

# Russia v The World: Was That Inevitable?

## A Review Essay by James P. Farwell<sup>1</sup>

*Germany's Russia Problem*

John Lough. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021.

*Not One Inch: America, Russia, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Stalemate.*

M.E. Sarotte. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021.

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### About the Author

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Two exceptional new books add powerful insight into Russia's worldview and the challenges surmounting the West in forging an actionable collective security agreement for Europe and the US.

Chatham House's John Lough has weighed in with a critical analysis in *Germany's Russia Problem* that examines the complex relationship between

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<sup>1</sup> James Farwell's opinions are his own and not those of the US Government, or any of its departments or agencies, or of COCOM.

Germany and Russia. Johns Hopkins Cold War historian Mary Sarotte has provided her brilliant *Not One Inch: America, Russia, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Stalemate*, an intricately researched and splendidly written, detailed history of engagements among US administrations, former Warsaw Pact nations that now hold NATO membership, and Russian leadership. Lough has written a long book, over 500 pages, and so rich in detail that, despite the fluid writing, reading and digesting it requires focused attention.

Each book offers a parallel theme. The old saw ‘timing is everything’<sup>2</sup> comes a little into play in reading Lough’s fine work but does not undercut the book’s importance or analysis of Germany’s disposition towards Russia before the invasion of Ukraine. His book details and critiques Germany’s ambivalent posture towards Russia and its faint-hearted response to the threats that Russia poses to Germany through its extensive influence in civil society and on security policies. The invasion turned matters upside down and opened German eyes, exposing a ruthless dictatorship that exploited German sensibilities to advance Russia and weakened German security.

Lough understood the challenge before the invasion made reality manifest, and he deserves significant credit for his cold-eyed, objective analysis of the reality of the strategic situation. He didn’t predict the invasion, but he understood Ukraine’s central role in European security and how Russia played the game. He understood that ‘contrary to the established thinking in Berlin and many EU capitals, [...] Russia is key to resolving Europe’s Ukraine problem. The underlying problem is Russia, not Ukraine’.<sup>3</sup>

Let’s give Lough the high marks he deserves and look at the book’s analysis, written before the invasion, which identifies critical elements that combined to bring Russian strategic views out of the dark and into cold daylight. A challenge for Germany is—or, until the invasion,

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2 *Germany’s Russia Problem*, p. 181.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 188.

was—to devise policies that accelerate Russia’s return to Europe, while ensuring that Europe could support a reforming Russia better than the failed policies that emerged as the Soviet Union collapsed.

Lough advises that ‘fear, sentimentality, ambivalence, economic complementarity, residual *Ostpolitik* [‘new eastern policy’, or policies related to normalisation of relations between West and East Germany] reasoning and a sense of obligation to Moscow for allowing Germany to reunify’ distort and inhibit its behaviour. The guilt factor arises from the Second World War and the barbarity that the Nazis wreaked upon Russians—17 million out of 34 million Soviet citizens under arms perished—and what many Germans perceive as Russia’s surprisingly charitable view towards their nation in the aftermath.

Lough points out that for ‘today’s generation of German policymakers, German reunification was the key event in their lives’,<sup>4</sup> giving rise to a debt they believe they owe Russia. One result was the failure in Germany to define its interests or to develop a strategy to advance them. Lough is far-sighted in his assessment of tensions between Germany’s desire and Russia’s conceptual approach to building security. He pronounces them incompatible and finds that Germany holds a romanticised, naive view towards Russia and its influence in Germany to generate sympathy for its positions. Russia’s trump card has been to play on a myth of Russian victimhood to trigger a sentiment of German moral failure toward Russia.

Lough examines the historical, social, and economic ties between the two nations concisely and clearly. The more exciting aspects examine more contemporary political and diplomatic relations. Lough recognises that Russia saw the ‘colour’ revolutions as a US conspiracy to oust Vladimir Putin from power.

Westerners find Putin’s paranoia irrational and absurd. But there’s no reason to suppose that Putin failed to believe his rhetoric. He well articulates his view in a July 2021, 5000-word essay, ‘On the Historical

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4 Ibid., p. 183.

