



Beyond the Headlines

May 19, 2014

New York, NY

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Russia and Ukraine: Past, Present, and Future

Jonah Kokodyniak: So I think we'll start—good afternoon, I'm Jonah Kokodyniak, and I'm a Deputy Vice President at the Institute of International Education and on behalf of all of us, I'd just like to welcome the Women's Foreign Policy Group for what should be an incredibly interesting discussion, and it couldn't be more timely. And welcome Kimberly Marten of Barnard and Columbia. This is a topic that's incredibly close to the Institute's heart and work; we have offices in Kiev and also in Moscow that are serving as the Fulbright representatives in both countries as well as managing a broader portfolio of corporate and foundation programs and without a doubt it's a challenging time, but all the programs are continuing and I think we all believe probably more valuable than ever to both of those countries. So, thank you for coming and it's now my pleasure to turn it over to Patricia Ellis.

Patricia Ellis: Thank you very much, Jonah. We're really happy to be back here again, we always appreciate the warm hospitality, a wonderful place to meet, and it's great to see everyone and certainly this could not be a more timely event on *Russia and Ukraine: Past, Present, and Future* with Kimberly Marten, as he said, of both Barnard and Columbia University. I'll say a few more things about her in a moment. But this definitely—the topic, you know, it's changing by the moment, I mean, actually, as a former journalist I love that, you know, when I'm preparing, but to keep up with everything that's going on is just amazing on so many different levels. I mean, just to mention, starting back in March with the annexation, and then the fighting and recent referendum in eastern Ukraine, the imposition of economic sanctions, the continued fighting on the ground, the first round of talks took place between people in the east, not the separatists, but people in the east, and those in Kiev, and, of course, most significantly, on May 25th, the election is scheduled and we'll be talking about all of these topics.

So, I want to mention that—and thank those of you who were able to come to our annual Celebration of Women Diplomats, which is always wonderful, so if you didn't make it this time come next time because we get a chance to meet and interact with so many of the women diplomats from the UN, the ambassadors, deputy ambassadors, consuls general, and it's—it's always great, and it's always encouraging to see more and more women in leadership positions, so that's really fantastic.

And, so now it is my privilege and pleasure to introduce Kimberly and actually, I found out about her on the internet [*Laughter*]. I saw an interview that she did, you see, I mean, you have to be creative, I'm always looking for good speakers so people who have suggestions please let me know, but sometimes—I was determined to find someone great to speak about Russia and I think it was an interview with John Stewart—[*Laughter*.]

Kimberly Marten: That was really fun to do.

Ellis: Or—or she was also—she was also on the Charlie Rose show—

Marten: I was—with Richard Haass as the guest speaker.

Ellis: And a number of other places. And she was right here—

Marten: Fresh Air with Terry Gross—

Ellis: Right here in New York, so it was fantastic. So, Kimberly Marten is a specialist on international security and Russia and she's the Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Political Science at Barnard College, and she also is affiliated with Columbia. She's Deputy Director for Development at the Harriman Institute on Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies, and, in addition to Russia, her other big topics of research are corruption, international security, warlordism, very interesting, around the world, and militias and security sector reform. She's written four books. As I mentioned, she's been in all—all types of media, so I won't mention it all, but recently had an article in *The Washington Post*, ForeignPolicy.com, etc., and I think you were interviewed for a Russian publication, was it—

Marten: I was, yes, the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.

Ellis: Yes, is that—that's an online publication?

Marten: I think at this point it is online.

Ellis: Yes, exactly. So, she is going to take us through what's going on, what it means, and I'll open it up with some questions and I'm sure you all have many questions after that, so we look forward to a really rich discussion and thank you so much for joining us.

Marten: Thank you, it's my pleasure. Thank you, Jonah, and thank you, Patricia. It is really an honor and privilege for me to have the opportunity to have a conversation with you today. What I've been asked to do is to keep my remarks relatively short, maybe fifteen minutes, so that we have time for discussion. And let me just say at the beginning that it is impossible to talk about this topic in a way that does not offend someone. [*Laughter.*] It is fraught, especially in the current situation, and I know I will have done my job if I offend people from both sides, rather than trying not to say anything and therefore not offending anybody. So, I've noticed that there are people on the attendance list who have Ukrainian last names and people on the list who have Russian last names and I will try to do my best to steer my way down the middle.

I have been asked to start off by just giving us a very quick refresher on the history of Russia and Ukraine and how they relate to each other and history is itself fraught because you can't say anything about the history without being contentious by definition, but I'll try to do my best telling you what it is that scholars seem to have come to consensus about, even though there are always people who disagree. So, we know that the Russian and the Ukrainian civilizations both had their source in medieval Kiev and Rus. And that Rus was a civilization that was made up of a variety of Slavic tribes but that the princes who were really in charge were probably Scandinavian by origin. It was a place that worked pretty much by a combination of overlordship by the princes but also consultation among the villages and so people had a voice in what was happening and then all of this changed in the thirteenth century when the Mongol Golden Hoard invaded and then ended up occupying for a couple of hundred years until the rise of Muscovy, which turned into Moscow. At that point, Ukraine, the area that is now Ukraine, became very fragmented, it was not a place that really had any kind of a unified identity, and in fact many scholars believe that the word *Ukrayina* actually comes from the word *kray*, which means edge, and which has been interpreted for many hundreds of years, at least from the time of Catherine the Great, to mean "borderland." So, all along this has been sort of the history of Russia-Ukrainian relations. There were independent Cossack settlements that were set up for a little while; from 1648 to 1654 there was a Cossack leader who managed to have what amounted to an independent state in the area called Ukraine. But keep in mind that the Cossacks themselves were not an ethnic group. The Cossacks were people who were, for whatever reason, escaping from either czarist Russia or from rather authoritarian Poland and settling in this area. And they didn't manage to keep their independence for long. They found themselves torn between the empires that they were fighting on both sides, and so

very soon they made an agreement for protection with the Russian Empire. So since that time, the area that is now Ukraine was always divided between multiple empires and the one that dominated for a couple hundred years was Russia on the one side and the Polish-Lithuanian Empire on the other side. Catherine the Great then ended up cooperating with some of the other European powers to divide up Poland and took a little bit more territory for the Russian Empire and also seized Crimea at that time, and then it was split between the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

And, everything started coming unraveled in World War One. Then you had the Bolshevik Revolution. For about two years, people in Ukraine tried to establish their own Ukrainian version of a communist state. That didn't last. And then from the 1920s through the early 1950s, much of the territory that is now Ukraine was just ridden with violence of one sort or another. And so you look back on that history and you realize that the whole question of having an independent Ukrainian identity, the whole relationship between Russia and Ukraine, the whole question of whether Ukraine fits into the East or the West, has never had a definitive conclusion. And Ukraine as we know it has only existed since 1991. And so that is the back-story that I've tried to present as objectively as possible about Russia and Ukraine going back in the history and how we got to the situation where we are today.

