

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. list	Visit of the First Lady - Cellular Phones (1 page)	11/11/1997	P6/b(6), b(7)(C), b(7)(E), b(7)(F)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Speechwriting (Noa Meyer Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 13007

FOLDER TITLE:

The Trip of the First Lady to Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Ukraine,
November 9-18, 1997 (Laura) [Binder] [1]

2012-0869-S

kc960

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



**The Trip of the
First Lady to Kazakhstan,
Kyrgyzstan,
Uzbekistan, Russia, and
Ukraine**

November 9 - 18, 1997

Dick
MR MORNINGSTAR



**WELCOME
ABOARD**

Despite handicaps

We are looking forward
to a joint
US/Russ'n conf'ce ^{help}
on family violence. ^{S/E} ^{next}
year in
which among other ^{exchange}
things, we can share ^{mutually}
information on models ^{that}
that are working to ^{kill}
combat the problem

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. list	Visit of the First Lady - Cellular Phones (1 page)	11/11/1997	P6/b(6), b(7)(C), b(7)(E), b(7)(F)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Speechwriting (Noa Meyer Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 13007

FOLDER TITLE:

The Trip of the First Lady to Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Ukraine,
November 9-18, 1997 (Laura) [Binder] [1]

2012-0869-S

kc960

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or
financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President
and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of
personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed
of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C.
2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of
an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial
information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of
personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement
purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of
financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information
concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

DRAFT 11/10/97

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL IN KAZAKHSTAN
ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN
NOVEMBER 10, 1997

I am delighted to be here in Kazakhstan. I have come to Kazakhstan and to Central Asia to reinforce the strong, but young ties between our countries; to witness the ~~impressive~~ progress you are making in ~~moving toward democracy~~ ^{strengthening} civil society, and ^{building} an economy grounded in open markets and private enterprise; and to bring a message of encouragement and solidarity from the American people, who want to stand with you on this journey. *I hope to learn that reforms in these areas are continuing.*

In this beautiful city along the ~~old~~ ^{ancient} Silk road, I look forward to learning more about the people of Kazakhstan's courageous walk down a new road to democracy and prosperity. During my visit, I will have the opportunity to meet with the President and Mrs. Nazarbayev and with non-governmental organizations who are working to ensure that ~~the seeds of democracy~~ ^{civil society} takes root, grow, and thrive. I will be able to see firsthand the role that young people and women are playing in the economic, social, and political life of Kazakhstan, as they use their voices to create a new future for this country. I will also attend a ribbon-cutting at a new Women's Wellness Center, where the United States has joined with you in partnership to make sure that women have access to one of the most important tools of opportunity: comprehensive health care.

I want to thank President and Mrs. Nazarbayev -- and all the people of Kazakhstan -- for the warm welcome you have extended me. The United States is proud of its partnership with Kazakhstan. I look forward to strengthening the ties between our two countries, to learning from each other, and to exploring new ways that we can ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for all the people of Central Asia.

→ Kazakhstan and

###

*This can be a lot
We will stand with you as you work down this road*

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

DRAFT 11/10/97

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL IN KAZAKHSTAN
ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN
NOVEMBER 10, 1997**

I am delighted to be here in Kazakhstan. I have come to Kazakhstan and to Central Asia to reinforce the strong, but young ties between our countries; to witness the impressive progress you are making in moving toward democracy, civil society, and an economy grounded in open markets and private enterprise; and to bring a message of encouragement and solidarity from the American people, who want to stand with you on this journey.

In this beautiful city along the old Silk road, I look forward to learning more about the people of Kazakhstan's courageous walk down a new road to democracy and prosperity. During my visit, I will have the opportunity to meet with the President and Mrs. Nazarbayev and with non-governmental organizations who are working to ensure that the seeds of democracy take root, grow, and thrive. I will be able to see firsthand the role that young people and women are playing in the economic, social, and political life of Kazakhstan, as they use their voices to create a new future for this country. I will also attend a ribbon-cutting at a new Women's Wellness Center, where the United States has joined with you in partnership to make sure that women have access to one of the most important tools of opportunity: comprehensive health care.

I want to thank President and Mrs. Nazarbayev -- and all the people of Kazakhstan -- for the warm welcome you have extended me. The United States is proud of its partnership with Kazakhstan. I look forward to strengthening the ties between our two countries, to learning from each other, and to exploring new ways that we can ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for all the people of Central Asia.

###

love
friend
to
study
Central
Asian
in women
in politics

initial
voice

because passion to learn deep in large part on women's full participation

DRAFT 11/10/97

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT UPON DEPARTURE
ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN
NOVEMBER 11, 1997**

I want to thank President and Mrs. Nazarbayev -- and the people of Kazakhstan -- for their extraordinary hospitality. In this beautiful city, I was privileged to see how you are preserving the rich cultural heritage of your past, while charting a new democratic course for the future. I was especially impressed by the strong steps that citizens here are taking to build democracy by fostering private enterprise and civil society.

Over the last two days, I learned firsthand how governmental and non-governmental are working to expand the circle of opportunity to include all citizens -- including women and young people -- as you write the first chapters in a success story of prosperity and freedom. I took part in a discussion with a dynamic group of local students who are building a new future for Kazakhstan by teaching their peers how to use their voices to address important issues like the environment and human rights. I participated in a ribbon-cutting at a new Women's Wellness Center, where the people of the United States have joined with the people of Kazakhstan to make sure that women have access to comprehensive health care. I was honored to address and then to meet with women from throughout Central Asia, who are working to see to it that women are full participants in the lives of your countries.

I hope that in this short time I have been able to convey the warmth and friendship the American people have for the people of Kazakhstan -- and how much we look forward to hosting President Nazarbayev during his visit to the United States later this month. When I return home, I will bring with me wonderful memories of the people I met here, excitement about the democratic progress I've seen, and an even greater sense of the common bond that unites our two countries. Americans will continue to stand with the people of Kazakhstan as you courageously fight for a new future of democracy, prosperity, and freedom.

KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, UZBEKISTAN, RUSSIA AND UKRAINE
NOVEMBER 9 - 18, 1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Humanitarian Aid

American International Health Alliance Programs

Women

BACKGROUND ON KAZAKHSTAN

- Background notes/Country profile
- Main Issues in Bilateral Relations
- Political and Social Overview
- Economic overview
- Human Rights
- Ethnic and Religious Issues
- Education System and Issues
- Women's Issues
- Population and Family Planning
- Children's Issues
- Health Issues
- U.S. Assistance
- Environmental Issues
- U.S. Embassy

BIOS

MAPS

EVENTS IN ALMATY

- Ribbon Cutting - Almaty Women's Wellness Center
- Courtesy Call on President Nazarbayev
- Tour Kazakhstan Central Museum
- Discussion with Kazakhstan Youth Leaders
- US Mission Event
- Government of Kazakhstan-Hosted Reception
- Central Asian Conference on Women in Politics Keynote Address
- Meet and Greet with Prominent Women

BACKGROUND ON KYRGYZSTAN

- Background notes/Country profile
- Main Issues in Bilateral Relations
- Political and Social Overview
- Economic Overview
- Human Rights
- Ethnic and Religious Issues

- Education System and Issues
- Women's Issues
- Population and Family Planning
- Children's Issues
- Health Issues
- U.S. Assistance
- Environmental Issues
- U.S. Embassy

BIOS

MAPS

EVENTS IN BISHKEK

Arrival Statement on U.S. Humanitarian Aid
 Tour Market / FINCA Roundtable Discussion
 Courtesy Call on President Akayev
 Lunch Hosted by President Akayev
 Ribbon Cutting at Kyrgyz-American University
 American Community Event

BACKGROUND ON UZBEKISTAN

- Background notes/Country profile
- Main Issues in Bilateral Relations
- Political and Social Overview
- Economic Overview
- Human Rights
- Ethnic and Religious Issues
- Education System and Issues
- Women's Issues
- Population and Family Planning
- Children's Issues
- Health Issues
- U.S. Assistance
- Environmental Issues
- U.S. Embassy

BIOS

MAPS

EVENTS IN TASHKENT

Courtesy Call on President Karimov
 Government of Uzbekistan-Hosted Reception
 Tour/Opening of Women's Wellness Center
 Women's Roundtable Discussion
 American Community Event

EVENTS IN BUKHARA

Tour Cultural Sites

Remarks on Cultural Diversity

EVENTS IN SAMARKAND

Visit USAID Artisan's Development Center

Tour Registan Square

Tour of Shah-I-Zindi Mausoleums

Cultural Sites

BACKGROUND ON RUSSIA

-Background notes/Country profile

-Main Issues in Bilateral Relations

-Political and Social Overview

-Economic Overview

-Human Rights

-Ethnic and Religious Issues

-Education System and Issues

-Women's Issues

-Population and Family Planning

-Children's Issues

-Health Issues

-U.S. Assistance

-Environmental Issues

-U.S. Embassy

-Science and Technology

-Space

BIOS

MAPS

EVENTS IN YEKATERINBURG

Tour Bonum Center

NGO Town Hall Meeting

Opening of USIA Exhibit

American Community Event

Courtesy Call/Reception Hosted by Governor Eduard Rossel

Symphony Opening Night Performance

Private Dinner with Mrs. Yeltsin

EVENTS IN NOVOSIBIRSK

Visit Ethnography Museum

Speech at Akademgorodok

Event TBD

Reception Hosted by Governor Vitaliy Mukha

American Community Event

BACKGROUND ON UKRAINE

- Background notes/Country profile
- Main Issues in Bilateral Relations
- Political and Social Overview
- Economic Overview
- Human Rights
- Ethnic and Religious Issues
- Education System and Issues
- Women's Issues
- Population and Family Planning
- Children's Issues
- Health Issues
- U.S. Assistance
- Environmental Issues
- U.S. Embassy
- Jewish Cemeteries
- L'viv Cemetery

BIOS

MAPS

EVENTS IN L'VIV

- Tour/Discussion at L'viv Oblast Clinical Hospital
- Remarks on Jewish Heritage
- Moment of Remembrance at Ghetto Monument
- Government Ukraine-hosted Lunch
- Icon Restorers at National Museum
- Tour of St. George's Cathedral
- American Community Event
- Speech at Opera House
- Meet and Greet with Prominent Women

NIS REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Commonwealth of Independent States. When the new independent states (NIS) of the former USSR attained independence in 1991, they were largely unprepared for the challenges of statehood or for the requirements of membership in the international community. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was established in 1992 to try to preserve some Soviet-era political and economic relationships in the absence of the Soviet government. Many of the new independent states, however, were uncomfortable with these ties - which were mainly vertical and dominated by Moscow - and have steadily distanced themselves from Russia by establishing closer links with each other as well as with the outside world.