Unity of Russians and Ukrainians'.<sup>5</sup> There he argues that Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians are all descendants of Ancient Rus, bound together by one language, economic ties, the Orthodox faith, and the rule of princes. Putin faulted Ukraine's political leadership—explicitly, not the Ukrainian people—for rewriting history to edit out all that bound Russia and Ukraine. He denounced 'radicals and neo-Nazis' while dismissing the 1930s genocide of Ukrainians at the hands of Josef Stalin.

However, mad events—generally of his own making—may have caused Putin to become, as he has always been, highly articulate. However misinformed he may be about the history of Ukraine and the attitudes of its citizens, Putin makes his case directly. Politics doesn't give rise to many universal truths, but one is that we need to pay attention to what politicians say in public more than what they say in private.

Putin was upfront in declaring that the 'true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia' and pronouncing Russians and Ukrainians to be 'one people'. He concluded his essay with the statement that 'what Ukraine will be—it is up to its citizens to decide'. It's an odd statement for a Russian who has transformed himself from a clever tactician, who was increasing Russian prosperity and enhancing its influence and standing abroad, into a war criminal. Apparently, while concluding that although Ukrainians should decide their future for themselves, Putin felt they merited a helping hand in the form of rocket attacks, missile strikes, and butchery of innocent women and children.

Although events overtook him, Lough demonstrates prudence in favouring strength while cautioning against policies that produce unproductive forms of confrontation with Russia. He notes that forcing Russia into a 'besieged fortress' posture would lead to repression. That prediction proved accurate, as Putin moved to put his country inside an information bubble. As Ukraine has piled on new victories and Russia has reportedly suffered 100,000 casualties, blowback from mobilising 300,000 new

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5 'Article by Vladimir Putin "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians"', *Official Website of the President of Russia*, 12 July 2021.

troops and right-wing nationalist criticism have burst that bubble.<sup>6</sup> Putin doesn't currently face a popular uprising, and while his position with the elites has weakened, he seems secure now.

Lough points out that confrontation encourages the Kremlin's appetite for meddling outside its borders as part of an effort to protect the Putin regime by shaping the external environment to its benefit. And although events nullify this observation, Lough argues that confrontation offers an opportunity to divide NATO and exploit weaknesses. It turned out that NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, NATO leaders in Europe, and President Joe Biden had stiffer spines than Putin expected. Putin also achieved what no Western leader had succeeded in doing. Instead of undermining NATO, he unified and revitalised it with a new mission of containment.

And while this essay does not focus on China, one notes as a sidebar that the vigorous Western response to Russia's invasion ought to make China think twice before launching an invasion of Taiwan. Any Chinese leader who thinks that would be a home run needs to think again.

Much of Lough's book details weakness in German attitudes which have leaned since the close of World War II to pacifism, leading to a toothless military. Germany participated in the Afghan war but insisted on sending an ambulance into battle. Colleagues who served on the frontlines had contempt for Germany's participation there. After Russia seized Crimea, Germany offered a weak-footed response that must have encouraged Putin's convictions that he could invade Ukraine without worrying about a formidable NATO response. Even Angela Merkel, fluent in Russian and viewed as a strong chancellor who understood Russia, fell victim to naivety in judging Russian attitudes and likely behaviour. She is as much at fault as anyone for tolerating Nord Stream 2, even though it was apparent that dependency on Russian gas supplies opened up strategic vulnerabilities.

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6 'Ukraine War: US Estimates 200,000 Military Casualties on All Sides', *BBC News*, 10 November 2022; Michael Weiss and James Rushton, 'Putin's Mobilization Draws Public Blowback, Especially in Minority Regions', *Yahoo! News*, 26 September 2022.

Perhaps only the poisoning of Russian dissident leader Alexei Navalny shocked her out of her doldrums. Why Navalny stood apart from the previous assassinations of journalists Yuri Shchekochikhin and Anna Politkovskaya and political leaders Boris Nemtsov—a killing that sent shockwaves through Moscow’s political elite—and Sergei Yushenkov is unclear. I’ve always respected Merkel’s ability, but like all politicians she showed a knack for nearly catastrophic misjudgements, including how she handled the crisis of Middle East refugees, which threatened to destabilise Europe. Throughout, Lough questions why Germany persisted with the same policies for so long when they failed, accelerated the emergence of a Russian system hostile to the EU and NATO, and worked against Germany’s own interests.