Well, what has happened since 1991? The second argument that I would like to make is that Ukraine has never really come together as a very well-institutionalized state. There have been competitive elections in Ukraine in various ways since 1994, but the problem with those elections is that they have been competitive attempts to change who the leadership are from time to time but without being supported by strong institutions. So, Ukraine, in this time, for over twenty years, has never had an independent judiciary, the judiciary has just over and over again—there's been great evidence that it's possible to buy your way into various forms of legal action—has struggled with the idea of having an independent media, whenever there has been what looks like an independent form of the press that has arisen it has had struggling difficulty staying in place, basically because the ideas of advertising need a vibrant free market to support them, and that has been something that hasn't really happened in Ukraine, and so it has been dominated by various, very large-scale, what have been referred to as oligarchs, who benefited from the privatization campaigns in Ukraine, who have—have taken over on various media things. And so you put all of this together, and even though there has been democratic elections and even though there has been changeovers in who is in power, it has never really had a firm institutional base as a liberal democracy the way that we might think about that term when we apply it, for example, to North America or Europe. We have learned that in addition to the terrible corruption that has been in place in Ukraine for all of these times, we've learned in the past few weeks that Ukraine also does not have very reliable police or military forces. There had been hope that because the Ukrainian military had served with the United States and with NATO, first in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the peacekeeping operation there, then in both Afghanistan and in Iraq with small formations going to all of those places, because it's been a membership of the NATO Partnership for Peace program, that perhaps the Ukrainian military would be an institution that had some strength behind it. And what we've seen is that the Ukrainian military has itself, to some degree, split. We've seen that the Berkut, the special police forces, seem to have gone over to the side of some of the pro-Russian forces on the eastern side of Ukraine rather than maintaining loyalty to the government in Kiev. We've seen that the police who are the national police, the regular national police, have really varied in how much they are able to maintain order in various places in Ukraine. And most disturbingly, what we've seen over the last few weeks, is the emergence on both sides of militias whose funding and whose loyalty is not clear.

So we've seen in, if you look on the map, let me just get up so that we can know what areas we're talking about. So here's Russia. We've seen in these areas of Donetsk and Luhansk in particular, we have seen pro-Russian militias emerging. There was just a report by the BBC that came out this morning that indicates at least one of those militias is loyal to Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. For those of you who don't know that name, Zhirinovskiy has been an actor in Russian politics since the early 1990s, he's in charge of something that's called the Liberal Democratic Party, which is known for being neither liberal nor democratic [*Laughter*], he has made some incredibly ugly ethnic, nationalist remarks in all directions, he has been treated for—for a lot of this period, as somewhat of a joke in Russia, and yet he still has a great deal of political power. He is a

member, essentially, of the Putin administration. And now we know that there is at least one militia based in Luhansk, based right on that area next to the Russian border that is loyal to Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. We know that some of the militias are associated with people who also fought on behalf of the Russian interests in Crimea. Who moved from Russia to Crimea and now to Donetsk.

So that's one part of it. But on the other side, to try and support the police that have been so weak, we know from reporting that has happened over the last few days, that there are a couple of large-scale oligarchs from, also in some places from the eastern part of Ukraine, but who have funded their own militias. And when we heard about the steel workers who were—the coal workers, coming out to be, you know, so enthusiastically on the side of the state in Kiev, it turns out that they were probably being supported by one of the oligarchs. And so, it's really not clear exactly where any independent kind of political motivation is coming from, and in particular, we should keep in mind that Ukraine, throughout all of its electoral history, has had a history of protest for pay. And so, there always are questions when there are thousands of people who come out and protest in one degree or another, are they there because they really believe in what they're protesting, whether they're protesting for or against the government in Kiev, or are they somehow being paid off. And that makes trying to figure out what's really happening on the ground very difficult.

I'm particularly distressed by the emergence of all of these militias because it fits right in to what I see as being warlordism. And what are warlords? Warlords are local, armed actors who often cooperate with states, either the state that's on the territory where they're located, or with a foreign state, but who are really not out for any kind of general political movement, whether that's rebellion or whether that's patriotism, but are really out for their own self-interest, and who tend to operate according to what's called patronage. In other words, they're really good at gathering resources to themselves and then distributing those resources to their followers and then maintaining the loyalty of their followers through their ability to control pieces of the economy, and then to use that patronage to keep their militias loyal to them. Now, we don't know what's gonna happen with any of these groups that are in the eastern part of Ukraine. You know, they have emerged relatively recently, they could be just flashes in the pan that disappear, but unfortunately, Russia has had a history under Putin of supporting warlords in other places. And so, one of the chapters in my book that came out in 2012 that's called *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States* looks at the relationship between Russia and Georgia and how Vladimir Putin supported warlords, supported people who were controlling small pieces of territory using a combination of patronage and force, to try to get leeway against the Georgian authorities—the Georgian state authorities in a variety of smaller areas in Georgia. I argue in the book in another chapter that he's done the same thing—Putin has done the same thing in Chechnya. He essentially took a very complex situation of what the politics were in Chechnya and gave it over to a single man in his militia, he gave it over to Ramzan Kadyrov, who is just really a horrible man in many ways, but who has done a fantastic job of controlling the intelligence in Chechnya and of having his own militia take over the territory. And so he cooperates with Putin, but he's not really under Putin's control, he's not really under the control of the rest of the Russian state.

And so, what I am unfortunately thinking is probably going to happen in the eastern parts of Ukraine, no matter what happens with the election, is that you're going to find warlordism emerging. You're going to find militias staying in place that are there not for any grand political reason, not because they're patriotic to Russia or patriotic to Ukraine, but they're out for their own self-interest and they give players on both sides, they give both Putin in Moscow and then the Ukrainian oligarchs on the other side, on, what I would call, plausible deniability. When they do something that the people who are paying them off don't like, then the people who are paying them off can say, "Oh, I didn't order that. We don't control them. They're doing it on their own." But, at the same time, they are doing things that are, in general, favorable to the people who are paying them off. And so, you know, we can talk a little bit about the elections, I am not an expert on Ukrainian politics, I know there are some Ukrainians in the room who may know more about the May elections than I do. But the other thing to keep in mind about the May 25th elections when we're thinking about what that means in terms of the state of Ukraine, is that all of the people who are the leading candidates, including Poroshenko, who is the chocolate baron who has

a long history in Ukrainian banking, in being a minister of foreign policy, of security affairs, of economic affairs in earlier Ukrainian administrations. Tymoshenko, who has cooperated with him in the past until they had a major falling out—all of the people who are the major players are people who are either oligarchs themselves or who are connected to the oligarchs. And so, I think it is premature to expect that whatever happens on May 25th, which may result in a runoff election in June if, on May 25th, nobody wins a majority of the votes, you have to get over 50% of the votes to have the May 25th election to actually be the one that decides things in the future, it's premature to have much hope that things in Ukraine are gonna change drastically from where they've been over the past twenty years.