Rejection of Russian authority. The CIS has not fulfilled Russia's original expectations. NIS leaders use the CIS as a forum to conduct bilateral or regional diplomacy rather than as a mechanism for building viable multilateral institutions. The Russian leadership now explicitly recognizes that NIS leaders are loathe to cede authority to an organization that puts Russia's interests first or attempts to establish links similar to those of the Soviet era. Many recognize that the CIS will only develop to the extent that it serves the common interests of all its members.

Ukraine. Russia's relations with Ukraine began contentiously in 1992 with the dispute over the Black Sea Fleet which is based on Ukrainian territory in Crimea. The controversy festered for nearly five years and was aggravated by trade problems and Russian resentment over Ukraine's efforts to establish closer ties with the United States and the West. In 1997, the two neighbors finally reached agreement on a friendship treaty and resolved the Black Sea Fleet dispute, which President Yeltsin concluded during a state visit to Kiev in May; however, neither parliament has ratified these agreements.

Central Asia. In Central Asia, Russian policy is largely defensive, motivated by the desire to prevent further erosion of Russia's military, political and economic influence in the region. Given Russia's history of heavy-handedness and lack of capital or technology, it is only natural that the Central Asian countries would seek investment, political contacts and integration with the world community.

a) Russian interests. Many Russians want to secure a major role for Russia in developing Central Asia's natural resources and seek to limit outside economic involvement in the region. Moscow would like to maintain its monopoly on transit routes for Central Asian oil and gas, even as Russia's private sector has an interest in participating in international consortia planning to exploit these resources. As economic interests gain more influence over Russian foreign policy, a more market-driven approach towards Central Asia should emerge. A dispute between the Foreign Affairs Ministry and Russian oil companies over delimitation of the Caspian Sea typifies the disconnect between Russia's economic interests and its foreign policy community. Russian official policy is to support a condominium arrangement among all the Caspian littoral states (including Iran) for the development of Caspian energy. Our policy (and that of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan) is to support a clear division of property rights based on the division of seabed resources.

b) Relations with Russia. Russia's closest relationship in Central Asia is with Kazakhstan, in part because of the long border and centuries-old political and economic ties, as evidenced by Kazakhstan's large (though aging) ethnic Russian minority. Russia's leverage in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan is also strong. In Tajikistan, Russian troops play a key role in arbitrating the balance among feuding clans, and the GOR was instrumental in brokering the peace settlement in June. Russia also regards its presence in Tajikistan as necessary to stem narcotics trafficking, as a beachhead for influencing events in Afghanistan and as a means to thwart Islamic fundamentalism. Kyrgyzstan regards close ties with Russia as a necessary balance to China, Bishkek's southern neighbor. The Uzbekistani leadership has been the most able and willing to pursue policies independent of Moscow and is actively reaching out to the West and building political bridges to Ukraine. Turkmenistan, adhering to a policy of neutrality, has been stymied in efforts to export its gas to paying customers through Russia because of Russia's control of oil and gas pipelines. In response, Ashgabat is seeking to develop alternative pipeline routes through Iran and Afghanistan.

c) Regional cooperation. Within Central Asia, cooperation has been closest among Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, though personal rivalries and competition for resources often limit the scope of joint activity. These three states have established an organization that mediates issues of water usage. All five Central Asian countries are members of the Economic Cooperation

Organization, an association of ten countries throughout Central and South Asia. Security cooperation is also fledgling: in September, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan participated in CENTRASBAT, a military exercise conducted with the U.S., Russia, Turkey and others under the auspices of NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative.

18TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1996 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times

December 25, 1996, Wednesday, Home Edition

ACTION: Part A; Page 1; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 2809 words

SERIES: CENTRAL ASIA. The Long Road to Democracy: * First of two parts

LEADLINE: COLUMN ONE;
NATIONS IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY;
POST-SOVIET REPUBLICS OF CENTRAL ASIA REACH INTO THE PAST TO FOSTER STATEHOOD.
ISLAM, ETHNIC TONGUES AND ANCIENT TYRANTS MIX WITH THE MACARENA, OIL MONEY AND
RUSSIAN IMPORTS. BUT DEMOCRACY LAGS.

BYLINE: RICHARD BOUDREAUX, TIMES STAFF WRITER

LEADLINE: SAMARKAND, Uzbekistan

BODY:

OK, so he built towers of human skulls from Baghdad to New Delhi. If Soviet
story portrayed Tamerlane as nothing but a bloodthirsty conqueror, so what? In
his long-forgotten capital of his 14th and early 15th century empire, history
is being--and is being--rewritten.

Tamerlane is back--on equestrian statues proclaiming "My Strength Is in
Islam." In a bizarre revival, post-Soviet Uzbekistan has repackaged the Mongol
tyrant as an enlightened prince and national role model.

Rare is the Uzbek wedding toast or school day without a politically correct
tribute to his administrative genius, his patronage of art and astronomy, his
advocacy of women's rights. Rarer still is any mention of his unpleasant side in
the Uzbek media--which has shortened his Turkic name to Timur, omitting the
suffix that means he was maimed.

The new Tamerlane had a coming-out party in Samarkand's immense square, the
registan, for his recent 650th birthday. Hundreds of dancers, horsemen,
musicians and poets staged a revue sanitizing his exploits and finessing the
fact that Uzbekistan did not exist in his time.

Here and in the four other Central Asian republics born as Soviet colonies
even decades ago, today's leaders are supplanting Lenin with pre-Soviet
heroes--famous and infamous, legendary and real--to stamp contrived new
identities on independent states.

"The auspicious one, who always keenly felt the pain and suffering of his
people, turned a land trampled by occupying forces into the most powerful
ultranate on Earth," said President Islam Karimov, opening a Tamerlane museum.
Let us, living in peace, turn Uzbekistan into a great state that is the envy of
the world."

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

The Central Asians' conjuring up of pre-colonial histories is one belated step toward statehood. Warming to the independence thrust on them five years ago they also are reviving languages and Islamic customs that the Soviets tried to suppress; opening to trade, investment and know-how from all comers; and resisting Moscow's lingering urge to treat them as subjects.

But the new states are vulnerable. Ruled by holdovers from the Soviet era, they have a long way to go before achieving democracy, economic vigor or inter-ethnic accord. Any of them could sink into disorder when the leader departs.

Few places were shut off as thoroughly in this century as the lands of Soviet Central Asia. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan now embrace 54 million people--most of them poor--in a landlocked, mineral-rich area half as big as the continental United States.

The Soviet Union's collapse in late 1991 threw open this region, drawing a volatile fault line between East and West.

With Russia in retreat, Muslim but secular-ruled Turkey--backed by the United States--moved in with aid and scholarships to counter a perceived Islamic fundamentalist threat from neighboring Iran. Western oil giants and Far Eastern conglomerates joined the rush to do business.

Within a year, civil war was raging in Tajikistan between Communists and a group led by Afghan-backed Islamists, prompting Russian troops to put that nation back under Moscow's control.

But rather than engulf the region, the long-simmering Tajik conflict has made it easier for leaders of the four other "stans" to demand obedience at home. The budding of those independent nations, however flawed, proceeds in peace.

A 5,700-Mile Journey

A 12-day, 5,700-mile journey through those four countries offered a sampling of forces shaping their new identities.

The voyage, which began in the Kara Kum desert in Turkmenistan, followed the old Silk Road route through the Turkmen city of Bayramaly, built on the site of ancient Merv, Bukhara in Uzbekistan and Samarkand. It crossed the steppe to the snow-capped Tian Shan peaks of eastern Kazakhstan, winding through one inland nation after another.

"Isolation is the mother of all our problems," said an official in Uzbekistan.

Yet no place feels entirely cut off.

Deep in the rippling Kara Kum, hours from the nearest town, Iranian truckers lodge stray camels on a moonlit highway to deliver Japanese electronic goods from Dubai. A new railroad from the east fills hotels in Almaty, the Kazakh capital, with Chinese traders.

"Macarena," beating from loudspeakers at the outdoor rug market, is a bestseller in Ashgabat, the Turkmen capital. At an outdoor mall in Tashkent,

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

the Uzbek capital, pedestrians line up to sing along with a Russian-language karaoke machine. President Askar A. Akayev, whose 10-year-old son roams the Internet and idolizes software mogul Bill Gates, has ordered Hewlett-Packard computers for every high school in Kyrgyzstan.

Korean banking, electronics and auto-making ventures are so ubiquitous to Uzbeks that some call their country "Daewooistan," after the South Korean conglomerate. Multibillion-dollar oil deals are made in the \$ 1,500-a-night executive suite of Almaty's new Hyatt Regency, which has a soaring atrium shaped like a desert tent.

Not all traffic is welcome. A growing caravan of opium moves through the region from lawless Afghanistan, corrupting officials and addicting people in its path toward Europe.

Of course, the Soviet legacy persists--in chunky cityscapes inflicted on nomadic societies, in elephantine factories that died with the last five-year plan and in slavish dependence on cotton, still harvested on collective farms by forced student labor.

The Russian language, which brought literacy and culture to many, remains the regional lingua franca.

