"Exploiting Ethnicity in Russian Hybrid Threats"

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Abstract

Recently, the term 'hybrid warfare' has been applied to a set of levers by which some actors in international relations attempt to achieve their foreign policy objectives. One of the levers Russia employs in their use of hybrid warfare is to exploit ethnic cleavages in targeted societies. In former Soviet Republics, Russian uses propaganda to reach out to ethnic Russians populations (or Russian speakers) in those countries. In other countries, Russia cynically exploits ethnic cleavages simply to cause problems in targeted countries, such as Arab immigrants in western Europe or Catalonians in Spain. This paper explores the nature of Russia's attempts to exploit ethnic cleavages and how western government should address them.

Keywords

Introduction

Recent debate within defence circles has been intense as western countries attempt to come to terms with the evolution of warfare (Hoffman, 2009). The North Atlantic Council meeting at Wales declared that *'We will ensure that NATO is able to effectively address the specific challenges posed by hybrid warfare*

threats, where a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures are employed in a highly integrated design' (NATO, 2015).

According to military theorist Frank Hoffman, 'Hybrid threats incorporate a full range of modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts that include indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder' (Hoffman, 2009).[2] NATO defines hybrid threats as 'those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives' (Miklaucic, 2011). The synergy of multiple techniques is a large part of what makes hybrid threats so difficult to defeat.

Exacerbating ethnic conflict is one of the key threat techniques the Russians have employed since 2014. The Russian government has played upon the fears of ethnic Russians (and Russian-speakers) in the Baltic States. In Ukraine, Russia has mobilised ethnic Russians with great success, getting tens of thousands of people to support the Kremlin's goals. This was not an entirely organic conflict. It was, at least in part, the result of Russian governmental manipulation. As German political scientist Andreas Umland has observed of the Glazyev tapes, 'Russia actively fanned the flames of pre-existing ethnic, cultural and political tensions in the region' of southern and eastern Ukraine (Umland, 2016).

Exploiting Ethnicity

Exploiting ethnic cleavages in western societies is an ideal hybrid technique for several reasons. First, the western liberal tradition urges states to downplay rather than accentuate ethnic differences among their

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2   In 2007, Hoffman used this definition: "Hybrid wars can be conducted by both states and a variety of non-state actors. Hybrid wars incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including convention capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion and criminal disorder. These multimodal activities can be conducted by separate units, or even by the same unit, but are generally operationally and tactically directed and coordinated with the main battlespace to achieve synergistic effects." Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, (Arlington, Virginia: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007), 14.

populations. Second, the fairness or justice of a government's policy vis-à-vis an ethnic minority, in the end, is not determined by the government, but by the targeted population. Thus, a western liberal state may feel it is treating an ethnic minority population justly, but that minority population may nevertheless feel badly abused by the government, and therefore that population might be receptive to Russian propaganda highlighting the perceived injustice. Finally, unlike policy debates, ethnic differences may be intensely felt and are not susceptible to compromise. A leftist may debate a rightist on economic policy and may be convinced by the argument and change his mind. If an ethnic minority member is convinced that the majority ethnicity hates him simply because of his ethnicity, the minority member cannot change to accommodate the majority's concerns, even if he wanted to do so. An ethnic conflict is an intransigent one.

Russia does not target only ethnic Russian populations, but exploits ethnic cleavages in targeted countries whenever it is useful to Russian policy. In Ukraine, Russian secret services and propaganda apparatus skilfully used ethnic Russians living in that country. Paramilitary groups were formed and mobilized and the general population incited by Russia propaganda to resist the Kyiv government. In countries with no Russian population, proxy populations have been used. In the Balkans, Russia, citing historical ties, has sought out ethnic Serbs for ethnic appeals. In Georgia, Abkhaz and South Ossetian minorities were exploited to achieve Russian objectives. Cynics might say that Russia is not really concerned about a minority population's human rights; they are just exploiting ethnic cleavages to create chaos. A case in point would be the Catalan secession episode. Spanish investigators found that Russia used Spanish-speaking people and bots (i.e. automated social media accounts) to incite Catalan secessionists and, at the same time, to point out to Madrid how Catalan independence would hurt the Spanish economy (Alandete, 2017; Lesaca, 2017). The Kremlin, for its part, takes a very different view of ethnic secessionists inside the Russian Federation. The experience of Grozny from 2000 can illustrate the point. Let us examine the history of Russian thinking about ethnicity and warfare.