And I think one of the things that complicates things further is the International Monetary Fund bailout because on the one hand it's really hopeful that there is all this money coming into Ukraine that could make such a difference in terms of Ukraine's ability to try to stave off pressure from Russia, coming from the natural gas imports that Ukraine is dependent on. But on the other hand, all around the world, the International Monetary Fund conditions that go into giving aid to countries, are always very stringent, they always require a very strong degree of really pulling back on public services and public subsidies and at a time when Ukraine has been really suffering from poverty, when one of the things that's certainly motivating people in the east to be attracted to Russia is unemployment and the lack of opportunity that's available in a part of the country that's essentially a rust belt. When you've got that situation, the IMF conditionality, might actually just make the economic situation more fraught, and it might mean that whatever government comes into place in May or June, if it's not able to meet the IMF conditions, might find itself in a very unstable situation. So, you know, even though we can look on this as perhaps a sense of hopefulness that Ukraine might establish itself as really a workable state, there are all these reasons that lead me to really doubt that it's gonna happen any time soon, unfortunately. So that's the second point I want to make, that Ukraine is a weak state, that it is now seemingly beset by warlordism, and that these elections might not make all that much difference in terms of what happens in Ukraine in the future. And if people in the audience have evidence that things are gonna change, I really wanna hear it because I wanna be optimistic.

The third point that I want to talk about is my take on Putin. Putin's actions fit very well into a narrative that's really common among the Russian public of grievance against the West, of everything the West has done by expanding NATO, by not giving more support to Russia when the Soviet Union ended, of allowing Gorbachev to make all kinds of unilateral concessions without matching them from what the West has done, but I wanna argue that that doesn't actually explain what Putin has done. Why doesn't it explain what Putin has done? First of all, there were not threats facing Crimea when Putin made the decision to take over Crimea. He talked about the ethnic Russian population being threatened; there's no evidence of that being the case. There was that immediate changeover in the language law that happened when the new government established itself, but it was undone within five days and the new prime minister and new president of Ukraine immediately said that they wouldn't enforce it anyway, so that doesn't explain his decision to take over Crimea. The Russian naval base Sevastopol was guaranteed to be under Russia control until the year 2032 by an international treaty that fit Ukrainian interests because it gave Ukraine discounted prices on Russian natural gas. And so neither of things, not a threat to the Russian-speaking or Russian ethnic population, not security concerns explains why Putin decided to take over Crimea.

What Putin has done is already enormously expensive for the Russian state. He's pledged \$7 billion to go to Crimea this year. That's paying off what has always been state subsidies to the population, it's also paying extra subsidies to try to make sure that the state employees in Crimea and the police forces in Crimea stay loyal to him. He has the challenge, in addition, that's gonna be expensive of how to keep Crimea supplied with electricity and water and food. You know, if we look at Crimea on the map, Crimea doesn't have a land border with Russia, and so all of these things came into Crimea from the rest of Ukraine, and he's gonna have to figure out some way of supplying the population there either by trying to build an enormously difficult and complex land bridge from Russia, which Moscow has been talking about, or by somehow coming up with a deal with the rest of Ukraine to get the supplies to continue by the way that they normally have. And we know that the Ukrainian government has been

intermittently cutting off both water and electricity to Crimea over the past few weeks. So there's also gonna be lawsuits from those in Crimea who've had their property taken over by Russia. That'll be both lawsuits that are coming from the Ukrainian government in Kiev, but also something to keep in mind is that many of the hotels and many of the resorts in Crimea, which is where Crimea got some of its money, are owned by people who live in Kiev, who have no desire to be Russian citizens, who consider themselves Ukrainian citizens, and who don't know what's gonna happen to their property. And if that doesn't get worked out in some way that's satisfactory, they will probably be suing the Russian government in some form of international court.

We heard yesterday in *The New York Times* about the huge petroleum deposits that are off the coast of Crimea. Well that's all well and good in theory, but two things to keep in mind. Those are only Russian property under international law if international law recognizes the Russian takeover of Crimea. There's no evidence that that's gonna happen. And so, the law of the sea is not going to apply to the Russian takeover in Crimea unless somehow Russia negotiates with the rest of the international system to get their recognition that Crimea is now Russian territory. Furthermore, in order to do any deep-sea oil and gas drilling, Russia needs the support of western oil and gas companies. Now, we have evidence that the current western oil and gas deals with Russia are continuing, but there's a big step between saying that the current contracts will continue and then that somebody like Exxon or even one of the European companies will be willing to sign a new set of deals with Russia over Crimea given the current situation. And so there are lots of big ifs that are there.

So, for all of these reasons, it's extraordinarily expensive, and it really is not something that I think matches the interests of the Russian state as a whole. It's enormously popular in Russia, but Putin didn't need that. This came right on the heels of an incredibly successful set of Olympics in Sochi. Not only were the opening and closing ceremonies gorgeous, you know, just beautiful, a paean to Russian culture and Russian history that really got people enthused and feeling patriotic. There were no terrorist attacks, which everybody had been predicting in the West might happen, so Putin showed that he was a strong leader who was in control. And then, to top it all off, Russia won the most medals and the most gold medals at the Sochi Olympics, and so Putin proved that Russian sport had recovered from the bad times that it had under Yeltsin. He didn't need more Russian public support. So if it's not—if it's not explained by security interest, it's not explained by Russian state economic interests, it's not explained by popularity at home, what explains it? Well, I think what really explains it is the very narrow set of elite patronage politics that constitute Russian politics since the end of the Cold War as much as they do Ukrainian politics since the end of the Cold War. And in particular, what I have found very disturbing is Putin's brand new turn to Russian ethnic nationalism. Putin throughout his entire fourteen years in power has been very careful to always speak about Russian nationalism in terms of Russian state interests. And there's two different ways that you can express the word "Russian" in the Russian language. You can say *rossiyane*, which means of the Russian state—Russian citizens—people who are citizens of the Russian state, or you can say *rusскиye*, people who are ethnically Russian. And up until now, Putin has always been so careful to use the word *rossiyane*, Russian state. Starting with his speech to both houses of parliament at the point where he said that he was taking over Crimea, he has switched to use the word *rusскиye*. In that speech to both houses of parliament that took place, I think it was in April, I don't have it written down exactly what the date was, he used *Russkii* approximately ten times in the speech, which he had never done before. And a couple of days ago, when Putin spoke to the Crimean Tatars, who were just marking the seventieth anniversary of their large-scale deportation to Kazakhstan and elsewhere in central Asia in 1944 under Stalin, Putin started out his speech to the Crimean Tatars by saying, "We know you suffered under Stalin, but you know the *rusскиye* people were the ones who suffered the most." The people who were ethnically Russians, he said, were the ones who suffered the most under Stalin. Not *rossiyane*, not the people of the Russian state, but ethnic Russians suffered more than the Crimean Tatars.