But the dominant ethnic tongue is gaining favor in each country, along with English. Uzbekistan's elite University of World Economy and Diplomacy teaches logic in Uzbek, law in Russian and economics in English. The United States and Malaysia are favorite destinations for study abroad.

Billboards in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan herald changeovers to the Roman alphabet, which had been used across the region until Moscow imposed the Cyrillic alphabet in 1940.

"Our Islamic leaders preferred Arabic script, and most people wanted to keep Cyrillic," said Aman Khanberdiyev, a Web-surfing astronomer who provoked a debate in Turkmenistan in favor of the Roman alphabet and won. "English is the language of information technology," he argued. "Either we adopt its alphabet or we lag behind."

Faith Is on Display

The religious revival is a more sweeping assault on the Soviet legacy. Islamic holidays are on the calendar again, the Koran back on sale. Throughout the journey, faith was on display in the feverish construction of mosques and the shepherds who stopped their flocks exactly at prayer time and faced Mecca--even when they blocked the highway.

Not so visible in this picture of bubbling transformation are the front lines of ethnic bigotry and their recent eruptions.

Stalin divided remnants of Turkestan into the current Central Asian republics in 1924, stranding minority enclaves in each one, and pushed Russians to settle the region. Resurgent nationalism has put each post-Soviet leader under huge pressure to elbow Russians and other minorities aside and rule for the exclusive benefit of his ethnic kin.

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

Akayev acknowledged as much over afternoon tea at the leafy 250-acre Kyrgyz presidential estate. "Probably more than one decade will pass before we achieve a unified nation, when everyone has a feeling of belonging," he said.

Akayev and his Uzbek and Kazakh counterparts rose to power late in the Soviet era after ethnic riots had toppled their predecessors one by one. All three preach multiethnic inclusion, and this is where heroes like Tamerlane come in; they're supposed to be for everyone.

Any Kazakh fifth-grader can sing a song composed by the 19th century philosopher Abai and tell you that he wanted people not to hate each other. Abai now enjoys the status in his land--the father of its modern literature--that Russian colonizers had usurped for poet Alexander Pushkin.

In Kyrgyzstan, a land of nomads with almost no written history, Akayev has elevated the epic of a warrior-liberator known as Manas to something of a national ideology.

The 1,000-year-old poem has been passed down orally in Kyrgyz by generations of "Manas-tellers" with prodigious memories. The long version is about 500,000 lines and takes three weeks to recite.

Urkash Mambetaliyev, 62, a professional "Manas-teller," is riding a boom in public recitals, and he agreed to do a private one at his home. Wearing a burgundy velvet suit and white felt cap, he sat cross-legged on a rug, closed his eyes and filled the living room with a monotonous chant. His wife, who has to hear him recite almost constantly, fled to the kitchen.

The saga began:

As mother was nine days in labor,

Eight midwives were at hand,

A sound of screaming rang out, and everyone rushed to see,

Was it a boy or a girl?

When his mother saw Manas' penis, she was so glad she swooned.

Recovering consciousness, she lifted Manas,

But he was as heavy as a 30-year-old man.

Greedily, he ate three sheeps' stomachs filled with butter. . . .

No one knows for sure which real-life warrior inspired this legend (the word "Manas" is Kyrgyz for God), but Akayev has stamped a Manas image on the currency and the Manas name on the airport.

What's important, the president said, is that this figure "united all ethnic groups, clans and tribes that used to live here" and recaptured their homeland from Chinese aggressors. "He did not destroy, and he did not conquer. Those very simple and clear ideas can help us a lot."

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

But not everyone is listening. Central Asia's newly packaged ideals, its multiethnic cabinets, parliaments and popular assemblies, have done little to loosen the ethnic majorities' grip on scarce property and jobs.

A Tense Ancient City

Osh, the ancient city in southwestern Kyrgyzstan where Solomon is reputedly buried, remains tense more than six years after Uzbek-Kyrgyz clashes over a farm in the area left 300 dead. On the border with Uzbekistan, Osh has been an Uzbek enclave, but the Uzbeks are becoming a minority as ethnic Kyrgyz migrants pour in from the countryside.

In Osh's central bazaar, where the smell of grilled lamb fills the air and all politics is local, Uzbek merchants lose the best stalls to Kyrgyz competitors in daily skirmishes mediated without formal rules by the all-Kyrgyz city police. Ethnic rivalry is said to extend to the city's flourishing opium trade.

"The open enmity of the early '90s is gone, but all disputes are resolved in favor of the Kyrgyz," said Umarkhon Umurzakov of the Uzbek Cultural Center in Osh, who warned an interviewer that his office might be bugged.

Two million ethnic Russians have fled to their motherland under similar pressures across the region. A new ethnic frontier bisects Kazakhstan, where Russians outnumber Kazakhs 4-to-1 in the north and harbor latent separatist sentiment.

That frontier is now under assault. In the boldest step to reshape any Central Asian nation, President Nursultan A. Nazarbayev is building a new Kazakh capital 600 miles north of Almaty in swampy Ak-mola--the heartland of a Soviet campaign in the 1950s and 1960s to put the barren steppe under the Russian plow. The capital's transfer, due to start next year, aims to draw Kazakh settlers and resources northward and "politically stabilize" the area, a presidential aide explained.

Viktor Mikhailov, who settled the steppe in 1964 and now leads the Republican Slav Movement in Ak-mola, sees the move only as a new effort to push his fellow Russians out of Kazakhstan.

"One Kazakh--he used to be a good neighbor--has asked for my garage," Mikhailov said. "His argument is, 'Look, you'll soon be leaving for Russia, and nobody is going to buy it, so why not just give it to me?'"

Presidents Are Shrewd

What keeps such tensions from boiling over, for now, are shrewd presidents with broad powers and an instinct for compromise. Three of them have eased language-proficiency laws that had upset minorities; Akayev vetoed a bill depriving non-Kyrgyz of land-ownership rights.

Proclaiming their own faith, all nurture Islam's revival while overstating the fundamentalist threat and banning religious political parties. Scores of Islamic leaders have been jailed in Uzbekistan, where imams feel obliged to praise Karimov's regime as "Allah's shadow on Earth."

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

But these strong men rule weak states.

"Too much rests on the presidents," said Neil J. Melvin, a specialist on Central Asian politics at Leeds University in England. "The crunch will come when they die or are forced out, because there are no democratic mechanisms for replacing them. At that point, the minorities will be as vulnerable as they were in the early '90s, when central power was weak."

There is a world of difference between President Saparmurad A. Niyazov's eccentric personality cult in Turkmenistan, which brooks zero dissent, and Akayev's freewheeling Kyrgyzstan--the only one of these countries to reelect its leader in something other than a Soviet-like referendum with a "yes" vote of more than 90%.

But even Akayev has gagged his peskiest media critics. With his counterparts he shares an obsession with stability and what one diplomat calls "an Asian need for consensus and respect, even reverence, for position and age."

Karimov makes no apologies for running a brutal police state in Uzbekistan "while the new house is being built"--his metaphor for economic independence. Now his grip is easing as the country nears self-sufficiency in oil, gas and grain.

"The government feels more secure than it did a few years ago," said Abdumannob Polatov, the leading Uzbek human rights activist, who was jailed in 1992, forced into exile and then invited home during Karimov's state visit to Washington in June.

In return for such steps toward political reform, Karimov is getting access to Western credit and U.S. training for his growing army--which makes his neighbors wary of Tamerlane-size ambitions to dominate them. "Karimov understands that none of these things is available to a neo-Soviet Uzbekistan," said a diplomat in Tashkent.

A More Secure Region

The region as a whole is also more secure than it was five years ago, less of a geopolitical battleground for outside powers.

Iran sends trade delegations, not Islamic subversives. And Turkey, mired in troubles at home, has shelved ambitions to revive a pan-Turkic "commonwealth" across Asia. Less threatened in its backyard by either rival, Russia is ambivalent toward the Central Asian countries, still trying to dominate them but tolerating defiance.

Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have fought off repeated Russian claims to share their Caspian Sea oil and gas deposits. Karimov refuses to let Russian troops patrol Uzbek borders.

"Russia is still the biggest power here," said a Western ambassador in the region. "But the Central Asians are doing much better contending with it, developing their own personalities and policies without poking the bear in the eye."

Los Angeles Times, December 25, 1996

This game is meaningless to most people here--those who scrounge daily for food, water, medical care and work. Some interviewed during the journey described themselves as "Soviet citizens" abandoned by Moscow and these new border states, whose economies imploded after independence.

Yet what was more striking is how quickly the Soviet mind-set is fading, especially among the young.

Guzira Djumamuratova, 18, rolls her eyes at the mention of Tamerlane, a hero imposed on her university class in Tashkent the way Lenin had been. "They made us do this musical about Tamerlane," she said. "But he's not important."

What matters to her is Karimov's effort to build an Uzbek state with a new economy and legal system. It's the reason the first-year student chose to major in law.

"Here's what changed," she said. "In the Soviet era, people would withdraw and say, 'I work only for myself and my family.' Now we have independence, so we say, 'I work for this country.' "

Thursday: The Aral Sea, once Central Asia's lifeblood, is a shriveled shell of itself. Its dying pains have devastated much of the region.

(BEGIN TEXT OF INFOBOX / INFOGRAPHIC)

Where Conquerors Once Roamed

The Central Asian nations became independent in late 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. They had once been united by such medieval conquerors as Genghis Khan and Tamerlane in a region known as Turkestan that stretched from Russia to China. Russia gradually absorbed chunks of Turkestan in the mid-19th century, administering it as a single unit with the old name until after the Bolshevik Revolution. Fearful of a pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic challenge to Soviet communism, Stalin divided the region into the current republics in 1924.

"Stan" is an Persian word meaning "land of."