Western writers refer to the new form of warfare employed by Russia (and others) as 'hybrid warfare.' To understand the trajectory of the term 'hybrid

warfare,' however, we must understand what roots it had in the Russian mind. While there has been much Russian ink spilled to explain how war has recently evolve and to plot a Russian path for the future of fighting, Russians until recently did not use the word "hybrid warfare." In 2010, two Russian military thinkers, Colonel Sergei Chekinov and Lieutenant General Sergei Bogdanov of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, posited the asymmetrical ways in which the Russian armed forces could protect the Russian Federation (Chekinov and Bogdanov, 2010). In this article, they wrote of 'remote non-contact confrontation'[3] and 'non-contact forms of troops (forces) and their mode of action.'[4] Valery Gerasimov, the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces in a 2013 article wrote of 'distant non-contact effects' (Gerasimov, 2013). These ideas have been translated into English using the terms 'non-linear warfare' and 'hybrid warfare' (McDermott, 2014).

This translation does not completely describe what the Russian thinkers have in mind. Gerasimov suggests 'taking advantage of *the protest potential of the population*.'[5] Partisan warfare advocate Anatoly Zaitsev demonstrates that this is not just theoretical hypothesizing when he applauds the use of 'the people's militia in the south-eastern Ukraine' (Zaitsev, 2014). Most significantly, Russian President Vladimir Putin describes the character of modern military conflicts as being 'implemented with the extensive use of *the protest potential of the population*, and special operations forces' (Putin, 2014). This is clearly a maturing concept that is beyond just a relaxing of the Soviet linear approaches to operations. Russian strategic thinking centres in some ways on the population in the targeted area and whipping up popular discontent.

So, what do we make of this Russian thought? How should this effect policy?

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3   In Russian: "дистанционного (неконтактного) противоборства" and "неконтактные формы применения войск (сил) и способы их действий" (Chekinov and Bogdanov, 2010).

4   In Russian: "неконтактные формы применения войск (сил) и способы их действий" (Chekinov and Bogdanov, 2010).

5   In Russian: "Реализуемых с задействованием протестного потенциала населения" (Gerasimov, 2013).

The success of hybrid warfare or the Russian 'non-contact confrontation,' depends heavily on acceptance by and support from the local population in the area of operations. This in turn is heavily dependent on the perceived legitimacy of the political goals and the forces attempting to realise them. Legitimacy has been defined as 'the conceded right to exercise authority over and on behalf of a population' (Cable, 1998). Further, legitimacy consists of two types: existential and functional legitimacy. Existential legitimacy derives from how a group got power, while functional legitimacy is 'the perceived ability to understand the hopes, fears, needs and aspirations of a population or of a major constituency of that population. The emphasis here is upon perceptions, *local* perceptions of legitimacy. The population that a government seeks to rule, not by the government itself, defines legitimacy. The people of Donetsk and Lugansk, not by governments in Kyiv and Moscow, determine the legitimacy of Ukrainian governmental actions in eastern Ukraine. Ukrainians of Russian extraction may view current events through the experience of their Russian parents and grandparents during World War II. Some Ukrainians of Russian extraction emphasized the ethnic component of Maidan Revolution (i.e. seeing the conflict as being between Russians and Ukrainians). In Latvia and Estonia, how ethnic Latvians and Estonians view public policy may be quite different from the way ethnic Russians in those countries view the same policy. Russian propaganda can be differentiated by virtue of language. For example, propaganda oriented towards Serbs is broadcast in Serbian while propaganda intended to incite Arab migrants is broadcast in Arabic.