The bane of any author writing about current history is watching unfolding events render aspects of exemplary scholarship obsolete. Anyone who dips into these waters risks that. But Lough’s thinking is measured. He articulates his theme about Germany’s naivety powerfully. And at every turn, he shows nearly a fortune-teller’s ability to guess the future correctly.

Dr Sarotte’s epic study, *Not One Inch*, is provocative reading for anyone—scholar, practitioner, layperson—who wants to understand how 2022 became the tragic year it did in Eastern Europe. The book lays out her views as to why relations between Moscow and Washington deteriorated so badly after a period of promise when the Soviet Union was collapsing and events propelled the unification of Germany. Events did not propel the expansion eastward of NATO.

Sarotte provides clarity through a tightly organised book structure divided into three parts. The first, covering 1989–92, opens with the Berlin Wall falling. Horrified Russian leaders believed that Russian sacrifices during World War II privileged them to dominate Central and Eastern Europe. Helmut Kohl pushed to consolidate Western advantages while Russian politics made that possible. Kohl and Bush correctly predicted hardliners would try to oust Gorbachev. They worked to unify Germany

and expand NATO beyond its Cold War border. Bush had handled the upheaval reasonably well, but in working to unify Germany, foreclosed options for extending transatlantic security except by extending NATO beyond the Cold War line—and with that, the Article V obligations.

In 1993 and 1994 came Bill Clinton & Co. Unexpectedly, power in Russia fell to Boris Yeltsin. He was greedy and ambitious, but he wanted good relations with the West. He and Clinton established a rapport. General John Shalikashvili authored the Partnership for Peace plan (PfP) to develop a regime of collective security in Europe that included Russia. Yeltsin's foolish use of force to crush opponents in Chechnya and skilled manoeuvring by Clinton cohorts Richard Holbrooke, Tony Lake, and Strobe Talbott quashed the PfP plan in favour of aggressive NATO expansion. Clinton's decision to stop the plan—which Ambassador George Kennan and others judged foolish—foreclosed the option of incremental expansion of NATO that, in Sarotte's view, might have assuaged Russian paranoia about rapid NATO expansion. I'd add that this expansion carried fateful consequences for what transpired in Ukraine between 2014 and the present.

Sarotte's third part examines the period 1995–99. She chronicles Clinton's aggressive embrace of NATO expansion that foreclosed options to limit the location or number of new allies, the pace at which they were added, or the membership benefits they enjoyed. She describes Clinton's efforts to save Yeltsin's political neck. This section is especially fascinating. Although the book doesn't reach into the US elections in 2016, the account of Clinton's actions places complaints about Russian meddling in American politics in a different light.

In early 1990 George H.W. Bush had led a closely knit small team of himself, Secretary of State James Baker, and National Security Advisor General Brent Scowcroft. As the Soviet Union faced collapse, they had favoured a measured pace of change that would not trigger reversals. Cascading events from Hungary and then East Germany trapped Mikhail Gorbachev, who found himself unable to control unleashed forces or

to keep the Soviet economy together. Gorbachev wanted to save, not destroy, the Soviet Union, but was locked in a trick box with no way out.

In the meantime, Germany posed a stark challenge. Gorbachev tried to impose a condition on unification that banned a foreign nuclear presence on its soil in West or East Germany, a view that 84 per cent of Germans happened to share. The instinct for pacifism would persist until February 2022. It was a good move by Gorbachev. He wanted to separate Soviet–German relationships from discussions about other countries and to handle the resolution bilaterally. The idea mortified the Bush team, which sought a broader agreement addressing NATO’s future, not just Germany’s. Kohl wasn’t willing to wait. He hurried towards that goal with Bush’s support, although they were careful to avoid action that publicly humiliated the Soviet leader.

What about NATO? Gorbachev seemed to favour a pan-European organisation that included the USSR. The latter had legal rights as one of Germany’s four occupying powers and troops in Germany. He had leverage but remained unclear about how to employ it. Bush stayed focused. He wanted to maintain NATO and secure its future by including within it a united Germany. But Kohl held the cards. German reunification did not require Germany’s membership in NATO. The Bush team realised that deal would undermine NATO.

Sarotte’s account of how the leaders managed the situation is very interesting. She reports that Bush had to deal separately with Kohl and his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Kohl ran a coalition government that required the support of Genscher’s FDP, although the converse was not true, as Genscher could have formed a government with other coalition partners. A critical problem was that Genscher made noises about not expanding to the East.