So, this has become his new thing, and how does that fit? Well, it fits because one of his close colleagues, the very close people that he has worked with and that he is trying to reach out to, is a man named Vladimir Yakunin, who is very tightly tied to the Russian Orthodox Church, he runs a think tank

that is part of what the Russian Orthodox Church is associated with. And the Russian Orthodox Church has gotten—the one that's based in Moscow—has gotten very, very conservative in recent years and has spoken out on behalf of conservative, ethnic Russian issues. And, in fact, some of the militias in eastern Ukraine that are pro-Russian have talked about their alliance to the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow and ethnic Russians who are associated with the Russian Orthodox Church. Well, Yakunin is not nearly somebody who's associated with the Russian Orthodox Church. He's also the person who benefited the most from the corruption that we know was associated with the Sochi Olympics. Why is that? It's because he is Russia's railway baron. He is the CEO of Russian Railways, and in order to do all of the construction at Sochi, they had to build new railroads and new highways and Yakunin was also given the responsibility for the highway construction, and that meant—Sochi was sort of out in the middle of nowhere, it was not well connected to other Russian areas—and that meant that all of those construction materials that went into building that vast amount of construction that went into Sochi, went over the railroad and went over the highways, which means that they all needed to have agreements with Yakunin's organization to get those construction materials there. And we just have overwhelming evidence that there was a huge amount of corruption that went into the construction and Yakunin would've been somebody who benefited from all of it.

So, somebody before I started said, "How do we explain the timing of what happened in Crimea?" We don't explain it based on security concerns. We don't explain it based on economic need. We don't explain it based on Putin's need to appeal to the population. I can explain it, and I—I don't have proof of this, but I suspect it—it played a big role in this. It's a way of taking away all of the people's attention from what was going to be a very large set of scandals over corruption at the Sochi Olympics, because now nobody's talking about Sochi anymore. You know, in January, everybody was talking about Sochi. In May, everybody's talking about Ukraine. And so, I think it was sort of a jujitsu move on Putin's part, classical judo maneuver, to take attention off of what might have been difficult for him and his allies, to reassure his allies that if they were gonna be Orthodox, he could out-Orthodox them by what he was gonna do in relationship to Crimea and Ukraine, and by putting himself in the position of power, not nearly with the Russian public as a whole, but with his informal network. So, I'm sure that I've caused immense controversy by everything I've said [*Laughter*], I hope I've offended all sides equally, and now I welcome questions.

Ellis: Thank you so much. We really appreciate it, thank you. [*Applause.*] That was wonderful. You have things with the map and a historical perspective. I wanted to welcome one of the women ambassadors, our colleague the Ambassador of Bosnia to the UN, thank you for joining us. Are there any other diplomats in the room that I might have missed? Okay, thank you. So, I wanna pick up where you left off: so we're talking about Putin, his motivations, you have studied this a lot—we have the short term, but then there's the medium term and the long term, and so everybody's been speculating why did he act so differently in the east than he did in Crimea? You know, he did not use the military option, okay, but, at the same time, he has caused a lot of destabilization by this ethnic nationalism. I showed it to you before we started, I was reading an article in *The Washington Post* and they have a chart of the Russian populations in all the various former Soviet republics. Latvia and Estonia have Russian-speaking populations, 24–28%. Moldova, all of this, there are a lot of very large—Kazakhstan is another one, large—everybody's really nervous. And this is a way not to—not only to destabilize Ukraine, but to put everyone on edge, it puts the West on edge, what can NATO do and all this stuff, so what are the long term goals? Does he—is he trying to recreate the Soviet Union? Is he just trying to become more and more respected because he is viewed—his propaganda has been effective and he's viewed as, you know, someone who's successful and so popular, 80% population, any leader in the world would love to have this. So, if you could, you know, talk a little bit about this, and then the other thing is there have been economic sanctions, but really, you know, what impact have they had? And, we just had Susan Rice speak in Washington. So we're talking about [the] medium and long term and then the impact of economic sanctions because in that interview with Susan Rice, she said, well in the future we may get a lot of people who said, okay, the sanctions haven't been that strong, there could be sectoral sanctions. What, if anything, would have an impact, I mean. The Russian economy has been going down, even before this, it's been weaker, but they do have the oil card. So if you could start with those two.

Marten: I could give a whole other speech on, actually, each of the three points that you raised, so we would be here all afternoon. But let me try my best.

Ellis: Okay.

Marten: What is Putin's long-term plan? I don't think he has one. We have a tendency in the United States to have this—this stereotype that all Russians are chess players and that this must just be one move on the chess board. I don't think—I've said this before, publicly—I don't think Russia, I don't think Putin is a chess player. We know that Putin is a judo master. And, what is it that a judo master does? And Mike McFaul actually used this in a speech that he gave at Stanford, but I think he borrowed it from me, I think I said it first—I think I said it on The Daily Show and he picked it up from me. What does a judo master do? A judo master goes into the arena and says “Hmm, what is the weakness of my opponent? Where can I push?” And so, that's what I think Putin does, I think he pushes and wherever he finds that something gives way, he pushes harder and harder and harder and then when he's done with that, he doesn't see it as part of a long-term strategy, he says, “Okay, who's my next opponent, and where can I push?” So, the reason that Putin was able to take over Crimea—and we'll see what the long-term consequences are because I won't be surprised if the Crimean Tatars make it that easy for him in the long-term; they are somewhere around 15% of the population and so far we haven't seen anything except a lot of complaints from them, but I think in the future we may see more action. The reason that Crimea was relatively easy is that a majority of the population in Crimea is ethnically Russian. At least, we think that. The last time that we have any measure of people's self-identified ethnicity is from 2001—a census that was taken in Ukraine, and so that might be out of date. But as of 2001, something like 58% of the population in Crimea considered itself ethnically Russian. So, he knew that he had the majority advantage there, we know that he had some sort of a relationship with the man who was the head of that naval fleet from the Ukrainian side there, and then furthermore there was already a Russian military presence there because of the agreement that I mentioned earlier about the Russian naval fleet having the arrangement to stay at the base in Sevastopol until 2042. So, all of those things made it—you know, I still think it was very risky, but it still made it more likely that he could make headway there.

In these other regions that are located on the Russian border, including in Luhansk and Donetsk, the Russian ethnic population as they identified themselves in 2001 is a minority. It's less than 40% each of those places, and, you know, sort of, in various—depending on whether it's rural areas or urban areas, but at the most it's about 38 or 39%, so that's a substantial minority, but it's still a minority. As we go further north, it becomes even a smaller minority. And the other thing to think about is that, for the Ukrainian population as a whole, people who are younger, people who only started, for example, going to school, after Ukraine was an independent country, have much more self-identity with an independent Ukraine than the older part of the population does because the older part of the population still thinks of themselves as being post-Soviet rather than of being necessarily Ukrainian. So, when all of those things are put together, it means that the younger the population gets, the more connected to economic interests in Kiev the population gets, and also the more ethnically self-identifying as Ukrainian the population gets, the harder it is for Putin to have sureness about what he's able to accomplish. And so, in those cases, working with warlords might be a better way to have long-term Russian control over those territories than sending in military troops might be. So then the second thing, part of your—

Ellis: Just one thing, Kimberly, there was just a recent Pew Poll which was saying that a large percentage of—including in the east—a large percentage of the Ukrainian population would prefer to keep the country whole.