GRAPHIC: GRAPHIC-MAP: Where Conquerors Once Roamed (Central Asia); VICTOR KOTOWITZ / Los Angeles Times PHOTO: Workers repair a dome in the Registan, an immense square in the ancient Uzbek city of Samarkand, once a stop on the famed Silk Road. PHOTOGRAPHER: SERGEI KIVRIN / For The Times PHOTO: Urkash Mambetaliyev recites Kyrgyz epic of warrior-liberator Manas in his living room in Bishkek, the capital. PHOTO: Man sells hats in Ashgabat, the Turkmen capital. Region is less isolated now. PHOTO: Western car is displayed outside new casino and hotel in Ashgabat. PHOTOGRAPHER: SERGEI KIVRIN / For The Times PHOTO: Camels are part of the scene in Turkmenistan's Kara Kum desert. PHOTOGRAPHER: SERGEI KIVRIN / For The Times PHOTO: A man sells hats in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan. The Central Asian region is less isolated now than it was during the Soviet years. PHOTOGRAPHER: SERGEI KIVRIN / For The Times

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: December 25, 1996

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1996 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times

December 26, 1996, Thursday, Home Edition

SECTION: Part A; Page 1; Foreign Desk

LENGTH: 1454 words

SERIES: CENTRAL ASIA: The Long Road to Democracy. Last of two parts

HEADLINE: SHRINKING OF ARAL SEA LEAVES CENTRAL ASIANS SUFFERING;
ECOLOGY: SOVIETS' DIVERSION OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION HAS BEQUEATHED A HOST OF
ECONOMIC AND HEALTH PROBLEMS.

BYLINE: RICHARD BOUDREAUX, TIMES STAFF WRITER

DATELINE: MUINAK, Uzbekistan

BODY:

The old man roams what used to be the floor of the Aral Sea, coaxing a ram, a goat and a cow in search of food in what is now relentless desert.

Not far away is the rusting hull of the fishing boat that three decades ago he sailed high above, on the surface of bountiful waters. The marooned wreck stands askew amid a ghostly fleet anchored in salty dunes.

Stopping his tiny herd in a patch of desert grass, he encounters a stranger who inquires about the sea.

"I can no longer imagine any sea out there," replies Sanginkik Saktaganov, turning his lean, weathered face north toward the horizon where the shore disappeared. "I don't think it will ever come back."

It is a pitiful epitaph for Central Asia's dying fountain of life, uttered from a harsh and poisoned landscape that is the region's costliest legacy of Soviet rule. The presidents of the five countries dependent on the sea have joined to lobby for worldwide help, but they have received only modest commitments and even less relief.

"You cannot fill the Aral Sea with tears," says an Uzbek poem. (U)

Until 1960, the Aral was the world's fourth-largest lake and produced 160 tons of fish a day, much of it hauled in boats like Saktaganov's to a huge cannery in this onetime coastal city.

Then, in one of humankind's cruelest assaults on nature, Soviet engineers began diverting the two Aral tributaries into the desert to irrigate the world's largest cotton belt.

Today the sea has shriveled to a third of its former volume and split into near-lifeless lagoons, its nearest shore 30 miles from here. The Aral watershed, which sustains most of Central Asia's 54 million people, is poisoned.

Los Angeles Times, December 26, 1996

Chemical pesticides and fertilizers wash from irrigated cotton fields into the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, polluting much of the region's drinking water, its soil and the sea. Toxic salts and dust blown off the exposed seabed by blinding windstorms turn everything grayish-brown.

Millions of people are sickened by the air and water, and impoverished by the loss of fish and fertile land. The drying of the Aral, whose water volume moderated the weather, has brought Sahara-like extremes of hot and cold to the valleys nearby, cutting the growing season by two months.

*

Worst of all, the Soviet Union, which created this mess, is not around to clean it up. The five Central Asian republics that emerged from the Soviet collapse in late 1991 lack the resources to cope.

Their most ambitious plans for the Aral watershed stop short of reviving the sea or even halting its shrinkage.

The Caspian Sea, 370 miles west of here, is rising. But building a canal and pumping the spillover to the Aral would cost \$ 280 billion, and officials say that's utopian. Reversing one of Russia's northward-flowing Siberian rivers toward the Aral--an old Soviet idea--is rejected as ecocidal.

Some environmentalists insist that drastic cutbacks in cotton growing could save enough water to bring back the sea.

Weak economies and growing populations put national leaders under pressure to use any leftover water to grow more food. Before they can even think about the sea, officials say, the region must cope with the public health and economic calamities that have come in the wake of the Aral's depletion.

"All the parties recognize that restoring the sea to its 1960 level or anything approaching that is just not feasible," said Peter Whitford, manager of the World Bank's Aral basin aid project. "But a lot more can be done to meet the human needs in the disaster zone and to put land and water management on a more rational footing."

Reacting to a March 1993 appeal by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the World Bank helped these countries draft 19 such projects--expected to cost \$ 450 million over several years--and organized a June 1994 donors conference in Paris.

The results were disappointing. Donor nations pledged \$ 31 million of the \$ 40 million asked for a one-year start-up phase and delivered just \$ 15.7 million--mostly for studies by Western consultants.

"So many round tables, seminars and conferences, so many reports published on problems we've known about for years!" exclaimed geologist Gaip Khudainsasar, pointing to piles of volumes in his cluttered office in Turkmenistan. "Yet the Aral keeps shrinking, and the ecology of the basin has not improved."

Los Angeles Times, December 26, 1996

While environmentalists echo his frustration, some small improvements are underway.

the desolate shore of a small lake near Muinak, four bulldozers kick up clouds of dust as they flatten the sandy ground for seedlings. Workmen are laying irrigation pipes to the new forest from the nearby Amu Darya.

Bekullah Davletiyarov, a 41-year-old hydraulic engineer, wore an immaculate white suit to inspect his U.N.-financed project, the first of a series of "green belts" that will shield the Amu Darya delta from poisonous Aral dust.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has brought safer drinking water to about 500,000 people by cleaning up 29 wells in Kazakhstan and building or upgrading seven water treatment plants in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

But little help has come to this dried-up fishing port, despite a plaintive billboard at one entrance. In English it reads: "The catastrophe of the Aral Sea . . . is a disaster on a global scale, which Uzbekistan and its neighbors cannot cope with alone."

Few places have been hit as hard as Muinak.

*

The cannery, still its chief employer, takes a reduced catch from nearby reservoirs and fish farms. But impatient creditors have cut off tin supplies, idling the cannery's 860 employees without pay for most of this year.

People loitering on dusty streets talk of illness, hunger, desperation.

A middle-aged woman pounced from a bread line not long ago, witnesses recall, and stole a loaf from a teen-age girl. The girl's mother chased the thief home, where she was found dividing the bread among five frail children--and mercifully left alone.

Dr. Abdurashid Ubiyev, deputy chief of the Muinak hospital, said the town gets 70% of its medicine from American and European donors but not enough to cope with soaring disease rates.

Last year, for example, 23 of the town's 24,000 people had tuberculosis, the doctor reported; now 78 do, and no one outside Muinak helps treat them. Another 74 have cancer, he said--half again as many as in 1993. Other specialists say 87% of all children here are born anemic and that infant mortality is 110 per 1,000--a rate comparable to Uganda's.

"Tell me one thing," said Dr. Oral Ataniazova, director of the institute on women's and children's medicine in Nukus, the nearest city. "If there is a sincere will to solve the Aral Sea problem, why after five years isn't there clean water in every town in the delta?"

Uzbek President Islam Karimov, accused in Muinak of ignoring the town, has led the criticism of foreign donors for not giving more.

Los Angeles Times, December 26, 1996

But the World Bank is delaying a new appeal for donations until the Central Asians show more will to confront the problem. They have not kept two promises--to give real power to a five-nation body to push Aral basin projects, and to set aside 1% of each nation's income to pay for them.

Saving precious water in the basin will depend on other hard decisions.

Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, whose leaders resist free-market reform, have yet to set prices for water use--a step to control waste.

Nor have Central Asian leaders as a group begun to compromise over sharing rivers that flow through all five countries. A Soviet-era plan of water allocation remains in effect as they try, with multinational advice, to write a new one; in practice, each hoards what water it can and mistrusts its neighbors.

Meanwhile, the Aral continues to lose more water to evaporation than it gains from rainfall and its beleaguered tributaries. Scientists expect it to stabilize at about half its current size.

In Muinak today, the shore is visible only from the town's Aral Sea Museum--through a surreal window on the past.

Carp, pike and other fish that once thrived in the Aral line a museum shelf, head down in glass jars. Old fishing nets hang from the walls. Stuffed carcasses of animals that roamed the wooded shore--foxes, wolves, jackals and badgers--hold rigid poses. There's a kayak, plus some wooden models of ferries, trawlers and barges.

Among the paintings is one of a woman in a head scarf and a girl with parents standing by a fishing boat on the Aral shore.

They are looking at the sea.

(BEGIN TEXT OF INFOBOX / INFOGRAPHIC)

The Shrinking Sea

How the Aral Sea has shrunk since 1960 and what it might look like in the year 2000.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: Fishing boats lie high and dry near Muinak in Uzbekistan. The Aral Sea has retreated 30 miles in this area. PHOTO: A boy takes a drink in the Uzbek town of Muinak, formerly on the shores of the Aral Sea. Drinking water in the region is often polluted by runoff. PHOTOGRAPHER: SERGEI KIVRIN / For The Times GRAPHIC-MAP: The Shrinking Sea, VICTOR KOTOWITZ / Los Angeles Times

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: December 26, 1996

U.S. Leads Peacekeeping Drill in Kazakhstan

Multinational Exercises Aimed at Promoting Stability in Resource-Rich Central Asia

By R. Jeffrey Smith
Washington Post Staff Writer

SHYMKENT, Kazakhstan, Sept. 15 (Monday)—In an unprecedented display of U.S. military interest in energy- and mineral-rich Central Asia, 500 U.S. paratroopers are slated to jump today from Air Force cargo planes onto an arid plateau near here to practice international peacekeeping.