Baker made a fateful trip to Moscow. There he suggested verbally to Gorbachev and then to Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze that Germany join NATO, but that in this scenario NATO would not move

‘one inch eastward from its present position’. Baker later retrenched, apparently under pressure from Bush, but the Soviets had taken his initial pronouncements as a promise. The Bush team has since argued that it was floating a trial balloon, although Baker repeated it at a press conference. Baker later pulled back, but he was a careful, cautious negotiator.

Seeking to remove Soviet reservations about reunification, Kohl embraced Baker’s view. As Kohl expressed that sentiment to Gorbachev, Genscher advised Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze: ‘For us, it is clear: NATO will not extend itself to the East.’ Still, Gorbachev temporised until Kohl suggested letting Germans themselves decide. Kohl wasted no time announcing Gorbachev’s agreement and moving forward. The Soviets thought Kohl had pulled a fast one and Gorbachev had dropped the ball, agreeing to reunification with no conditions. But Kohl got away with it. He was a wily operator.

The debate over what was promised persists, but Sarotte’s research shows why the Soviet Union—and subsequently Russia—believed it had a commitment from the US and Germany not to expand NATO. Gorbachev should have got it in writing, as Bush did not agree with Baker or Genscher. Bush favoured expansion. Bush and his team adroitly achieved their goals. Bush sought a strong NATO and set the foundation for maintaining one in the post-Cold War era. Germany reunified and joined NATO without any concession that would ban foreign troops or weapons from its soil. This set the stage for accession to NATO by Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Gorbachev was relegated to arguing for including Russia in NATO or some European collective security agreement. Bush would have probably done well to pay closer heed to Gorbachev’s suggestion.

Bush’s election defeat in 1992 shocked Bush himself. History doesn’t reveal its alternatives, so what a second Bush term might have looked like is speculation. Brent Scowcroft told me they intended to focus on bringing peace to the Middle East. But the future of NATO would never have been far from their minds. The change in administration did not

favour the future. My feeling about Bush & Co. is that they formed the ablest national security team since Eisenhower's presidency. They were strategic. They thought over the horizon. Pragmatism, not hubris or ideology, drove their policies.

Sarotte makes a reasonable case that the US and the West were less fortunate when Bill Clinton took over the Oval Office. Poor judgement by Clinton and a cohort of advisors led by National Security Advisor Lake, Holbrooke, and Clinton's Yale university sidekick Talbott upended efforts to stabilise European security.

Sarotte believes that Clinton's most far-reaching national security decision—a perverse one—was to derail the Pfp. Sarotte touts the initiative as one that envisioned a key role for Russia. At first embraced by Clinton and backed by his chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Shalikashvili, Secretary of Defense William Perry, and statesmen such as George Kennan, it might have worked, she believes.

The Pfp was proposed in October 1993 at a meeting of NATO defence ministers. The concept encouraged states to build democracy and strengthen security cooperation between states not part of NATO. It contemplated eventual membership in NATO for Central and Eastern European nations, including possibly Russia. Clinton liked the idea until Lake, Holbrooke, and Talbott worked him over when Clinton backed off support.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl liked Pfp. But his focus was on unifying Germany. Sarotte documents his strategy of bribing an essentially bankrupt Russia with financial support in exchange for not opposing reunification. Clinton's team dealt the Pfp one set of blows. Boris Yeltsin dealt it a separate set by insisting on special privileges. Tensions over Bosnia further weakened Russian support for the plan.

Then Yeltsin initiated the First Chechen War. The war emboldened Russia sceptics, who argued that the West should expand NATO to meet

a potential Russian military threat. Naively, Clinton's team convinced themselves that they could persuade Russia that expansion posed no danger.

Then there was Ukraine. No party could adequately define Ukraine's role in a collective security structure. In concept, the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances signed by the US, UK, and Russia in December 1994 was going to assure Ukraine's territorial integrity and that of Belarus and Kazakhstan—with the Russian Federation, UK, and US agreeing to refrain from threatening or using military force or economic coercion against them.