Marten: You're absolutely right.

Ellis: However one gets a very different impression because—when you see the separatists and these referenda and all that.

Marten: I would not call the separatists “separatists”, I would call the people that are in the news as being separatists—I think they are probably people who are on the verge of being warlords.

Ellis: Ah, okay.

Marten: So there is a population, no question, that supports them. And the reason that the population supports them is largely economic, probably, rather than identification with Russian culture. Although, we don’t really know, but I think it was probably—it is probably a mistake to look at Luhansk and Donetsk, as a whole, as being separatists. And again, I know that what I’m saying is very controversial, but it’s very hard to get a real handle on what’s being said.

We also know, when you talk about polling, that the vote in Crimea was not anywhere near 97% of the population voting to join Russia. And we know that because of a leak that accidentally appeared on the website of a Russian government source. It was the Russian organization that works with the state that was talking about housing and the status of the population, and they had a report about what happened in Crimea, and it turns out that, I believe, it was somewhere around half of the population that actually voted, and of that half of the population, they don’t have very good records about who actually voted and how they voted, and so one of the reports was something like between 30 and 50% of the population in one area voted for Russia, well that’s a pretty big margin of error. I mean, for anybody who’s looked at Western polling, it was between 30 and 50% of the population, we don’t really know what that means. So, we don’t really have good evidence, even in Crimea, of what percentage of the population was interested enough in joining Russia that they went out and voted on its behalf, so all of that is very controversial.

The second question that you asked, which I’ll separate from this question about what’s happening in Ukraine, is about what’s gonna happen in other Russian territories. Putin may try hard to destabilize things, but a couple of things to keep in mind is that Latvia and Estonia are NATO member states.

Ellis: And EU members.

Marten: And Putin would be foolish, truly foolish, to try to take on any action that caused military or police force destabilization in NATO states. All that would do is make the West react much more strongly and much more cohesively against what Putin is doing. By taking these moves in Ukraine, he’s already essentially put NATO on guard, and so you can bet that NATO is very focused on what’s happening in Latvia and Estonia. One might hope that it has a positive effect in that the Latvian and Estonian leadership might do more to try and reach out to the Russian-speaking population to take away the sense of unhappiness that that population has had. In Kazakhstan, the evidence over the last few weeks is that President Nazarbayev, the leader in Kazakhstan, is getting sort of tentative about his relationship with Russia. He sort of stood back in going further in the Eurasian Customs Union, that he had been scheduled to sign a major agreement about a couple of weeks ago, and, instead, was meeting with a bunch of westerners at the time that that signature meeting was supposed to be happening. We know because of a leaked memo that appeared from one of the ambassadors that was from China, who had been serving in Kazakhstan, that China is a little bit uncertain about what it means for the future stability of the region, and China has been a much stronger player in Central Asia in the last few years than Russia has. So Kazakhstan would have support for sort of standing up to Russia, perhaps from its Chinese allies.

Ellis: But, on the economic front, China just concluded, or is about to conclude—finalize a huge gas agreement—

Marten: Oh, from all of this there’s no question that China gets cheap gas and oil because, all of the sudden, other people are a little bit reluctant about Russian gas and oil, so China benefits. But if you’re China, think about it from this way too, Russia has just—Putin—I’m trying to say Putin rather than Russia, because I think it’s a mistake when people talk about this as if its Russian national interests

and the Russian population as a whole, it's Putin playing on his perceptions of what—of Russian national interests and Putin playing on what the Russian population believes, but it's Putin that's doing this—but what Putin has done is announce that it's okay to take over a neighboring territory if the—the culture of that territory and the language of that territory is different from the culture and language of the capitol. You know, it was okay for him to take over Crimea because, really, that was part of Russia. Well, China has a couple of places on its borders—Chinching, Tibet—that don't really fit in with Han Chinese majority ethnic relations, and so China's gonna be looking at that a little bit uncertainly, too. But, you know, China would really like to have its rise recognized as a peaceful rise and, in order to have that happen, China needs stability, it doesn't want the whole thing to blow up in its face. And so, I think, you know, there—there are mixed Chinese interests.

The one thing, I think, that we have to be most worried about is Moldova. And, that is because, like Ukraine, Moldova is not a NATO member, Moldova is about to sign the same kind of agreement with the EU that Ukraine will be signing probably, that [it] was about to sign when all the things started turning haywire in November, but this area along the river, here, between Moldova proper and Ukraine, since the early 1990s, has been a place that has been dominated by Russian military troops who are cooperating with people that you might very well call warlords. And so, the one thing that, you know—if we believe that Russia actually—that Putin actually has long-term intentions, and some people have suggested this, you could see the takeover of Crimea and here, on this little border between Ukraine and Moldova, sort of a Russian attempt to take over there, and maybe, you know, sort of moves here in Odessa, all of the sudden, you know, this could become something where Russia just moved down a little bit and tries to take control of the entire northern Black Sea region. And so, I think that that's the place where if anything further is gonna happen, that would be the lowest risk of the available sources for Putin to take some kind of action. But I also think that by doing what he did in Crimea, Putin has put the West so much on guard that there're going to be more incentives that are relayed against him that'll make it harder for him to do that.

Finally, you asked about the sanctions. I think the sanctions are actually having some effect, and its not direct effect on the individuals, but we know that, in fact, Russia's banking deals are more associated with the need to go through American technology than, I think—I recognized and a lot of people recognized before the sanction went into effect. And, furthermore, we've seen that it's had a bad effect on Kazakshtan, among other places, that are very much in need of having an economic relationship with Russia because Russian economic uncertainty is effecting other parts of the former Soviet space as well. Lots of answers to a very complex question.

Ellis: But the sanctions—

Marten: The sanctions are having more of an effect than—it's not just the direct effect on the individuals, it's the indirect effect on Russian banking and on what's happening in other of the states that came out of the Soviet space and that are still connected to Russia.

Ellis: Okay, let's open it up. I have plenty more questions but let's open it up. Well, okay, let me, in the interim, while people are getting their questions ready, can you talk—you mentioned the media before because I've read in numerous articles, they always refer to—anytime the Russian groups have been able to—Russian, whether you're calling them separatists or whatever the groups are called, the first thing they do is take over the media. No longer can you get Ukrainian and other outside media but you can only get the Russian media and, you know, in Russia there's—Putin has been viewed as very successful in terms of propeganda and making his fellow countrymen feel great and if you could just, you know, talk a little bit about that.

