

# NO APOLOGY, NO FUTURE

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*[This Monday's Archive, "No Apology, No Future," was originally published on April 28, 2005. 18 years ago, a prediction that Russia would disintegrate as did the Soviet Union was almost unheard of. Now it seems ubiquitous. Google Russia + collapse, +dissolution, or +decolonize will result in millions of hits. The List of active separatist movements in Russia in Wikipedia advocating independence from Moscow will astound you. Russia is accelerating into centrifugal chaos, which won't take TTPers by surprise, as they were forewarned many years ago.]*

Map by the Lansing Institute

*TTP, April 28, 2005*

Budapest, Hungary, October 1997. It was a gorgeous fall day, the sun sparkling off the Danube, the domed Royal Palace glinting on Buda Hill, smartly dressed shoppers strolling along the Vaci.

Just a few years ago this place had been a fear-ridden Russian colony. Now everyone on the street was chattering away on a cell phone. Back in the Soviet days, only the Nomenklatura – the Communist elite – could get a telephone, and even they were terrified of talking freely.

I was in Budapest speaking to a conference of international business leaders. Another speaker was a Moscow television news commentator well-known in Russia, Boris Notkin.

He informed his audience about how humiliated Russians felt, losing their Empire and the Cold War, not

winning many medals in the Olympics, and having their Mir space station go belly-up. He warned of a dangerous anti-Americanism emerging among Russians, who resentfully blamed America for their problems.

A gray-haired gentleman with a Central European accent stood up and asked Boris a question:

*“In addition to their feelings of humiliation and resentment, do Russians have any feelings of remorse for inflicting Communism upon so many countries? After their defeat in World War II, the Germans apologized to the world for being Nazis and for the horrible atrocities Nazism committed. After their defeat in the Cold War, will the Russians ever apologize to the world for being Communists and the equally horrible atrocities Soviet Communism committed?”*

Boris looked straight at the man and coldly answered, *“No. Russians feel no remorse. They will not apologize.”*

This past Monday, April 25, Russian President Vladimir Putin reaffirmed this absence of remorse and refusal to apologize for the genocidal horror perpetrated by Soviet Communism upon so many countries and peoples. In a nationally televised speech to the Russian Federal Assembly in Moscow, he declared that “the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.”

The truth, of course, is that the *existence* of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical disaster of the 20th century.

It was only because the Germans went through a *mea culpa* emotional purge of the Nazi poison that they were able to create a prosperous free market democracy. The Russians will never be able to do the same until they can summon the moral courage to say to the world, “We’re sorry.”

Until Russians can take responsibility for their history and stop blaming everyone else for it, they can never overcome it. Until they can admit they created a monstrously evil tyranny, they can never create a morally decent society. Until they can stop yearning for past imperial glory, their former colonies will always hate them, and never trust them.

For these colonies know that the “Soviet Union” was a fiction, a Hollywood-set country that didn’t really exist. What actually existed behind the façade was a Russian Imperial Empire with the secular religion of “Marxism-Leninism” as its ideological justification.

The justification may be gone, but the dream of empire has not. This was confirmed by Putin asserting in his speech that “Russia should continue its civilizing mission on the Eurasian continent.”

Continue civilizing? The mass slaughter of millions, the Gulag concentration camps enslaving millions more, imprisoning a score of nations behind the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain – this is civilizing? Ask any Latvian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Pole, Czech, Hungarian, et al, and they’ll tell you Russia’s historic mission has been *un-*civilizing to the horrific extreme.

Thus Russia remains determined to march resolutely towards cultural and national extinction. Putin may fly off for photo-ops in Egypt and Israel this week, and have George Bush and other world leaders stand next to him in Red Square week after next (commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII) – but it’s all for show.

Because in the meantime, in spite of Russia’s being the world’s second largest oil producer (after Saudi Arabia), of all fifteen now-independent nations that once comprised the Soviet Union, Russia is next to last in current

economic growth. Only Tajikistan is lower.

An extremely high-placed source in the Kremlin tells To The Point that capital flight has reached flood levels. The government's public admission was that \$8 billion flew out of Russia last year. "The true figure," our source said, "is four times that: \$32 billion. It will be much more this year."

So no matter how much Pootie-Poot struts on the world stage or on Red Square, the disintegration of Russia and its influence will continue unabated. Yet Russia doesn't have to. All she has to do is apologize. But she can't. With no apology, there's no future in Russia. A pure Greek tragedy based on an inescapable tragic flaw in the Russian character. Aeschylus and Sophocles would have understood.

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