The agreement has caused confusion. It provided *assurances*, not *guarantees*, mainly arising out of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Much has been made about whether the three nations erred in giving up nuclear weapons. They did not. They may have had weapons, but Moscow had the codes to use them. The understandings implicit in the agreement went nowhere as cooperation between Russia and the US broke down. This chicken came home to roost in 2021 and 2022.

Sarotte clearly favours the PFP, and makes a good case for it. Still, one must recognise that a strong competing school of thought rejects the view that Putin—or those standing behind him—was ever open to amicable relations between Russia and the West. This school of thought believes that the Russian security apparatus remained powerful despite Yeltsin's efforts to promote a rapprochement, and was merely waiting for the right opportunity to reassert itself. These voices remain deeply sceptical of Russian political intentions. One might recall that Ronald Reagan's famous line 'trust but verify' is actually a Russian proverb. Those assessing Russia's security mindset would do well to read an interview in the Estonian weekly *Eesti Ekspress* with the heads and employees of the state security agencies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.<sup>7</sup> They clearly believe that sceptics of Russian intentions are not sceptical enough.

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7 Eero Epner, "Human Life Has No Value There": Baltic Counterintelligence Officers Speak Candidly about Russian Cruelty, *Eesti Ekspress*, 17 October 2022.

The genocidal tactics that Russia has employed in Ukraine certainly support their view.

At some point, Clinton convened Friday-night strategy meetings of close political advisors in the White House residence. Friends attended these. They revered Clinton. Yet all noted that until his final months in office, when Clinton applied the full force of his brilliant intellect to seeking a Middle East peace, national security occupied no priority for him.

In those meetings, he generally referred questions on national security to Tony Lake and, later, Lake's successor, Sandy Berger. Indeed, in 1995, as essential events unfolded leading to the 1999 accession to NATO of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, more personal activities distracted Clinton. It was no accident that he appointed two weak secretaries of state, Warren Christopher and Madeline Albright. Christopher may have been a fine lawyer, but as secretary of state he achieved little. Albright was smart but naive about world politics. Clinton assumed that neither would do much, thus avoiding getting him into trouble. Neither did, although the effect, combined with Lake's blundering tenure at the NSC, caused the US to stand idly by while Serbia committed genocide against Bosnian Muslims, and Hutus did the same to Tutsis in Rwanda. Both genocides, especially that in Rwanda, were easily avoidable.

Sarotte criticises both the Bush and Clinton teams. She contends that both operated on mistaken assumptions about post-Soviet Russia and to understand the extent to which the liberation of Central and Eastern Europe looked to Moscow like imperial collapse. The book was written before the events of 2022, but one can see that actions taken in the 1990s proved a precursor to the current war.

Sarotte joins Ambassador Kennan in criticising the decision to expand NATO so quickly. The Alliance expansion added to the burdens of Russia's fragile young democracy when it most needed friends. Kohl and Baker stand out as the two prescient, solid players in the byzantine

manoeuvres that governed NATO's fate. Baker understood politics and politicians. One sometimes feels that academics and think-tank gurus who style themselves as national security experts view foreign leaders as a different species.

US political consultants—by background, I'm one—have long handled most election campaigns worldwide. Election consulting lets one see foreign leaders up close and personal, in a different context than diplomats or military attaches do. Their masks are off. Different cultures produce distinct idiosyncrasies, but politicians tend to be more alike than one might expect. A master of political art, Baker understood that and was able to deal with them effectively.

Kohl understood politics but more importantly he understood Russia and its leaders. In Sarotte's telling, Kohl struggled valiantly to reassure post-Soviet Russia that Europe posed no threat, and to find ways to integrate Russia into Europe. Baker and Kohl recognised there was greater value in easing tensions and avoiding unnecessary steps that would aggravate them and cause the collapse of Russia's fledgling democracy.

Yeltsin had many abilities, but he was emotional and an alcoholic in failing health. Realising that Yeltsin—supported by his foreign minister, Andrey Kozyrev—offered the best hope for amicable relations with the US, Clinton pulled out all the stops to save Yeltsin's election bacon. The 2016 election gave rise to complaints that Putin was stupid for using social media to disrupt the US election and elect Donald Trump. Doubtless, Trump's election pleased him, but like most US political insiders, it never crossed his mind that Trump might prevail. He seems to have been more interested in discrediting and crippling Hillary Clinton before she became president. Putin hated her, and anyone who believes that personal relationships—or hostility between political leaders—don't count doesn't understand politics.