The week-long, U.S.-led exercise is to be conducted jointly with 120 troops from Turkey, Russia and four other nations and has been billed as the longest airborne military expedition in history. Troops from the Army's 82nd Airborne Division embarked early Sunday morning from Fort Bragg, N.C. for a 19-hour nonstop flight to this former Soviet republic.

By spending an estimated \$5 million to rapidly deploy forces 7,700 miles from home, the Pentagon is demonstrating its desire to encourage and reinforce greater political independence and stability among friendly nations in this region, according to several officials here. They noted that Kazakhstan and the two other key participants in the exercise—Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan—stand at a key commercial and political crossroads between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, in a region formerly dominated by the Soviet Union.

"What we need here are independent, sovereign states that are able to defend themselves," said Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary Catherine Kelleher, who arrived Sunday to observe. She cited the "potential for conflict, plus the presence of enormous energy resources" in justifying U.S. involvement.

Kelleher did not specify what conflicts worry Washington the most, but ethnic or religious tensions already exist nearby in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Kashmir, parts of which are claimed by India and Pakistan. Roughly 650 miles southwest of this dusty and decrepit Kazak city is Iran, which has sought to

expand its influence in the area at the expense of the West, several officials said.

But it is the region's immense, untapped deposits of minerals and oil that have prompted experts and politicians to predict that the fate of Central Asia's nations could affect the world balance of power. The Caspian Sea, 800 miles northwest of here, is home to a pool of oil that exceeds the North Sea's reserves and rivals those beneath Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

In Turkmenistan, to the southwest, experts say a pool of natural gas could be the largest in the world. Although most of these resources are likely to be consumed by China, India and other neighboring nations rather than by the United States, the American oil companies Chevron Corp. and Mobil Corp. already have staked nearly \$7 million to help develop the Tengiz oil fields surrounding the Caspian Sea.

The U.S. ambassador to Kazakhstan, A. Elizabeth Jones, also noted that the region's resources will be "a backup or fill-in" to those of the Middle East, in the event that U.S. purchases from there should ever be interrupted. But she said Washington's desire primarily was to help the nations defend themselves, not to prepare for any future U.S. military rescue.

A total of 1,329 troops are to take part, acting in response to a hypothetical U.N. request for assistance in enforcing the settlement of a border dispute and also quelling local opposition from renegade, separatist forces that are assisted by a foreign power. A Kazak officer, Col. Alexei Riskin, said the scenario is based on conflicts that already have occurred in the former Soviet Union, but did not elaborate.

The first person to parachute is expected to be Marine Corps Gen. John Sheehan, commander in chief of the U.S. Atlantic Command, which is sponsoring the exercise. Sheehan, who had been in the running to become chairman of the joint chiefs of staff but was passed over, is to retire in three days.

Some of the foreign forces are from a newly

formed battalion consisting of troops from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Islamic nations that were forged in 1991 from the shards of the former Soviet Union and remain economic rivals. Forty members of the battalion were trained at Fort Bragg for the jump. Their task will be to help secure an imaginary airfield in fields owned by the Kazak military before helping police the surrounding area.

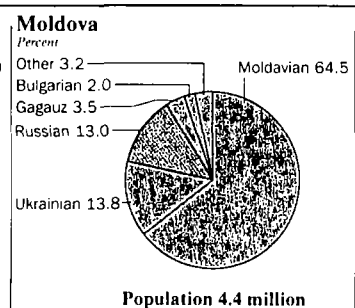
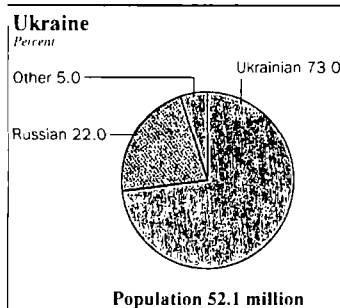
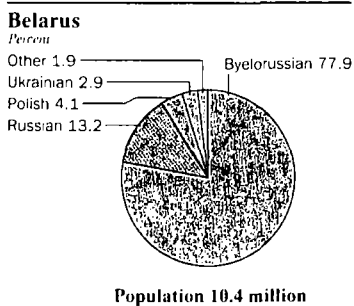
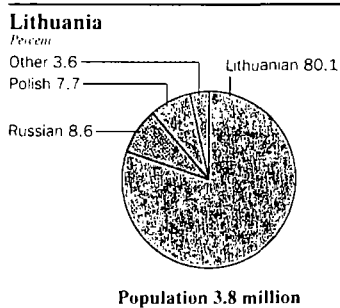
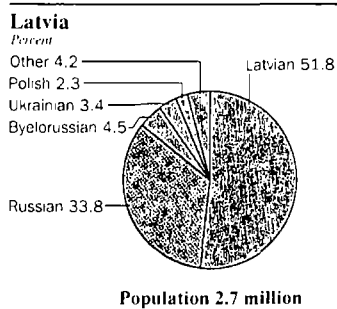
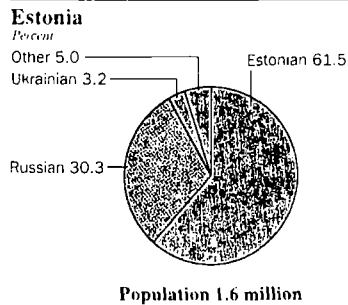
The nations are participants in the U.S.-sponsored Partnership for Peace program, organized by NATO to help former Moscow allies become accustomed to military cooperation with the West. Although Russia has been wary of an expanded NATO presence in Central Europe, several U.S. officials said Moscow and Washington recognize they have a common interest in enhancing the stability of the moderate Islamic nations on Russia's southern border.

As a result, Russian military officers have been heavily involved in preparations for the exercise, and 49 Russian paratroopers are to take part. The only Russian protest to date was mounted last week outside the U.S. Embassy in Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, by several dozen communists who said they are opposed to the presence of U.S. troops.

"If in 1992 someone had told me that in 1997, American airborne troops would be dropping in the same zone as Russians from their home nations, I would have told them they were crazy," said Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Martin Berndt, a director of exercises and joint training. "We believe the door is open to this type of thing. We want to push it open a little bit further."

Reporters were sent here from Washington to cover the exercise as a test of the defense department's media pool system, established to ensure that journalists can witness the deployment of U.S. forces overseas in wartime. They were informed of the trip seven hours before departure last Friday and were not told in advance where they would go.

Ethnic Russians in the Newly Independent States



*Ethnic percentages for Georgia.

Significant concentration of ethnic Russians

Scattered presence of ethnic Russians

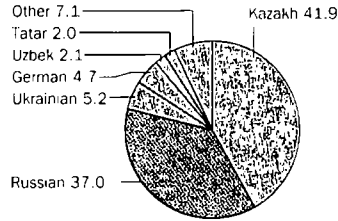
Population totals for the Baltic states taken from *The World Factbook 1994*. Population totals for all other countries taken from *CIS Statistical Bulletin #20, June 1994*.

a



Kazakhstan

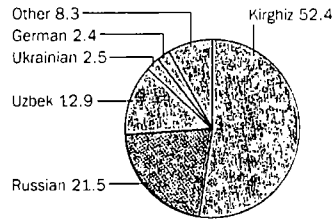
Percent



Population 16.9 million

Kyrgyzstan

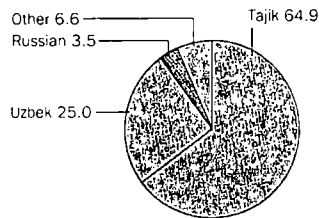
Percent



Population 4.5 million

Tajikistan

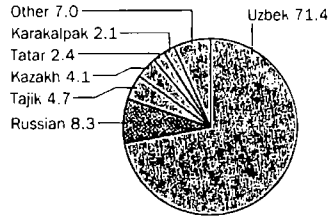
Percent



Population 5.7 million

Uzbekistan

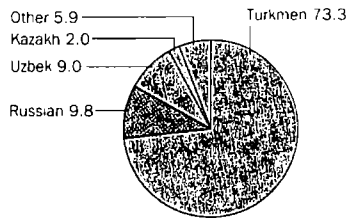
Percent



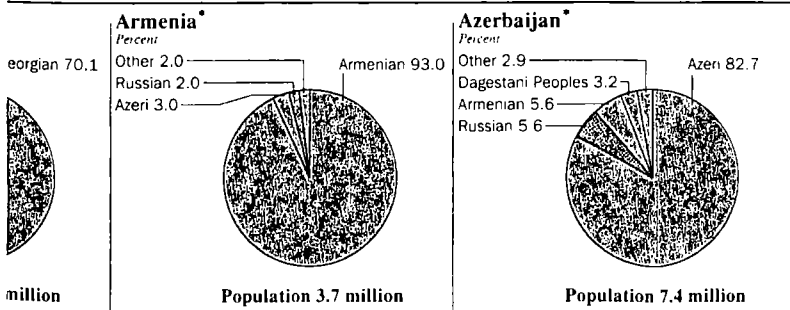
Population 22.2 million

Turkmenistan

Percent



Population 4.4 million



*Armenia, and Azerbaijan taken from the 1989 Soviet census; they may not accurately reflect present-day conditions.

SOROS FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN: Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan

Overview:

The Soros Foundations are involved in various programs which address the needs of women and children. These include Step by Step, Critical Thinking, Health Education, Visual Thinking Strategies, Child Abuse and Debate, and various health and medical programs. The following will summarize the main aspects of each of these programs. Each of the National Foundations participates in these programs according to local needs and priorities. Therefore we are including below more specific country based information on women's and children's programs and the new Russian Public Health program.

Step by Step:

Step by Step is a comprehensive education program for children, birth through age ten, which introduces child-centered, individualized teaching methods and supports community and family involvement in preschools and/or primary school classrooms. Special emphasis is placed on the long-term replicability of these demonstration schools, through work with Ministries of Education and institutions that train new teachers and retrain experienced teachers. The program has a 5 year developmental framework in each country. The program reaches out to serve the needs of underserved children in the region: minorities, children with disabilities, Roma, refugee children, children living in poverty.