This highlights the importance of *narrative* as an input to how people view politics and how politics shapes their reactions. In this there are two very different types of narratives. First is the *organic* narrative, in that it originates with the people on the ground themselves. The other type is the *sponsored* narrative, one that originates outside the objective area, and is exported to the population for political purposes. One example of this is the narrative that the Euromaidan protest. Ukrainians see themselves as establishing a degree of independence from Moscow. The Kremlin portrays western Ukrainians as 'fascists' (BBC, 2014; Kozlowska, 2014). Russian military thinker Anatoly Zaitzev, in his article 'Partisan Methods,' cites the anti-

Soviet Ukrainian Insurgent Army ("UPA" in Ukrainian), which fought the Red Army as well as the Nazis during World War II (Zaitsev, 2014). This fits the Kremlin narrative that opponents of President Yanukovich as fascists. Ironies abound. Political scientists Agnia Grigas and Marcel van Herpen write, "What present-day Russia calls 'anti-fascism' is rather the expression of a jingoist, nationalist mood, which in fact comes close, very close indeed, to a modern variant of fascism itself" (Grigas and Herpen, 2014).

From the perspective of policy, the issues of self-perception of legitimacy and the sponsored narrative are helpful tools in predicting potential trouble spots. Using these tools, policy makers wishing to anticipate where the next hybrid threat may break out can look for these two indicators: ethnicity and the employment of a sponsored narrative. For example, Crimea, in 2001, was 58.5% ethnic Russian. The collapse of the Yanukovich regime was a trigger for non-Russian Ukrainians in Crimea to declare their support for the new regime in Kyiv (Fisher, 2014).[6] Ethnic Russians in Crimea responded (Amos, 2014). This may have been organic or sponsored by Moscow (Allison, 2014; Lavrov, 2015). Political scientist Nikolay Mitrokhin argued that the Donbass uprising was led, at least in part, by FSB and GRU operatives (Mitrokhin, 2015). Within days ethnic Russians were calling for a referendum on Crimean independence (Smith and Stromova, 2014), and 'little green men,' commonly believed, but never officially acknowledged, to be members of the Russian military, appeared in Crimea by February 28, 2014 (Ramirez, 2014).

The same template played out in eastern Ukraine. Oblasts with significant ethnic (or linguistic) Russian populations soon became scenes of ethnic violence and separatist or secessionist movements. Donetsk oblast, for example, at the most recent Ukrainian census was 38.2% ethnic Russian. Luhansk oblast was 39% ethnic Russian but 68.8% Russian-speaking (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2001). It is not surprising that these two soon became the scenes of ethnic violence and separatist action, and, most importantly, the theatre of operations of 'little green men' or 'polite men,'

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6   At a rally in Simferopol on 23 February 2014, 5,000-15,000 people declared loyalty to the new regime in Kyiv, for the dissolution of the current Crimean parliament, and prosecution of separatist leaders in Crimea (Radio Svoboda, 2014).

commonly believed to be Russian soldiers intervening for the benefit of the local Russian populations (Frizell, 2014). The Russian policy of offering Russian passports to all ethnic Russians in former Soviet republics who want them has given Russia the entrée it needs for intervention 'to protect their compatriots' from perceived harassment (Grigas, 2014).

The model has limits, however. For example, Kharkiv oblast has a population that is 25.6% ethnic Russian (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2001), yet no long-lasting ethnic violence broke out there. It is possible that other factors explain this lack of hybrid war breaking out. Perhaps there is a 'take-off' level of ethnicity required for ethnic strife to erupt. Perhaps the local conditions were not sufficiently tense. Perhaps there were no adequate leaders of the ethnic Russian community to lead a Russian separatist movement in Kharkiv.[7] Perhaps there was a shortage of Russian forces to support expanding operations into Kharkiv Oblast. Similar Russian attempts to sponsor secessionist coups in Odessa and Zaporizhzhiya also collapsed (Kuzio, 2017).

Russia's plans for hybrid warfare in the future are anyone's guess, although the potential theatres are not difficult to template. The Baltic States would seem to be possible venues, although the ethnic (and linguistic) populations vary considerably. Lithuania for example, has a population that is 5.8% is ethnic Russian and 15% Russian speakers. Latvia is 26.2% ethnic Russian and 34% speaks Russian. Estonia is 24.8% ethnic Russians and 30% Russian speaking (CIA, 2015; Grigas, 2014).

