian nuclear facilities under safeguards.
- The Ukrainian export control system is rudimentary and in need of effective development and implementation.

has not ratified the NPT, and the Ukrainian political and economic situation is more chaotic than that of the other states. Even so, some policies introduced in the chapters on Belarus and Kazakhstan could also apply here. Such policies are restated at the end of this chapter, along with policies specific to Ukraine.

Outlined below are four approaches to dealing with Ukraine's hesitation to give up nuclear weapons. They are intended for consideration if the Rada does not ratify the NPT.

### ■ Balanced Policy

One U.S. strategy to promote Ukrainian accession to the NPT as a non-weapon state would employ both carrots and sticks. This approach is essentially the one the United States has pursued since mid- 1993. Through it, the United States would assure Ukraine that NPT adherence would bring the maximum possible in the way of security guarantees, economic aid for implementing START I, and other economic help.

Even without NPT accession, however, under this approach the United States would develop political relations and contacts on many different issues of interest to both governments, promising to develop them further and to increase economic aid and cooperation upon accession to the NPT. Maintaining some contact with Ukraine even in

the absence of NPT accession would have the effect of diminishing the apparent importance of the nuclear issue, removing the impetus on Ukrainian politicians to become more obdurate on the matter in order to attract the attention of the United States. Fully developed economic relations, on the other hand, would be contingent upon NPT adherence. The United States could make it clear to Ukraine that refusal to accede to the NPT would be met by U.S. and Western refusal to give any security assurances or economic aid.

Under this approach, the United States would continue and intensify current diplomatic and other pressures on Ukraine to give up ownership of the nuclear weapons. **The United States would also continue its diplomatic efforts to foster a more positive relationship between Russia and Ukraine, as it already has done in helping mediate the tripartite presidential declaration of January 14, 1994.** It is unlikely that any other state is as well positioned as the United States to mediate between the two. The largely unanticipated achievement of the tripartite agreement is a measure of the usefulness of these efforts.

In light of Ukraine's economic difficulties, it is possible, although by no means certain, that diplomatic and economic pressure could carry the day. However, they could also cause a strong backlash. In addition to these promises and pressures, the

United States could continue to try to persuade the Ukrainian government, legislature, and public in general of the disadvantages of Ukrainian nuclear possession. Finally, under this approach, the United States would continue its current policy of helping Ukraine to meet international standards of material control and accountancy over its nuclear materials and to augment its body of expertise in nuclear safeguards.

Aid to this end, provided under the Nunn-Lugar Amendment, would be expanded. The United States would work to assure that nuclear safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency are expedited and implemented as soon as possible to prevent diversion of nuclear materials from Ukraine. In addition, the United States could work to persuade Ukraine to ratify the agreement to open the Ukraine Science and Technology Center, which has been formally agreed to by the Ukrainian government but lacks formal executive authorization. The center could be made more attractive for Ukraine by broadening its scope, allowing for involvement of more civilian scientists, and including topics of immediate interest to Ukraine. Some of these might be securing the safety of the Chernobyl site, monitoring and dealing with the radioactive pollution in the region, and engaging in epidemiological research among the victims of Chernobyl, both to improve dose-response knowledge of the effects of radioactive exposure on humans and to assist in providing clinical help to those exposed.

The United States participated in an international extension of this “balanced policy,” combining it with cooperation with Russia on the issue. The policy appears to have had a measure of success, resulting in the presidential tripartite agreement on nuclear weapons in Ukraine. The advantage of this policy is that it has apparently succeeded in eliciting reasonable compromises from all parties involved, and it appears to be on the verge of securing Ukraine’s accession to the NPT. However, if the Rada fails to ratify the NPT within a reasonable period of time, other options may need to be considered.

## ■ Confrontational Policy

A second, much different policy line would be for the United States to eschew persuasion by no longer overtly pressing Ukraine on the nuclear weapon issue. However, no further aid of any sort (except humanitarian, if needed) would be offered until Ukraine acceded to the NPT. The United States would rely on internal economic disincentives and external (chiefly Russian) pressure to prevent the Ukrainian seizure of the nuclear weapons. Under this approach, the United States would make clear to Ukraine that the United States chooses not to bargain for Ukrainian NPT accession and is unimpressed by Ukrainian attempts to assert itself as a nuclear power.

The primary drawback of this approach is that much of the assistance that would be denied by the United States would address issues such as the establishment of a nuclear material accounting and control system and the implementation of export controls. Helping Ukraine in these areas is in the direct self-interest of the United States and the global nonproliferation regime, and it should not be considered as a gift or reward to Ukraine.