Russia meddled. Its meddling did not alter the outcome of the presidential election. Putin and his cohorts are war criminals who are committing

genocide in Ukraine. Given how events have unfolded in Ukraine, one hopes Russians oust him. It's not clear stability in Europe, with knock-on effects elsewhere, is possible while he retains it. But let's go back a few years and look at what Bill Clinton did and why, perhaps, Putin is not entirely out of line in scoffing at complaints that Russia interfered in a US election. The US has hardly proven a bystander to Russian politics.

Consider Clinton's actions. In 1996 he sent capable consultants, Dick Dresner, George Gorton, and Joseph Shumate, to advise Yeltsin's campaign. They acted through his daughter, Tatyana Yumasheva. Later, the Russians tried to downplay their contribution. But I know Dresner well and have worked with him. Their story of making a real difference through their polling and advice on strategy and media is true.

Clinton tasked his CIA director, John Deutch, to advise Yeltsin on re-election. Finally, in the name of foreign aid, Clinton shovelled billions to Yeltsin. Think about that. What do you suppose would be the reaction had Clinton used Russian political consultants, taken advice from the head of the FSB, and accepted—let's use millions rather than billions of—campaign dough from Russia? I have no problem with what Clinton did to save Yeltsin, but hypocrisy is the cardinal sin in politics.

The collapse of the PFP arguably ensured acerbic relations between Russia and the West. Putin's paranoia was not novel to Russians. Border insecurity and obsession with its perceived lack of respect from the West have always permeated Russian diplomacy. The first tsar, Ivan IV, Peter the Great—whose portrait, not Lenin's, hangs in Putin's office—Catherine the Great, and a succession of Russian leaders up to and including Putin shared those traits.

Sarotte's scholarship teaches the importance of having the right leaders at the right time. Bush was much better informed and more prudent than the impulsive Clinton, and his team was wiser than its successors. Clinton should have achieved greatness as president. As a politician, he possessed energy and enthusiasm. He had a rapport with voters. He was

well read. He possesses a top-notch intellect. Those who worked with him—his White House senior staff—loved him, however difficult he could be in private. But he spread himself out across the board.

Bill and Hillary Clinton have trodden a bumpy road as partners. He capitulated to her agenda from 1992 to 1994, as highlighted by her ‘Hillarycare’ proposal that helped cost the Democrats control of Congress in 1994. After that, he shunted his wife aside and triangulated between liberals and conservatives. Politically that was shrewd and it produced historic welfare reform and a balanced budget.

Kohl was stolid, solid, and a testament to what pragmatic leadership could accomplish. But his example demonstrates the need for a united NATO effort to deal with Russia. As Sarotte points out, he had deep pockets and was willing to fork out huge sums of money to secure Russian approval for uniting his country. He and Bush share credit for getting that done. At the same time, there was no forgiveness of Russian financial debts—a failure Sarotte feels, I think correctly, might have helped uphold Russian democracy.

Kohl’s successor, Gerhard Schröder, lacked Kohl’s knowledge of Russia or his ability. After serving as chancellor, he became chairman of the board at Nord Stream AG and of Rosneft, and in 2022 drew criticism for complicity in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. He may yet be sanctioned for his involvement with Putin.

Yeltsin hoped to establish a viable democracy in Russia and partner with the West on an equal footing. His foreign minister, Kozyrev, laboured to help Russia achieve both ends. Both failed. One cannot discern how Moscow would ultimately have reacted to a more cautious enlargement of NATO. And one has to consider the firm desire of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join.

Sarotte’s view that leaders should have given the Partnership for Peace a chance is shared by many Russian experts. They believe it would have

enabled Washington to avoid choosing too soon between Russia, Central Europe, and Eastern Europe, and post-Soviet republics such as the Baltics and Ukraine. The PfP could have kept Western options open. It would have allowed NATO to expand in the face of new threats. It also provided options for a post-Soviet state, Sarotte notes, that expanding the Alliance did not.

Both Lough's and Sarotte's books reinforce the importance of leadership that looks over the horizon—the prerequisite of strategic communications. Politicians cannot mail-order a crystal ball. William Faulkner wrote that the past remains a part of our present, but the clues offered can help define a clear vision of what lies ahead. Faulkner was insightful.