Ethnic populations at the national level are not the sole factor, or even the most significant factor in determining where a hybrid war might erupt. As the Ukrainians have learned, there are 'micro-theatres' in which ethnic strife might erupt. It was not in Ukraine overall where Russian intervention broke out, but in the Russian-majority Crimea and in the oblasts of Luhansk and Donetsk with significant Russian minorities where fighting started. In the

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7   Although, oddly, Yanukovich fled to his "stronghold" in Kharkiv when he left Kyiv in February 2014. This Yanukovich "stronghold" in Kharkiv did not translate into an ethnic Russian stronghold in the fighting that followed. The centre of gravity of ethnic Russians in Ukraine proved to lie further south and east in Donetsk and Lugansk.

Baltic States, some areas have Russian or Russophone majorities or significant Russian minorities. In Tallinn, Estonia, for example, 37% of the population is ethnic Russian and 46% of the population speaks Russian. Narva, Estonia, is 88% ethnic Russian. In Riga, Latvia, ethnic Russians make up 40% of the population, while Russian-speakers total nearly 50%. In the Latvian city of Daugavpils, ethnic Russians are nearly 54% of the population, while Russian-speakers make up 79%. Vilnius, Lithuania, is 12% ethnic Russian, while nearly 27% speak Russian. In the city of Klaipeda, Lithuania, ethnic Russians make up nearly 20% of the population, while Russian-speakers total 28% (Grigas, 2014). The key point is that, in order for an ethnically based problem to erupt, a countrywide Russian majority is not necessary. A local majority may suffice to get an ethnic conflict started, unleashing the dynamics of inter-ethnic conflict.

Russia seeks to exacerbate ethnic tension between groups that include no Russians at all. For example, Russia placed an embargo on Moldovan exports of fruit and wine, but exempted fruit and wine from the ethnic Gagauz region of Moldova. In a more provocative example, two ethnic Poles in the Ukrainian province of Zakarpatia firebombed a Hungarian cultural centre in Uzhhorod. Later investigation, revealed the men's ties to the Polish far-right organization Falanga, whose leader travelled to the Donetsk People's Republic and some of whose members have gone to Donbass to fight alongside the Russian separatists (Górzynski, 2018). Do Russians really want to destroy a Hungarian cultural centre in a remote Ukrainian province? Probably not, especially since Hungarian President Oban may be Putin's closest friend in the European Union. More likely, the Kremlin mere wished to stir up ethnic strife between Poles, Hungarians and Ukrainians under the zero-sum game assumption that anything bad for the West is good for Russia.

A similar tale is brewing in the western Balkans. The *Republika Srpska* (RS), the Serbian half of the Bosnian Federation, declared January 9 its national holiday. January 9 is both the date on which the RS declared its independence from Bosnia-Hercegovina in 1992, and the Feast of Saint Stephen, the republic's patron saint. The Bosnia Constitutional Court declared the selection of this discriminatory and thus unconstitutional. RS President Dodik responded

by calling for a referendum on independence from the Bosnian Federation in 2018. 'It was an arranged marriage, and it has not worked out,' he said. 'Bosnia and Herzegovina is an arranged state, and we want out' (Surk, 2018).

Russia's involvement is more oblique. South Ossetian leader Anatoly Bibilov travelled to Banja Luka to celebrate the Day of the Republika Srpska with RS President Dodik. This was unlikely to have happened without the permission and support of the Russian government (Jardine, 2018). Also, the Russian motorcycle gang the Night Wolves will travel to the RS to celebrate the Day of the Republika Srpska (Radio Free Europe - Radio Liberty, 2018) Dodik has asked Russian to sell rifles to the RS police and requested that Russia train the RS special police unit. Russia has agreed (Borger, 2018). In September 2017, Dodik announced he was putting on hold a referendum on the independence of the RS (Kovacevic, 2018). Dodik later reneged, but did not swear off holding the election, just putting off the date when it would be held. Time will tell if the RS renews talk of secession from the Bosnian Federation, and whether Russian support is behind the move.