Marten: Sure. You know, since—in the last few months in particular, what we've seen in Russia is that a whole slew of independent media sites have been shut down or moved off-shore. And it had long been true that Putin's administration was able to dominate television, but we've seen in the last couple

of months is that he's also going after independent radio stations and independent social media sites. So, there's no question that—

Ellis: Bloggers.

Marten: Yeah, bloggers included. So, that—there's certainly—that is a tactic that Putin has been using. So what we've seen in these areas—and, you know, it's not the entire province of Donetsk or Luhansk where the people have been able to take over, so it's mostly the capitol cities and the broadcasting that's been done there, there's certainly a war over television broadcasting. But, a couple things to keep in mind is that there's still the internet. And another thing to keep in mind is that, you know, what happened during the Cold War is there was a radio set of competition back and forth between the Soviet side and the Western side, and if people still have radios—I mean, maybe this will bring something that brings Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty back into the limelight after having suffered some real losses in their funding in recent years. So, it's pretty hard to have complete and total control over the media these days—

Ellis: Right. China trying too. Okay, questions? Yes?

Question: I have a question. I'm Melinda Bush with Hospitality Resources. Mine is a question somewhat about the geography there but also what we hear in our media. For example, we hear that the Ukrainians and Kiev all want to be connected to Europe, they don't want to be connected to Russia, they want to look westward to Europe for their economic ties and for their—they want to be integrated more with the European areas. And, yet, when you look at this map, outside of that border, Poland, which is definitely Eastern Europe—I mean, aren't they really quite isolated here? And that's the first part of the question. So where does this commentary come that, well, they must be connected to Europe, they really want to be European, at least, as far as that section of Ukraine that is not Crimea and some of the others out of control? The other part that has to do with—isn't this all about the geography of controlling the Black Sea? I mean, look at Crimea, I got it right from that map, that's a—quite a stronghold sitting there, whereas Russia doesn't have anything else on the water, right, except these the one area on the right, yes. So, can you comment on that? I mean, you've told us instead it's oligarchs and the real world has nothing to do with what we're reading.

Marten: Okay, so, two very good questions. So, on the question of whether Ukraine is westward leaning. I hope that the sense of the history I gave you explains why there are people who identify more with the West because a big chunk of what is now Ukrainian territory was always part of the Polish-Lithuanian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and not part of the Russian Empire. So there's a long cultural history that goes way back. In the nineteenth century, there was Ukrainian nationalism against the rule of the czars in Russia, so there's a long history of Ukrainian nationalism that has been more westward leaning than it has been Russian leaning.

But the thing to think about—you're absolutely right—there is no way in the world that Ukraine can have economic health for itself while cutting off its ties to Russia. There's the obvious one of the natural gas supplies that come from Russia. There is the fact that many of the heavy industry factories and enterprises that are located in eastern Ukraine are tied to Russian enterprises including in defense industry. Some of those ties are not limited to the east. There are some Russian defense industrial enterprises that are very tightly connected to scientific enterprises that are located in Kiev, and so, I think that when we're thinking about what is actually the best, most stable result for the future of Ukraine and what people who are able to put aside the passions of the moment are most likely going to come down to as being the best solution is Ukraine not having to choose between being part of the West and part of Russia because it never has been either part of the West or part of Russia, but instead being a bridge between the West and Russia. And all of the militarism that we're hearing, all of the grand-standing that we're hearing, just makes everything worse. It is—you know, from the Russian side and from the European side and the American side, trying to force Ukraine to choose, and it is not in Ukraine's interest to have to choose. So that's the answer to your first question.

On the Black Sea, I mean, Russia does have access to the Black Sea, it's got ports that are all along here and in fact when they were celebrating a naval regatta recently, a couple days ago, they did make a stop at these Russian ports in addition to making a stop in Crimea, and the thing to think about about the Black Sea the further you go down is that Romania, which is a NATO member, Bulgaria, and Turkey are all on the Black Sea too, and Turkey has legal control by international law about what happens going through the Bosphorus. So there is absolutely no way that Putin could ever reasonably get control of the Black Sea. If Turkey has indicated that it considers itself—it always has in history through the Ottoman Empire—but now in particular, the Turkish leadership has said that it regards itself as sort of a protectorate of the Crimean Tatar population. It has spoken out against what Russian moves have been. Now, there's always the possibility of energy deals and so forth, but the latest thing that was in *The New York Times* yesterday is that now Putin might change the route of the South Stream Pipeline so that, not only does it take advantage of what's happening in Crimea, but it cuts Turkey out of the equation. That's not something that the Turkish government is gonna look at very favorably, and Turkey is a NATO member state. And so, unless you can imagine a situation where somehow the Russian military becomes so overwhelmingly powerful that it can defeat every attempt by NATO member states to protect themselves, there's no way in the world that Putin can control the Black Sea.

Question: Ellen Gorman from the Women's City Club of New York, and I had always thought that the European Union had very strict regulations as to the countries that joined it—

Marten: It does, it still does.

Question: Particularly with regard to human rights.

Marten: And Ukraine is not gonna join the EU any time soon.

Question: So, yeah, so it surprised me that there was all this debate about it joining.

Marten: Yes, well, the debate wasn't about joining the EU, the debate in the fall was about signing an agreement that would take it one step closer to the eventual process of joining the EU, was to get assistance from the EU in exchange for moving in the economic direction that would be more favorable to institutionalized control over the economy. So, nobody, nobody has been talking seriously about Ukraine joining the European Union any time soon, absolutely nobody has been talking about—well, except, occasionally some occasional American politicians, not the ones who are in Washington—nobody has seriously been talking about Ukraine joining NATO any time soon. So this is sort of a red flag that got sent up that when we think about NATO expansion, the last time that NATO expanded was in 2009. To join NATO, a country has to show that it has stability on its borders, which some people have said is the reason why Putin might be threatening Ukraine, to try to ensure that Ukraine always has instability on its borders, but it also needs domestic stability, it needs to have a set of laws that reflect liberal tolerance of ethnic minorities and that would mean that the rules that were put in place about not recognizing the Russian language were a step in the wrong direction. NATO also says that you have to have civilian control over the military, which we know Ukraine does not have. And if the events of the last few weeks continue, it's not likely to have any time soon. And NATO says you have to be able to contribute to the NATO alliance economically to join. NATO has a clause in it, Article 5, that says it's essentially all for one and one for all; if one state is threatened, everyone should come to that state's defense. NATO doesn't want to take on weak states that don't control their military, that can't contribute economically, that might cause more problems. The European Union has already been suffering over the last several years from recession, from questions by current member states about whether they want to continue their European Union membership. It would just be a crazy idea for the European Union to now take on impoverished, corrupt, unstable Ukraine as a member any time soon. We'll see what happens with the IMF deal, and maybe that would be a test. If Ukraine can actually keep a stable government in place after the May and June elections and meet the IMF requirements for conditionality, maybe that's an indication that Ukraine could in fact become an EU member state sometime soon. But you're absolutely right that both NATO

membership and EU membership are very, very conditional, and nobody was seriously talking about Ukraine joining either.