Women's Program:

The purpose of the Women's Program is to promote the advancement of women's human rights and empowerment through education, advocacy and research. A central focus is on the promotion of national, regional, and international cooperation and linkages among women's organizations which oppose gender discrimination. More specifically, there is a focus on common trends in the deterioration of women's status and the violations of women's social, political, and economic rights.

Health Education:

The Health Education Program was developed to provide an innovative approach to teaching health education to secondary school students with the aim of positively affecting their health behaviors. It is a teacher training program which introduces interactive teaching methodologies through a five part health curriculum and a five day teacher training focusing on Alcohol and other Drugs, Human Sexuality, AIDS, Smoking, and Nutrition.

Debate Program:

The Debate Program was established to promote change in an educational methodology in which the teacher's authority is never questioned, a method of learning which reinforces complacency in the general population. The Debate Program encourages the development of sophisticated communication skills, interest in and understanding of current social and political events, and tolerance for differing ideas. The program introduces formal debate to secondary school students in their native languages. An organized debate occurs between two teams of students who argue opposing sides on a topic within a limited time period. Before the actual debate, students conduct research and prepare arguments on both sides of the issue to be debated.

Critical Thinking Project:

The objective of the Critical Thinking Project is to introduce a core of instructional methods that promote critical independent thinking into primary and secondary school classrooms. A priority of the project is to include Teacher Training Institutes and Pedagogical Institutes from the beginning, with the aim of including these practices in teacher education. The project will work with educators to adapt and institutionalize pedagogical strategies that have been shown to help students think reflectively, take responsibility for their own learning, understand the logic of arguments, debate confidently, and make decisions responsibly.

Child Abuse and Children's Mental Health:

The program aims at building a multi-disciplinary approach to the problem of child abuse. Interdisciplinary teams of professionals put together by the national foundations help to create a professional association or treatment/training center in their country devoted to addressing child abuse prevention and treatment issues and basic child welfare policy.

Visual Thinking Strategies Program (VTS):

The VTS program teaches thinking and communication skills to children through looking at art. The program seeks to influence behavior through the understanding and developing of cognitive skills. The Visual Thinking Strategies curriculum is grounded in 20 years of research about how people of all ages and levels of sophistication think while looking at works of art. The last 10 years has resulted in a curriculum producing change in classroom practice everywhere it has been introduced, as well as contributing to overall school reform.

KAZAKSTAN - 1997 budget \$6,000,000**Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan****ul. Furmanova, 117/20****Almaty, Kazakhstan 480091****tel: 7 (3272) 503-811, fax: 7 (3272) 503-814. tel/fax: 7 (327)-5-811-408****email: gzarubin@pop.glas.ap****Executive Director: Mr. George Zarubin**

The foundation in Kazakhstan implements a number of OSI network programs oriented toward children and youth. In 1998, SF-Kazakhstan will continue these programs and facilitate the building of networks among teachers, parents and schools in the outlying regions of the country. Specific program activities include:

Health Education: Since its start in 1997, this program has been extremely well-received in Kazakhstan. It is anticipated that the Ministry of Education will soon adopt Health Education as part of the official school curriculum throughout the country. In 1998, the foundation will be recruiting regional trainers, developing health education curriculum in the Kazak language, and creating an independent NGO which will aim to disseminate the methodology and curriculum of the program further.

Debate: In 1997, the foundation introduced the debate program into a total of 35 schools. In 1998, the program will be further expanded into the regions of Kazakhstan, and introduced at the university level.

Step-by-Step: This program, which is in its second academic year in Kazakhstan, is currently being implemented in a total of 6 schools (28 classrooms). In 1998, the foundation will seek to establish ten new base kindergardens in the country's regions.

VTS: In 1998, the foundation will continue implementation of the Visual Thinking Strategies program, seeking to adapt the curriculum for Kazak language schools.

KYRGYZSTAN - 1997 budget \$4,6000,000 Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan**Abdumomunova 205****Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 720301****tel: (996 3312) 22 38 29 or 22 18 94 fax: (996 3312) 22 38 29 or 22 18 94****email: ahmat@office.soros.bishkek.su****Executive Director: Mr. Ahmat Madeuyev**

Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan supports a wide range of programs and activities which focus upon early childhood/secondary education. Through its "Transformation of the Humanities" program, the foundation has developed a network of 50 pilot schools which serve as centers for innovative education reform initiatives, including the introduction of such programs as debate and civics education. In 1998, the foundation will be working with the Ministry of Education to disseminate new curricula and methodologies more widely in Kyrgyzstan.

Step-by Step: Currently there are nine model kindergartens spread throughout Kyrgyzstan, four of which also serve as training centers. As of September 1997, Step by Step is also implemented in 16 first grade classrooms in 8 schools throughout the country.

Child Abuse: SF-Kyrgyzstan joined this OSI network program in 1997, and plans to continue in 1998 with continuous training for specialists in this field, as well as with teachers, social workers and law enforcement representatives. It will also support a rehabilitation center for victims of abuse, and wide scale public education efforts.

Children with Additional Needs: Designed to develop an integrated approach to education for children with disabilities in collaboration with the Step-by-Step program and pilot school network. Grants are made to specialized institutions which work with disabled children, and activities in local communities focused upon public education are supported.

Youth Program: In an effort to stimulate independent youth initiatives, open competitions are held for individuals and organizations seeking to start youth clubs (environment, culture, science, etc), school newspapers, volunteer projects, and other such activities. In 1997, more than 360 youth organizations were supported with equipment, training, books and magazine subscriptions.

Debate: The foundation supports the creation of debate centers and clubs, as well as summer camps, and intends to focus in the upcoming year on debate training and tournaments in the Kyrgyz language.

Womens' NGOs:

The foundations in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan provide support to women's NGOs through their general civil society/NGO development programs. (See attached list of organizations.)

RUSSIA - 1997 budget \$60,000,000
Open Society Institute-Russia
Bolshoi Kozlovski pereulok 13/17
Moscow, Russia 107078
tel: (7 095) 921 2065 or 928 4632
fax: (7 095) 976 2028 or 288 9512
President: Ms. Ekaterina Genieva
email: egenieva@osi.ru

Since its establishment in 1995, the Open Society Institute - Russia has been active in the areas of secondary and higher education, civil society, journalism, publishing, internet, and arts and culture. Women's and children's programs are implemented within the broader education and civil society programs. In July 1997, the Open Society Institute began planning a new large scale initiative in the area of women's and children's health.

Step-by-Step:

The Russian foundation has participated in setting up Step-by-Step centers in 17 cities across the country: Moscow, Samara, Togliatti, Novokubishev, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, St. Petersburg, Vladimir, Yaroslavl, Rodniki, Cheliabinsk, Kazan, Novgorod, Staraya Russa, Okulovka, Borovichy, Cheboksary. Spending for the Step by Step program will be over \$2 million in 1997.

Debate:

In the Debates program, over 100 teams have participated in tournaments since 1995; schools in twelve cities have participated in the program. The program was originally based in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Samara and Nizhny-Novogorod and Novosibirsk. There are three main debate centers (St. Petersburg, Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod) with the two others being "satellite" centers." This way the program can remain connected to each other in such a large country. There are also debate teams in Cheboksary, Sinbirsk, and Novgorod.

Women's Program:

In the Women's Program, the foundation has agreed to translate the text Women's Rights as Human Rights. They also recently supported the Global Survival Network's production of a documentary film, and a follow-up conference on the trafficking of women in Russia and Ukraine.

Support of Women's NGOs: Through OSI Russia's Civil Society program, grants have been made to a number of women's NGOs. (See attached list of organizations.)

Critical Thinking Project:

The Critical Thinking Project is in its early stages-- local teachers are currently being trained in critical thinking methods. Teacher training workshops are taking place in 5 regions--Moscow, St. Petersburg, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, and Novosibirsk. Teachers are being selected from pedagogical institutes, in-service institutes and retraining institutes. The second workshop is taking place mid-December in St. Petersburg.

Visual Thinking Program:

The VTS is well into its third year in St. Petersburg, Russia. The group of St. Petersburg coordinators, educators, and psychologists now act as a resource team for the other participating national foundations. With over three years of classroom practice, the St. Petersburg VTS Center is in the process of writing and publishing materials on various aspects of the VTS in practice, in addition to providing information on new educational methodologies that are being introduced in Eastern Europe.

Health Education:

The Health Education program was implemented in Russia in 1994 in St. Petersburg, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, and Novosibirsk. Since Health Education was not traditionally included in the secondary school curriculum in Russia, each of the regional programs, working with the local Ministries of Education has used differing approaches to introduce the course into the school system. Programs have been widely implemented in these four regions. There are plans to expand the program by adding

additional components related to the environment, family planning, and conflict resolution. Additionally, it is expected that the Health Education program will be replicated in additional geographic regions in 1998 within the framework of the new Public Health program.

Russia Public Health Program:

The Russia Public Health Program will focus on improving the health of women and children by implementing programs in the areas of women's and children's health care services, health promotion and disease prevention, and health information and education for professionals and the general public. We expect that this new initiative will be operational at the beginning of 1998 and will have a three year budget of \$100 million.

UKRAINE - 1997 budget \$17,000,000

International Renaissance Foundation - Kyiv ul. Artema 46

Kyiv, Ukraine 254053

tel: (380 44) 216 25 96, 216 1324, 216 1253, or 244 7487 fax: (380 44) 216 76 29

email: pokotilo@vidr.kiev.ua

Executive Director: Mr. Vlachoslav Pokotylo

The International Renaissance Foundation also implements the full range of OSI network programs for children and youth, including Step-by-Step, Debate, Visual Thinking Strategies and Health Education. In addition, the foundation has a national youth program designed to support youth initiatives in the different regions of Ukraine, including rural communities, as well as facilitating the development of an electronic communications network for youth organizations in the Kyiv region.

Step-by-Step: This program is in its third year in Ukraine, and currently operates in 20 kindergartens and 14 primary schools. The methodology is currently approved on an experimental basis by the Ministry of Education. In 1998, the program will seek to work more with Roma children, as well as children with disabilities. The program also works closely with teacher training/retraining institutes in Ukraine.