Russia's ethnic politics certainly makes for strange political bedfellows. Most Poles remember that Russia helped carve up Poland in 1772-1795. They also remember the Soviet attempts to crush Polish independence in 1920 and the Soviet invasion of Poland in September 1939. Despite this, the leader of the ethnic Polish party in Lithuania, Waldemar Tomaszewski, has been accused of having ties to Russia (European Foundation for Human Rights, 2012). Tomaszewski has indeed been in Moscow, although he said it was in a private capacity, seeking medical treatment for his son (Maciazek, 2015). Tomaszewski has criticized the Euromaidan protests, worn a St. George's ribbon in public and cooperated with *Baltskii* Mir, a Russian-language magazine whose target audience is Russians in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. For their part, the Russians have emphasised that their fight is against fascists in Kyiv, yet they seem willing to collaborate with Polish fascists and anti-Semites and some Polish far-right fighters have come to Donbass to fight for the Russians there (Jackson, 2014). Taken together, it seems the Russian government are content to embrace opportunistically anyone who can merely cause trouble in the countries to their west.

Proposed Solutions

Knowing that ethnically-based security problems may erupt, however, does not generate solutions. It is only defining the problem, and perhaps predicting where they may occur. This requires an interdisciplinary or interagency approach, in which officials from the ministry of the interior, for example, coordinate with and share information between intelligence officials, diplomats, police, and potentially the military. This is a whole-of-government way of anticipating and hopefully pre-emptively dealing with hybrid threats. A Counter Hybrid Threat strategy that deals with ethnic exploitation should consist of two broad planks, moderation and vigilance.

Moderation helps prevent problem. One example is allowing ethnic minorities to teach school in their preferred language (Musch, 2014). The old Soviet Socialist way to deal with nationality was to downplay it, and emphasise instead class struggle (Hough and Fainsod, 1979). Today, the Kremlin emphasizes ethnicity and nationality and does not deal with class at all, at least not in the way the Bolsheviks did. When looking for exploitable cleavages in today's societies, ethnolinguistic differences are readily available and easy to exacerbate.

The language of instruction in schools is a hot-button issue and one of the fault lines of ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union (Musch, 2014). Ethnic Russians see maintaining Russian language in the schools as a key component of keeping their children ethnically rooted, passing the language on to the next generation and thus keeping alive Russian culture in a non-Russian land. It is important to remember that the legitimacy of such a policy will be determined by the minority population, not by the countrywide majority or the government imposing it. For example, allowing Russian language instruction one day per week in Russian-majority areas might seem like a great concession to the government, but may be seen as totally inadequate to the Russian minority, to whom Russian propaganda appeals might one day be made.

Gaining and maintaining proficiency in the country's majority language is a worthy policy goal. One Lithuanian graduate student noted that 'due to the poor teaching of Lithuanian in Russian [language] schools, most graduates

face discomfort in the universities and labour market' (Grigas, 2014).[8] Thus, encouraging Lithuanian language proficiency is important for two reasons. First, it can help unify the country. Second, it helps ethnic Russians so they can compete in the Lithuanian labour market. If pushed too hard, however, Lithuanian language proficiency can become a wedge dividing ethnic Russians from their Lithuanian countrymen.

Next, the government or majority culture would do well to remember that ethnic division and conflict may well change over time. Ethnic Russians in the Baltic States who moved there in the Soviet era and late in their lives may never feel 'at home' in Latvia. One 80-year old Russian woman, who came to Latvia in the early 1950s and obviously now feels alienated, related to an interviewer: 'We are non-citizens. They called us occupiers, but now they turn out [to be] occupiers themselves. This is Russia's land' (Krutaine and Mardiste, 2014) 'Even though Latvia may give citizenship to Russian-speaking people,' one graduate student explains, 'they can never be called Latvians because Latvia strictly differentiates between citizenship and nationality. My citizenship is Latvian, but my nationality can be only Russian or Polish.' This distinction 'makes Russian-speaking people feel alienated and not wanted in society' (Grigas, 2014)

On the other hand, there are centripetal forces at work as well. Artem, a Russian-speaking doctoral student also from Riga, 'I'm a Latvian citizen, and I don't think of myself as somehow involved in Russian nationalism of politics. Besides, I think that Russia is rolling into the darkness these days, and I can't accept on any level their contemporary aggressive national rhetoric' (Grigas, 2014). One Russian-speaking Estonian schoolgirl explained, 'I was born in Estonia, it is my homeland.' Anton, a 24-year-old student in Tallinn, agrees. 'I do not consider myself as a [Russian] compatriot,' he says, 'because apart from the Russian language, nothing ties me to Russia.' Thus, there is a temporal aspect to this acculturation process. Older ethnic Russians are more

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8   United States faces a similar problem with Spanish and English language proficiency. Immigration advocates urge Spanish language instruction for immigrant children of Spanish heritage, but this may have the unintended consequence of stunting the development of English language ability necessary for these children to one day integrate fully into American economic and social life.

set in their ways while younger ethnic Russians may be more willing to adopt their native country over (or alongside) their ethnicity. The key question is whether or not time is the friend of peace. If time is on the country's side, the government should adopt a policy of moderation, let time do its work, and not needlessly antagonize a resident minority.