Ellis: I just want to mention one thing that I just read, that the IMF said that if the east is not part of Ukraine, the east which produces 15% of the industrial output of the Ukraine, that they would have to look again about—at the bailout agreement, and it would have to be re-negotiated. So that is something to bear in mind. And also, many of the towns in the east say they are not going to participate in the election, so I don't know what that means.

Marten: And one of the things, you know, and people have talked about the various kinds of arrangements for regional autonomy or for the various regions having more of a say in government, they run the gamut from just having governors that are elected locally rather than being appointed by Kiev because all the governors up until now have always been appointed by the Kiev central administration. But that's sort of the more minor version of what might be called regionalization or federalization, the more major version that a lot of the Russian negotiators have been talking about is having each of those regions be able to decide on their own whether they want to be a part of the IMF package for Ukraine as a whole. And so, it's not just that they would leave Ukraine, it's that if Putin gets his way, they would have the ability to say, "We don't want to be part of the IMF deal." And there's real contention about how much those eastern provinces are either contributing to Kiev or taking away from Kiev because, on the one hand, they do produce a significant amount of industry and agriculture that benefits the Ukrainian population as a whole, but on the other hand, that's also where a lot of the unemployment is and where a lot of the failing factories are, and so it would also be taking, to some extent, a burden off of Kiev not to have to provide social payments to those people if they were to become part of the Russian population. So, I think it's not clear what the economic effect of eastern Ukraine is on the rest of Ukraine.

Ellis: Let's take a few questions together.

Question: Sure, I'm Ali Mazzara with the State University of New York Global Center of Manhattan. First of all, it's fascinating to listen to you for hours, thank you so much, it's great. The question—I heard some experts on Ukraine and a Council on Foreign Relations talk and it was right after the takeover, you know, the one president left and—the people who are well-known experts on Ukraine said, "Well, we don't think Putin will do anything, he's not gonna make any moves," and I thought how could people—and I know you—we don't know everything—but was there any indication, you know, around that time, that he might make a move? And then, just a very quick second question: you talked about NATO and Article 5, and I go back to your example of Putin being a judo for a sec, doesn't he see—I would think he'd see that NATO is very weak as far as Article 5, you know, with Estonia they were—when the computers were shut down, I think in 2010, something like that, they didn't make a move and so I was just wondering your take on that.

Question: Hi, I'm Emily Borzick and I work just down the hall at IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund, and my question relates a little bit to the first question that was asked about the media's representations of Ukraine's desires to look westward, and I guess my question is whether or not you think that the US media is correctly representing the desires and interests of various parties in—during this crisis, kind of from the perspective that there may be—may be some sort of lingering Cold War desire to see Russia in a certain light, and whether the US media is at all catering to that desire?

Question: Hello, my name is Oksana Gapyuk, I'm from Mercy College, I'm Ukrainian and you actually—thank you so much for everything you have said, you haven't offended me [*Laughter*], this is true—this is the truth—

Marten: I've offended other Ukrainian audiences, so—

Question: There are—there are a lot of nuances where even at the border in Crimea, we have evidence that there were buses of people brought into Crimea to specifically vote for the referendum there on

Ukrainian passports, as well as in Donetsk and Luhansk [*Inaudible*] and so I speak with Ukrainians there and they say, "I have never seen so many Russians in my life," but being Crimean—the topic in Crimea it's very—it's—like, I wanna see Crimea back to being part of Ukraine. What has—what has to be done for the Ukrainian population to gain back the control of Crimea? Do we need to—do we need to hope for resistance of Russian population in Russia against Putin? Because, there has been marches for peace, but they are saying that Russia's good and we want Putin here. So, is it possible for the Russian population to perhaps, in the near future, to overthrow Putin and then in this way we can gain control of Crimea?

Marten: Okay. I found five questions there, so I'll try to do the best that I can. On Putin and whether there was evidence of what he was gonna do in Crimea, it's always dangerous to make predictions, especially about the future. I got caught in this myself in a way that was not intentional on my part. A headline was put on an article that I wrote for *Foreign Affairs* that I did not approve, that did not fit the content of what I said, but that nonetheless generated a heck of a lot of web attention because the title that was given to my article was "Why Putin Won't Invade Crimea." [*Laughter.*] And, I didn't say that, and if you look—the analysis down bellow was here are the things on each side and I was so angry, but it's always dangerous to make predictions. We don't—I mean, I think that Putin's move in Crimea was more risky than anything he's done in the past. And—but, at the same time, I think he's somebody who's become unpredictable because we never would've expected him to make this ethnic Russian comment also, that didn't go along with his fourteen previous years in power. And so, I don't think we can predict what Putin's gonna do next.

Second question, about the Estonian computer thing in 2010. NATO didn't need to do anything. It was a short-lived event, it was a surprise, but it didn't end up having long-term negative consequences. And, again, if anything, it was a wake-up call. And so, I, you know, it depends on what you mean. I think if there were credible evidence that Estonian police forces were starting to not do their job because they had been taken over by people who were no longer loyal to the Estonian state, I think if there was evidence that people in the Estonian military started grumbling about things being pro-Russian, I think that would be, you know—everybody's watching for it, and so I would think that that would be something that would cause NATO to move right away. But, you may be right. It may be that he has more leeway than we are thinking because I didn't think that he would risk taking over Crimea either, so I'm hesitant to make any real predictions.

Ellis: Kimberly, we have the perception here in the United States that the Russians are only getting one point of view—that, and you said that, okay, they have access to the internet, but, what is your sense of the media coverage—

Marten: As I said, over the past few months Putin has done so much to shut down the free media that was left in Russia, so I think that at this point that without going to Russia and actually living there for a while, it would be difficult to know exactly what coverage is getting across in Russia. Then, the question is, is there any chance of Crimea going back to Ukraine and what would it take to do that? The Russian population is not enthusiastically in support of Putin when you go out to outlying areas and actually talk to people on the ground, the polls say yes, Putin's doing a great job, but when you actually catch people speaking freely, you know, when they go out to drink or whatever, the Russian population is not all that enamored of Putin in general. But the number of people who've been taking part in the—in the anti-Putin protests has gotten much smaller with time after Putin was very successful in shutting down the protests in 2010, 2011. And also, the people who have been protesting on behalf of change in Crimea, I think that the numbers have been in the hundreds or at most just breaking a thousand, it hasn't been tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people in Russia protesting against it. And very disturbingly, Prime Minister Medvedev, who many people had seen as being a more moderate figure during the time that he was president, came out yesterday and said Crimea's never going back to Ukraine. So, I think it's very unlikely that any impetus for changeover is going to come from Russia. I think the answer to your question is that the only way that Crimea would go back to Ukraine would be a military invasion, which isn't going to happen. And, it'll probably become, you know, it'll verge on being one of the areas that is,

you know, more like, perhaps Abkhazia or South Ossetia than some place that is centrally Russian in terms of how things work. But I think it's very unlikely that we'll see any time soon a border change.