## ■ Conciliatory Policy

A third option would be for the United States to accept Ukrainian nuclear armament, despite the adverse consequences that such an action would have for the nuclear nonproliferation regime and for the prospects of gaining an indefinite continuation of the NPT at the NPT Extension Conference in 1995. The United States, for example, could offer to install a hot line from the White House to Kiev, like the one to Moscow. It could attempt to bring Ukraine into the European community of nations as an active member (although not as a member of the European Union or NATO). It could attempt to prop up the Ukrainian economy in order to keep the internal social and political situation stable.

If Ukraine’s emergence as a nuclear power were deemed inevitable, this approach might permit such a transition to occur more smoothly that it

would if one of the other approaches had been pursued. On the other hand, it could alienate Russia to the degree of possibly risking a major realignment of Russian foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States, and it would risk a preemptive Russian attack to prevent the nuclearization of Ukraine. Moreover, it would seriously endanger the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. As an added complication, the NPT prohibits the United States (and the other nuclear-weapon states) from assisting, encouraging, or inducing “any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire” nuclear weapons. Even if Ukraine declared itself to be a nuclear-weapon state, it would remain a non-nuclear-weapon state under the NPT’s definition of that term (i.e., a state that had not exploded a nuclear device before January 1, 1967). Therefore, any U.S. assistance that might be interpreted as supporting Ukraine’s nuclear weapon capacity would be questionable.

### ■ Develop Good Relations

This approach would be to treat Ukraine as a normal state with which the United States wishes to maintain good relations. Concern over the nuclear weapon issue would remain, but would constitute only one matter of discussion between the countries. The United States would focus instead on developing economic and political relations; easing the transitions from a centrally planned to a market economy and from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one; assisting in defense conversion; and the like.

The emphasis on developing relations on several planes with Ukraine would be aimed at a general improvement in political relations and at making Ukraine more receptive to U.S. suggestions in the nuclear field. Those suggestions, in turn, would be presented in a more restrained fashion than they would be under some of the other approaches. This approach would make Ukrainian leaders and parliamentarians feel that the interests

of the United States in Ukraine are not dependent on Ukraine’s nuclear weapon status, thereby devaluing the importance of nuclear weapons as a path to political power. The impression would be fostered that good relations with Ukraine are a fundamental part of U.S. policy, one that would not disappear shortly after a resolution of the nuclear issue.

This policy approach would be politically positioned between the “Balanced” and the “Conciliatory” approaches listed above. The disadvantage would be that the Ukrainian reaction might be to take the improved relations with the United States but to ignore minor U.S. carping about nuclear weapons.

### POLICY OPTIONS SUMMARIZED

In addition to following one of the above approaches to promote Ukrainian ratification of the NPT, a number of additional policies might be pursued.

- **Work intensively with Ukraine and the IAEA to apply IAEA safeguards to Ukrainian nuclear facilities as soon as possible.**

*Rationale For:* The absence of international nuclear safeguards and international standards for physical security at the many Ukrainian nuclear sites constitutes a proliferation risk. Ukraine and the IAEA have negotiated a draft agreement that would place all Ukrainian nuclear facilities under safeguards,<sup>19</sup> but implementing this agreement will require resources and time.

*Arguments Against:* None.

- **Offer increased U.S. aid in setting up and training personnel for application of nuclear safeguards, customs, and export control regimes. Expedite Nunn-Lugar assistance to these ends.**

*Rationale For:* Ukraine urgently needs such aid to maintain proper control over nuclear material

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<sup>19</sup> IAEA Division of Public Information, Media Talking Points 94/ 11, “Ukraine Negotiates Safeguards Agreement With the IAEA,” June 28, 1994.

on its territory. Such aid already has been extended under Safe and Secure Dismantlement (SSD) agreements. Because of the urgency of the problem, the effort needs to be applied as soon as possible.

*Arguments Against* Because of fiscal limitations in the United States, the government might choose to let the IAEA or other countries provide such support.

- **Apply U.S. Nunn-Lugar funds to housing and perhaps other aid for personnel having custody of those nuclear weapons located in Ukraine.**

*Rationale For:* If such personnel are seriously stressed economically, they may become vulnerable to subornation by foreign or subnational parties attempting to gain access to nuclear weapons or materials.

*Arguments Against:* Assistance given to active nuclear officers would be difficult to justify, politically and otherwise.

- **Offer aid in defense conversion, as in the other nuclear successor republics.**

*Rationale For:* Economic stability will be increased by successful transition of defense industries to civilian uses. The economic situation in Ukraine is even more serious than in many other FSU republics, and the issue is therefore more acute here. Increased economic stability also will reduce stresses that could tempt some with access to nuclear material or information to sell them to foreign parties.

*Arguments Against:* The economic problems in Ukraine are so enormous and complex that U.S. efforts to help may only have marginal effects at best. Further, thus far, minimal efforts at economic reform have occurred. Opponents of this policy would argue that aiding Ukraine in the economic area should come only after more positive actions by the government there.