Vigilance represents the second plank of an interagency response to hybrid threats. Western governments must monitor foreign media for changes in the Russian propaganda narrative. If a neighbouring country unleashes a spike in broadcast or print media making appeals to the nationalism of the targeted minority, this may be quite significant. Russian news media is increasingly a tool of Kremlin policy (Šešelgytė, 2014). If Russian media is highlighting that ethnic minorities in one's country are facing any mistreatment, it could signal that the Russian government is trying to see what spurring ethnic tension might spark. More work is needed on this area in studies of how Russian intelligence, Russian diplomats, and Russian media behave leading up to the Russian intervention in Crimea and Ukraine.

Next, domestic intelligence services have a responsibility to help prepare the country. This means learning whether the foreign 'sponsored' narrative is gaining traction among domestic populations. Military counterintelligence must also maintain vigilance especially in regard to ethnic Russians (or ethnic minorities) holding public office or positions of trust. This is a sensitive matter, since excessive distrust of members of ethnic minorities in public office may well *cause* the alienation the strategy seeks to address and which the Russians seek to foster. Russian military thinkers S. G. Chekinov and S. A. Bogdanov, however, explicitly call for 'intimidation, fraud, bribery of government and military figures, [and] the use of blackmail to persuade the leaders of the country's armed forces to abandon their duties' (Chekinov and Bogdanov, 2013; Berzins, 2014) As the Yanukovich regime came apart, who knows what pressures Ukrainian officers of Russian descent were placed under and which ones succumbed and switched their loyalties to Russia? In the middle of the Crimea Anschluss, one Ukrainian admiral announced he was switching sides (Polityuk and Zverev, 2017). Alexei Dressen, an ethnic Russian living in Estonia, was employed by the Estonian Internal Security Service, and was later arrested for spying for the Russians (Kuczyński, 2018).

Targeted countries must examine their own vulnerabilities from the eyes of hybrid threats, not the way a government wishes to see itself. Russia may attempt to exploit ethnic fissures that Europeans countries might believe do not exist. For example, in eastern Europe, a government may believe that its policies towards a Roma population are enlightened and liberal, but the members of the Roma population may see themselves as being oppressed. Likewise, in western Europe, a government may believe that it is treating Middle Eastern migrants and refugees magnanimously, but this migrants and refugees may see their situation differently. Further, Russian propaganda will work to enflame resentments and exacerbate tensions. The messages, 'You are poor because they are rich' and 'They hate you for your ethnicity' may be demagogic and irresponsible, but they are very enticing to those who see themselves as downtrodden.

Finally, the military must maintain the ability to repel an armed foreign invasion, repress a domestic insurgency, and defeat a hybrid combination of both. Ukraine did not adequately fund its military in the years leading up to the Euromaidan protest and has paid a very steep price in blood, treasure, and prestige since February 2014. NATO members cannot afford to find themselves in the same situation; the stakes are so much higher.

Conclusion

Hybrid threats are arguably a serious menace in today's international environment. The application of conventional military force, insurgency, criminal activity, cyber-attack, and information operations and the exploitation of ethnic cleavages, all in concert and in close proximity in time and space represents a serious threat. Russia looks for weaknesses in targeted countries, ones it can exploit to its advantage. Hybrid threats are by nature multi-vectored, and often include appeals to ethnicity. Responding to them calls for a comprehensive strategy which leverages multiples elements of national power, including law enforcement, foreign affairs, intelligence and counterintelligence, informational elements, as well as security agencies working in close coordination with each other. While the military may be part of the solution, countering hybrid threats is not simply a military problem

requiring a military solution. In many stages, the military will not be in the lead. A complete strategy must address countering hybrid threats using an interdisciplinary effort employing all the means at the state's disposal.

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