Marten: And then, finally, is the population gonna overthrow Putin. No. [*Laughter.*]

Question: I'm Warren Hoge of the International Peace Institute. I want to ask Kimberly about Obama and the situation. How well do you think he's handled it or how badly? And if you think it's been badly, what would you have suggested he do otherwise?

Marten: It's difficult to say because Obama's hands have really been tied by the fact that there is, you know, a very high degree of western sectoral connection to the Russian economy and so Obama has not—has had to negotiate very carefully in order to get the European Union to follow along with the idea of sanctions at all. And what we've seen right now is that Exxon Mobil has a lot of investments both in Russia and with the Russian company in the Gulf of Mexico, and so if sanctions get put into place against the oil and gas sector more broadly, Putin will face a lot of pushback from large American corporations. So, what could Obama have done differently? I'm not sure that it's clear. Ukraine isn't a NATO member; nobody had been talking about Ukraine as a NATO member. You know, Poland is certainly very concerned about what's happening in Ukraine because Poland is right on the border of what's happening in Ukraine. But at the moment, the things that have been happening are much less things that are key American security interests as opposed to things that are much more key Russian security interests and so, it's not clear to me what other levers Obama could use. I was initially a little bit concerned that things seemed to be moving so slowly, but in the long term it does seem that the sanctions are having an effect not because of their direct impact but, just in terms of making Russia sort of a—verging on a pariah state in the international economy, can I ask you what would you have done differently? [*Laughter.*]

Question: I've never been in government to advise, so I would've given the same answer you gave right now. But I'd like to ask one other thing along the same lines though. Looking back at the 1990s or since 1991, I'm thinking since Yeltsin, my own feeling is the West was not very sympathetic or understanding of the sensitivities in Russia, the sense of humiliation and shame they had as a nation, and we're paying a bit of a price for that now. That the idea of pushing NATO right to the borders of the old Soviet Union was probably not a wise thing to do. Do you agree?

Marten: It's difficult to say because, if I were Poland or Estonia or Latvia, I'd be very glad at the moment that NATO expanded. And so I think it's—you're asking a counterfactual question, what would have happened if NATO expansion never happened? If NATO expansion had never happened and if things continued as they were continuing in Russia and Russia had not been taken over after the Yeltsin years by somebody who was an ethnic nationalist, then you're probably right, that it would've been more stable and created less humiliation. But, remember what the fear was in the early 1990s, is that whoever took over next in Russia would be an ethnic nationalist. And, we do have evidence, if you look at the individuals who are associated with, you know, the ethnic nationalist movement, that some of those same individuals are the people who are associated with the old KGB and there were people who were warning already in Russia in the mid 1990s, including Andrey Kozyrev, who was, at one time, the Russian foreign minister, he just gave a talk on the NewsHour a week or so ago, but he is vilified in Russia as being a traitor and an American plant, he warned that there might be a KGB takeover of Russia. Now that we see that Putin has this background in the KGB, that many of his close connections are people who are KGB connections, maybe Kozyrev was right when he said.

So, you know, it's all a matter of trying to make guesses at the time about what would've been the right or wrong thing to do. I would say that in addition to the expansion of NATO, there were some real mistakes that were made later on. One of the mistakes was the unilateral aggregation of the anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which had been this very stable arms control agreement that was really the original agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union that created all of the arms control of the 1970s. And I think it was a mistake to just do that suddenly. But on the other hand, I think that Putin has made a number of mistakes too, and I would say that his provocation of Saakashvili in

Georgia is what it is, even though the evidence is that Saakashvili moved first, Putin knew that he was gonna move first and he played a judo move on Saakashvili to get him to move first. I think that was an indication of aggressiveness that made the situation worse. I think that Putin's actions in Chechnya were an indication of Putin's long-term motivations both on behalf of Russian ethnic nationalism and his willingness to use violence to get what he needed rather than trying to negotiate.

So, I think, yes—did the West, did NATO, did the United States make a mistake? Yes. Did Putin do things that were also aggravating and aggressive? Yes. And so I think, there's a tendency now for a lot of westerners to be, you know, beating their breasts, and saying, "Oh, if only we had done things differently." It's a two-way game.

Ellis: Okay, just referring to Warren's first question, in Washington, you do hear a lot of people say there should've been stronger sanctions, they should've been sooner, number one, but we had the problem, you know, we have to also go with the Europeans. The second thing is some people have also suggested in another program that Obama should've seized the bully pulpit and spoken to the American public about why Ukraine is so important. So, I'd just like your reaction.

Marten: Well, in the first place, we have to realize that Washington's all about the politics—

Ellis: Right. [*Laughter.*]

Marten: And so, there is the need to reach out to a base without completely alienating the other side that's necessary for other policies that aren't really Ukrainian. It would be difficult also to see exactly how he would seize the bully pulpit on Ukraine, given the complexity of Ukraine that we've talked about and given the fact that the really—the rational solution that anybody who's not emotionally involved in things—I think that there is agreement—Ukraine is not going to have a long-term successful future if we try to say that Ukraine must be part of the West. So how can you seize the bully pulpit and say, "The best solution is for Ukraine to be the bridge between the West and Russia and yes we need free elections but we don't want to alienate the Russians too much." I mean, there's a way in which seizing the bully pulpit doesn't work with the complexity. And of course, Obama's a professor at heart. [*Laughter.*]

Ellis: Okay, last question.

Question: My name is Hadija Wilson and I work at IIE, and I'm originally from Russia. I'm not ethnically Russian—from a region of the northern Caucasus. And, I'm really trying to stay very impartial, and I've specifically avoided CNN International, watched only Al Jazeera, and I have to say again—no emotions—I have to say I've been fascinated by Putin's effort to get Crimea into the country, to make it part of Russia. Thinking about his background, that he's a former KGB, thinking, as you said, he has no hope whatsoever to have any influence in the Black Sea, don't you agree that this is almost his last chance to get into the Black Sea? You know, to grab this piece of land—his only way to have some sort of influence in that area?

Marten: I think, if I can sort of add a little bit of an interpretation to what you just said, I think that there's good reason to believe that Putin did this for his place in history. It may not be the last move he makes in the Black Sea, there's always Moldova that we have to be concerned about as well. And there's also, you know, the little piece of Ukraine that extends down from Odessa, so we're not out of the woods yet, but I think you're right that if Putin is thinking about his place in history, he would love to go down in history as the man who got Crimea back after it was given away for reasons that didn't make any sense in Soviet times. And so, I think, seeing himself as having that place in history might very well be a part of what's going on.

Ellis: We have to wrap up, this has been absolutely wonderful. Thank you Kimberly, thank you.

Marten: Thank you. I so enjoyed this, thank you. [*Applause.*]