Debate: The International Renaissance Foundation has six regional branches, all of which have sought to implement the debate program. The program is also implemented at the university level.

Women's NGOs: The International Renaissance Foundation has a separate Women's Development program which provides start-up grants to women's NGOs and facilitates networking within the women's NGO community in Ukraine. (See attached list of organizations.)

UZBEKISTAN - 1997 budget \$800,000

Open Society Institute - Uzbekistan

Ivleva Street 41

700000 Tashkent

Uzbekistan

tel/fax (3712) 40 68 54; 55 61 60, or 54 82 43 Country Director: Ms. Katherine Mooney

email: kmooney@osi.silk.org

As the foundation in Uzbekistan is relatively young, they have supported only several projects in the area. These have included a program for human rights and civics education in secondary schools, and the Bukhara branch of the Business Women's Association.

**Attachment: Women's NGOs
(by country)**

KAZAKSTAN

Note: The foundation did not provide us with contact information, but we can certainly obtain that if necessary.

1. **Association of Working Women of Kazakstan**
Director - Raushan Sarsembayeva
2. **Association of Single Mothers - Almaty**
Director - L. Ishmukhamedova
3. **Agency of Ecological News "Green Women"**
Director - Lidia Astanina
4. **League of Women's Cultural Initiative**
Director - Asya Khayrulina
5. **International Ecological Association of Women of the East**
Director - Urkeez Iliyeva
6. **Republican Council of Women**
Director - Nina Amirovna Kayulova
7. **Bureau "Gender and Development"**
Director - Galiya Khasanova
8. **Feminist League of Almaty**
Director - Evgenia Kozireva
9. **Fund for Support of Businesswomen - "Zhanar"**
Director - Mara Seitova
10. **Union of Women Leaders of Kazakstan**
Coordinator - Mansiya Kainazarova

KYRGYZSTAN

1. **"Tendesh" - Women's Shelter**
Naryn, Kyrgyzstan
Tel. (7 335 22) 22 570, 41 249
Chair: Sveta Sayakbaeva
(hot line, shelter, medical assistance, psychological and medical counseling)
2. **Congress of Women of Kyrgyzstan**
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Tel/fax: (7 3312) 21-08073
Chair: Zamira Akbagysheva

3. **Center of Public NGOs "Umut"**
Balykchi (Issy-Kul region), Kyrgyzstan
Tel: (7 3344) 28 039
Chair: Svetlana Bashtovenko
(training, workshops for NGOs; assistance to new NGOs)
4. **Association of Handicapped Children's Parents**
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Tel: (7 3312) 434-788
Chair: Nadezhda Semenenko
5. **Psychological Crisis Center "Umut"**
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Tel: (7 3312) 426-651
Chair: Bubusura Ryskulova
(hot lines, counseling, publishing of materials)
6. **Women's Public Organization "Jez-Olmok"**
Village of Efimos, Panfilov district, Kyrgyzstan
Centralnaya Street 27
Chair: Edita Asanbekova
(training of unemployed women and teenagers in applied arts)

RUSSIA

Ekaterinburg

1. **Ministry for Social Questions**
Contact: Galina N. Karelova
Deputy Minister of Issues for Families, Women, and Children
tel: (7 343) 220-9733
2. **Contact: Evgenia S. Barazgova**
Doctor of Science, Chair of the Department of Theory and History of Sociology
tel: (7 343) 255-73-68 (w); (7 343) 251-30-42 (h)
3. **Organization RIA "Philanthropy"**
Contact: Elena Chernysheva
tel: (7 343) 256-91-14, 251-33-71, 251-10-86

Moscow

4. **Ecojuris - WLED (Women Lawyers for Environment and Development)**
Contact: Olga Razbash
119048 Russia, Moscow, Usacheva Str., 24 - 434
tel: (7 095) 246-2903
fax: (7 095) 245-3147

5. **Moscow Sexual Assault Recovery Centre "Syostri" ("Sisters")**
Contact: Irina Chernenkaya
121552, Russia, Moscow, Rublyovskoe Shosse 87 - 2
tel/fax: (7 095) 141-7226
e-mail: syostri@glas.apc.org

Novosibirsk

6. **NGO "Cradle of Siberia"**
Contact: Nellie Lopatina
tel: (7 383) 223-44-63, 223-45-90
fax: (7 383) 223-08-65
(Center for the defense of motherhood and childhood, health, education and culture)
7. **Women's Association for Creative Initiatives**
Contact: Natalya Stupakova
tel: (7 383) 210-14-34
(Legal defense, social defense)
8. **Women's Humanitarian Fund**
Contact: Natalya Demidova
tel: (7 383) 223-08-65
fax: (7 383) 223-02-93
(Entrepreneurial development)
9. **"Women Together": Center for the Support of Women's Initiatives**
Contact: Larisa Cherepanova
tel: (7 383) 222-15-80, 222-17-14
10. **Siberian Center for Social Initiatives**
Contact: Anatolii Zabolotnyi
tel: (7 383) 246-45-32, 246-54-77

Saratov

11. **Association of Women Lawyers**
Contact: Nadezhda Kuznetsova
410600 Russia, Saratov, Moskovskaya Str., 84 - 27
tel: (7 8452) 24-2834
fax: (7 8452) 99-1578
e-mail: KNV@iawl.saratov.su
12. **Saratov Business Women's Club**
Contact: Irina Tsareva
410035 Russia, Saratov, P.O.Box 548
tel: (7 8452) 12-9768, (7 8452) 24-5755
fax: (7 8452) 91-0159
e-mail: irena@ef.saratov.su

Other regions

13. **Center for Gender Studies of Bashkortostan**
Contact: Natalia Karavaeva
Russia, Bashkortostan, Ufa, Komsomolskaya Str., 9
tel:(7 3472) 24-2514
14. **Association of Women Lawyers of Kola Peninsula**
Contact: Irina Pajkacheva
183038 Russia, Murmansk, P.O.Box 716
tel: (7 8152) 57-2082
fax:(7 8152) 57-5847
15. **"Severlanka" - Human Rights Women's Organization**
Contact: Valentina Lupanova
184600 Russia, Severomorsk, S.Kovalev Str., 1-54
tel: (7 8153) 77-8711
16. **Business Women League**
Contact: Nina Panina
300600 Russia, Tula, Svoboda Str. 38 - 515
tel: (7 0872) 36-7651, (7 0872) 36-8488
17. **"A Woman And A Family"**
Contact: Svetlana Churakova
656066 Russia, Republica Altai, Barnaul, P.O. Box 1477
tel:(7 3852) 25-6963
fax:(7 3852) 44-2973
18. **Union "Women of Don"**
Contact: Valentina Cherevatenko
346427 Russia, Novochoerkassk, Kalinina Str., 88
tel/fax: (7 8635) 23-1936

UKRAINE**Kyiv**

1. **Women's Information and Consultative Center**
Contact: Ms. Olena Suslova, phone: 229-65-43
Organization is aimed at collecting, analyzing and popularizing among Ukrainian women information about women's organizations and women's initiatives activities. It also holds discussions and round tables on gender problems in social and political life in Ukraine.
2. **Women's center "Spadschuna"**
Contact: Ms. Nadia Samuliak, Ms. Galina Datsiuk, phone: 441-74-06
The main goal of the organization is to cover and popularize the information about Ukrainian women's contribution into society at different social levels and in different historical periods.

3. History of Ukrainian Press Research Center

Contact: Ms. Natalia Sydorenko, phone: 220-60-63

Center was created by women, who study or work at the Institute of Journalism and also with women-journalists. Center conducts researches on the place and role of woman in mass media. It covers questions of woman and journalism, woman and new information era, woman and modern communication, etc.

4. Program for the Development of Credit Unions in Ukraine

Contact: Ms. Irina Dragomyretska, phone: 229-42-27

The main goal of the organization is supporting women, who long for getting information and knowledge about the activities of credit unions, which are one of the very important instruments of population protection especially in the conditions of economic crisis. The organization supports women, involved in businesses.

5. Center for Psychological Assistance for Women

Contact: Ms. Ganna Buchkova, phone: 229-54-34

Center provides psychological consultations for women and kids, gives psychological treatment for women; covers psychological aspects of professional orientation for young women; holds business consultations (psychological basis of business negotiations, business behavior, solution gender problems at office)

6. Girl's Debate Club

Contact: Ms. Zoia Gulko, phone: 293-13-28

The main goal of the club is to develop interest and understanding of gender issues and tolerance for different ideas and to promote and activate debate activities in the schools of the city.

Lviv**7. Bylaws of Zonta International**

Contact: Ms. Olga Sydorenko, phone: 27-15-99

Zonta International is aimed at improvement of the legal, political, economic education, health and professional status of women and support of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

8. Salus Foundation

Contact: Ms. Oleksandra Sluzinska, phone: 34-32-85

The main goals of the Foundation are to make use the advanced methods of diagnostic and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, to treat the effects of sexually transmitted diseases upon women's reproductive health and to contribute to scientific research in the field of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

UZBEKISTAN

We can contact our representatives in the region to give us information on relevant NGOs in Uzbekistan, should that information be needed.

*

FROM: RUSS HARDESTY

TO: KATY BUTTON

DATE: November 03, 1997

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON FIRST LADY TRIP TO NIS

1. ALMATY, KAZAKSTAN- We have shipped one large box of medicines and supplies that will be staged at the Women's Wellness Center and pointed out to Mrs. Clinton during her visit. John Post is left Almaty where he coordinated with the embassy on details. A listing of the DoD medicines and a listing of Partnership/AIHA supplies that will be delivered to the hospital were faxed earlier to your office by Mr. Post.

