

# Putin's Way

## Russia's Development Strategy to 2020

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### Towards a Disciplined, Flexible 21st Century State Model

On February 8, 2008 President Vladimir Putin of Russia made an extraordinary speech at the Expanded Meeting of the State Council. The 13 page speech was titled *Russia's Development Strategy to 2020*. The document is a template, a guide for the creation of the 21st Century Flex-State. A State with strong, even aggressive leadership that seeks to keep its story, its history, its people alive and prosperous in an era of competitive globalization where information about any organization, any individual, in any country is nearly impossible to hide. It is a bold, even historical document about Russia's experience with a method of US economic torture called The Shock Doctrine (see Naomi Klein's book of the same name), and its trials and tribulations with low birth rates and dismal healthcare. It is astonishingly open.

More than anything, though, it's about the long-term. It is about country and national interest coming first, agency second.

Putin recognizes that only The State has the authority to wield power to protect the national interest, play referee when financial markets convulse, and ensure that a nation's infrastructure, its culture, its people and its security come first. After all, those are the critical components of The State. It is vital that, as much as possible, The State should attempt to remain unincorporated. "We have rid the country of the harmful practice that saw state decisions taken under pressure from commodities and financial monopolies, media magnates, foreign political circles and shameless populists, a practice that was not only detrimental to our national interests but that cynically ignored the basic needs of millions of people," said Putin.

According to Goldman Sachs, Russia has become a "remarkable" performing member of the BRIC's (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) with its economy growing at an annual rate of 6.8 percent. Even so, according to Putin, much remains to be done and Russia can't borrow and spend its way to national prosperity and security. In short, Putin's "non-democratic" plan, much maligned in the world's mainstream media, is working.

### ***Putin's Way***

The American people would do themselves a big favor by reading his speech. The entire US economic, political, military, and diplomatic apparatus—presidential candidates included—would do their country a great service by taking the time to understand and heed the message behind the words. That message is clear: The State exists to serve the interests of the people. The State will not fade away, it can't. Indeed, Evolutionary

Psychology teaches that human beings are hierarchical creatures that in groups need structure, discipline, and unitary purpose. The State should be the guardian of the national psyche and not the captains of industry. According to Putin:

“Our children will no longer have to pay our old debts. The state foreign debt has shrunk to 3 percent of GDP – one of the lowest ratios in the world. What choice can there be between the opportunity to become a leader in economic and social development, a leader in ensuring our national security, and the threat of losing our economic standing, losing our security and ultimately even losing our sovereignty? Russia must become the country offering the best life, and I am sure that we can achieve this goal, not by sacrificing the present for some radiant future, but by working day by day to improve people’s lives.

The transition to an innovative development path calls above all for large-scale investment in human capital. Human development is the main goal and essential condition for progress in modern society. This is our absolute national priority now and in the future. Russia’s future and our success depend on people’s education and health and their desire to improve themselves and make use of their skills and talents. I am not saying this because presidential elections are just around the corner. This is not a campaign slogan. This is vital for our country’s development. Russia’s future depends on our citizens’ enthusiasm for innovation and on the fruit of the labors of each and every individual.

Political parties must not forget their immense responsibility for Russia’s future, for the nation’s unity and for our country’s stable development. No matter how fierce the political battles and no matter how irreconcilable the differences between parties might be, they are never worth so much as to bring the country to the brink of chaos. Irresponsible demagoguery and attempts to divide society and use foreign help or intervention in domestic political struggles are not only immoral but are illegal. They belittle our people’s dignity and undermine our democratic state. Russia’s political system must not only be in accordance with our national political culture but should develop together with it. Then it will be both flexible and stable.”

### ***Rice-Minded Arrogance***

Much of the world’s mainstream media outlets focused their attention on the last two pages of Putin’s remarks in which he bluntly, but not surprisingly, indicated that Russia would respond to further military encroachments by the United States—and its NATO partners—by re-engineering its national security apparatus to counter US/NATO plans to encircle the Russian Federation with a ring of tripwire military bases. With its hand forced, Putin said that “Russia has a response to these new challenges and it always will.” He went on to say that “The use of new technology calls for a rethinking of strategy in the way our Armed Forces are organized. After all, new breakthroughs in bio-, nano-, and information technology could lead to revolutionary changes in weapons and defense.”

Officials from the US State Department, the Pentagon, US defense industry—and the many think tanks/interest groups they rely on—have carefully deconstructed and reconstructed President Putin’s comments on national defense.

Their considered—and predictable—recommendations on Putin’s remarks reads something like this: The US national security strategy of provoking Russia, and much of the rest of the planet, has been successful. Said provocation has produced additional and in some cases unforeseen threats, as the Putin speech demonstrates. Therefore, the out-year budget

planning is already dated and inadequate for the previously anticipated threat scenario. To meet new and as yet undefined threats posed by the Russians—and the world—an increase in funding requests next year is an absolute certainty. We must lobby the US Congress and convince the US public that an increase in program funding for all the US military services and their contractors is essential to counter this new Russian belligerency and other threats we cannot at this time predict.

Right on schedule, the marketing campaign kicked-off. On February 13, 2008, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had this to say about Putin. “The unhelpful [remarks] and really, I will use a different word; reprehensible rhetoric that is coming out of Moscow is unacceptable.”

Unacceptable? Who does she think she’s talking to?

### ***Soviet Model or Chinese “Communist” Model***

Rice’s flippant statement is yet another example of the *F\*\*\*! You! US national security policy*—an in-your-face mandate to corporatize and militarize The State for neocolonialist ends. This incendiary national policy has been wonderful for those who want to turn The State into a for-profit enterprise. As such, when Putin talks tough—because US national security strategy compels him to—he ends up providing the rationale for US corporatists/militarists who want to perpetually develop and market new weapons platforms, increase the centralization of national security systems to monitor public opposition, and use The State to justify shady practices (retroactively too!) from preemptive intervention and torture to US central bank policies that sanction Wall Street’s appetite for the Roulette Wheel..

It’s tough to gauge whether those in power in the USA—and the many who are now seeking elected and appointed office—want to turn the US State into capitalist version of the former Soviet Union or today’s Communist China with its capitalist face. Perhaps they want the best of both. Whatever designs they have, this much is certain:

- 1.) the continued corporate takeover—encourage by the three branches of the US government—of The State’s social, education, infrastructure and security functions, to include resource assets;
- 2.) increased militarization of the US economy;
- 3.) bigger defense budgets for kinetic overkill platforms for land, sea, space that ignore William Lind’s Nth Generation Warfare principles and take up a greater percentage of US GDP;
- 4.) unprecedented expansion and centralization of domestic surveillance and homeland security activities;
- 5.) widening income disparity and cost-of-living;
- 6.) ignorance of America’s story—its good, bad, and ugly history—as it has struggled to live up to the ideals embodied in the US Declaration of Independence and US Constitution;
- 7) loss of national and global identity;

8.) painful economic collapse/financial insolvency—a dramatic replay of the Soviet Union’s end—that terminates the American Nation State;

9.) violent anarchy as The State fails, the population disburses and pledges allegiance to whatever group or individual can provide food, shelter, clothing and security.

Putin offers a sensible means to avoid a nasty end.

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