

fundamental lack of infrastructure. Thus while the Russians have not abandoned their dream of profiting from the economic dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region, their ability to realize those dreams seems almost non-existent. It would be misleading to say that there is no economic activity in the Russian Far East, but the real breakthrough, normalization of relations with Japan, appears beyond Moscow's grasp. The fate of isolated Russian minorities, the appeal of simplistic ultra-nationalist dictums, and the problematic nature of Yeltsin's power make the forfeiture of the disputed Kuriles impossible for the moment.<sup>17</sup>

Yeltsin is not unaware of Russia's lost opportunities in the Pacific. A Russian priority is membership in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation community. However, APEC's guiding principle is the articulation of macroeconomic policies and Russia's lack of such coherent policies denies it the membership that might help it achieve its goals in the Pacific. Instead, it must content itself with trying to persuade the southern tier of APEC members that it is indeed serious about being a Pacific player; something that Gorbachev's flying circus of diplomats attempted to do in Southeast Asia in the late 1980's, before the Soviet empire collapsed.<sup>18</sup>

What all this suggests is that Russia is likely to remain a marginal player at best in the Asia-Pacific region for the balance of this decade. Except where its interests or Slavic credentials are directly involved (as in the Yugoslav case), it is likely to be a fairly passive participant in the UN Security Council and in other international fora. Its military will be retooled to achieve greater rapid deployment capability for peripheral brush fire wars and its massive naval, air, and land arsenals will be undermined by prolonged neglect. It is difficult under the circumstances to see the Russians playing much of a role in arms control and security in the North Pacific region