2. BISHKEK & OSH, KYRGYZSTAN- A USG contracted IL-76 is scheduled to arrive in Bishkek on the evening of November 11 carry several million dollars in commodity donated through the private volunteer organizations CitiHope, Heart-to-Heart, and Americorps. In early September, our office solicited CitiHope to conduct a survey in Bishkek to determine needs that might be met in conjunction with the First Lady's visit. The survey is completed and a humanitarian medical package funded by a grant through our office is being assembled which will furnish the 5 most badly needed pharmaceuticals to ten medical institutions in Bishkek. The Reverend Paul Moore worked very closely with our embassy, the Kyrgyz government and in particular with the Kyrgyz First Lady, Mrs. Mairam Akayev, and The Meerim Foundation, an international chairitable organization founder by her in 1993 in putting together the Bishkek USG sponsored donation. We should have the CitiHope cargo manifest in the in the next few days and will fax it to your office. The private volunteer organization Heart-to-Heart is assembling a package for Osh as a follow-on to a \$6 million donation they made to the people of Kyrgystan through our office in October of 1996. A manifest of this cargo should also be available also in the next few days. Also on this mission per your request we will be transporting 5 pallets of children's clothing for Bishkek from Americorps and 2 pallets of similar items for Osh. This material will be distributed by Peace Corps personnel in Kyrgyzstan and Peace Corps will be arranging the details associated with this donation. Embassy was asked at our request to discuss this project with the preadvance team to see how something could fit into an event with FLOTUS. The Reverend Moore of CitiHope in his trip report giving a detailed outline of his visit to Bishkek recommends that the First Lady visit City Children's Hospital #3. Other suggested possible sites were the AIHA partnership hospitals, either the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology or the Institute of Oncology and Radiology. Jim Smith will be able to shed some light on their projects. Due to the limited time the First Lady will be in Bishkek, we have arranged for the humanitarian flight to be visible on the ramp during her visit. The embassy has suggested that the best time for her to make reference to this mission is during opening remarks at the airport when she

- will
ship

arrives. John Post of our office is in the region and will in Bishkek prior to the FLOTUS arrival to precoordinate the arrival of our November 11 scheduled mission and to tie up loose ends.

3. TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN- It is envisioned that the First Lady will participate in the opening of the Women's Wellness Center at Tashmii II, the AIHA Partnership hospital with the University of Illinois at Chicago medical school. You received a listing of supplies that will be staged at this center. In addition, selected DoD equipment such as exam tables and stainless steel medical cabinets will be available for turnover. John Post will make sure everything is in place for the turnover. Mrs. Clinton recently participated in our 500th Airlift/Operation Provide Hope mission at Andrews Air Force Base. In all, \$22 million in medicines and medical equipment/supplies were delivered in June. DoD excess medical equipment, donated equipment from the University of Illinois medical school and equipment purchased through AIHA will be available for display at the Women's Wellness Center.

4. NOVOSIBIRSK, RUSSIA- We had envisioned that some medicines would go on the FLOTUS aircraft. However, following a recommendation from the embassy in Moscow, a decision was made to NOT include the medicines based on the possibility that this would embarrass Mrs. Yeltsin. Heart-to-Heart is continuing to plan for a humanitarian mission to Novosibirsk in 1998 but it will not be announced by the First Lady. If it comes up during her visit, I would suggest that Mrs. Clinton should acknowledge that she is aware that the U.S. Department of State is working with Heart-to-Heart and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to do a potential "Physicians With Heart" mission to the Novosibirsk region in calendar year 1998. Heart-to-Heart and AAFP will begin this process with a needs assessment visit to Novosibirsk in the spring of next year.

5. YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA- S/NISC is not involved with any donations for this visit.

6. L'VIV, UKRAINE- Children of Chernobyl has committed to providing medicines and medical equipment/supplies and an ambulance for this project. A USG contracted IL-76 is scheduled to arrive in L'viv on November 6 carrying approximately \$650,000 in humanitarian cargo. We have furnished you today a breakdown of the CCRF cargo. Most of the cargo is destined for the L'viv Regional Childrens Pediatric center and includes neonatal resuscitation equipment, medicines and medical supplies and an ambulance, all approved for import by the Ukrainian Ministry of Health. Another suggestion- AIHA has a very successful partnership between Henry Ford Health System in Detroit and the L'viv Oblast Clinical Hospital- a neonatology resuscitation training center. Two medical professionals from the L'viv partnership are currently in Detroit for training. We have arranged for them to carry a donation of medicines and supplies that will be there prior to the First Lady's arrival. John Post faxed you and inventory last week. Jim Smith can

provide more details concerning this Partnership. Along with the CCRF cargo scheduled to arrive on 6 November we are including 5 pallets of cold weather clothing and relief supplies being organized by Congresswoman Kaptur from Ohio. These items will be distributed by Peace Corps volunteers near L'viv. AHewitt is coordinating. Nadiya Matkewsky of CCRF will of course be on the ground in L'viv. We have had lengthy discussions with USAID and the embassy in Kiev coordinating the FLOTUS trip concerning Nadiya and the importance of making her a part of the program in Lviv. They assure me they are use to working with Nadiya. Marta Kolomeyets, one of the prime coordinators of the FLOTUS visit, is a personal friend of Miss Matkewsky and has her well in hand.

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan Airlift

Flight Arrival Date: 11 November @ 17:00 local time
Air Carrier: Atlant-Soyuz
Type of Aircraft: Il-76
Number of Pallets: 70 pallets (approximately) CitiHope is packing through the night and will have totals Wednesday morning.
Weight: 20,000 kilograms (approximately)
Cube: 150 cubic meters

Please note that the Osh cargo scheduled for 12 November will be loaded on this aircraft as well but the number of pallets, weight & cube will show on the Osh portion.

The Bishkek mission consists of three cargo providers, CitiHope International, Andes, New York; Project HOPE, Winchester, VA and The Peace Corps.

Cargo Description by donating organization follows:

- a. Project HOPE - Medical Supplies & Medicines
- b. CitiHope Int'l - Medical Supplies & Medicines
- c. Peace Corps - Clothing

Project HOPE and CitiHope consists of a joint venture and the goods will be distributed to several cargo recipients throughout Bishkek which include the following:

1. Kyrgyz Scientific Research Institute of Oncology & Radiology
2. City Children's Hospital # 2
3. Maternity Home # 2
4. Republican Narcological Dispensary Center
5. Kyrgyz Scientific Reproduction Center
6. Mercy & Health Center "Meerim"
7. City Emergency Hospital # 4
8. Republican Children's TB Hospital
9. Belovodsky Pshyco-Neurological Orphanage
10. City Children's TB Hospital # 2

The estimate value is in excess of 1.5 million, however, I won't have the final figures until tomorrow morning.

The other cargo provider is RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program for Allen County, Indiana. This cargo was collected by the RSVP Director, Jean Joley who has a daughter (Katie Joley) that is a Peace Corps Volunteer in Kyrgyzstan. I would estimate the cargo value of these items no more than 5,000 as a lot of the items are good will donations. The Peace Corps will be responsible for delivering the items to those in need.

Osh, Kyrgyzstan Airlift

Flight Arrival Date:	12 November @ 12:50 local time *
Air Carrier:	AK-Kanat
Type of Aircraft:	AN-26
Number of pallets:	12 pallets for Heart-to-Heart International 2 pallets for Peace Corps
Weight:	4,090 kilograms
Cube:	26 cubic meters

* Please note that flight will depart from Bishkek (FRU) @ 12:00 local time. This is all dependent on the First Lady's schedule and we're very flexible on this time.

There are two cargo providers for this airlift; Heart-to-Heart International, and RSVP. Heart-to-Heart International is donated 12 pallets of high grade pharmaceutical which will be received in Osh by Osh Free Medical Clinic. The 12 pallets are valued @ \$704,567.81.

The cargo donated by RSVP consists of 2 pallets which are valued at approximately \$5,000.00. These items are being received by the Peace Corps in Osh and they'll distribute the goods to those in need.

The cargo donated by RSVP consists of Children's clothing.

Please note that the Osh cargo will be loaded onto the same aircraft as the 70+ pallets going to Bishkek.

L'viv, Ukraine Airlift

Flight Arrival Date: 06 November @ 10:30 local time
Air Carrier: L'viv State Airlines
Type of Aircraft: IL-76
Number of Pallets: 45 pallets + 1 Ambulance for CCRF
5 pallets for Peace Corps
Weight: 20,296 kilograms
Cube: 150 cubic meters

The items which were provided by the Children of Chernobyl consists of medical & hospital supplies, medical equipment, hospital furnishings, children's medicines & toys, antibodies and an ambulance. The Children of Chernobyl received these items from various pharmaceutical companies such as Abbott Labs and Johnson & Johnson just to name a few. They also received donations from Toys R US.

The cargo donated by CCRF will be going to five different recipients, listed below.

- 1) L'viv Regional Children's Specialized Hospital, L'viv, Ukraine
29 pallets @ 12,130 kilos, Total Value: \$ 413,464.14
- 2) L'viv Regional Clinical Children's Hospital, L'viv, Ukraine
3 pallets @ 659 kilos, Total Value: \$ 30,448.00
- 3) L'viv Medical Institute, L'viv, Ukraine
3 pallets @ 722 kilos, Total Value: \$ 30,448.00 (same as 2)
- 4) Volynska Regional Children's Hospital, Lutsk, Ukraine
8 pallets @ 4,501 kilos, Total Value: \$ 123,727.79
- 5) Dnipropetrovsk City Hospital # 3, Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine
3 pallets @ 914 kilos, Total Value: \$ 45,075.00

The 5 cargo recipients represent 45 pallets + 1 ambulance weighing a total of 18,926 kilos and valued at \$ 643,162.93

The second cargo provider is from (Anastasia Fund) Congresswoman's Kuptor's office in Toledo, Ohio.

The cargo consists of 5 pallets weighing 1,370 kilograms and consists of clothing items. It's hard to put a value on these items since a lot of the goods are used. This cargo is being consigned to the Peace Corps and along with the Counterpart International these items will be distributed to several different families in and around L'viv.



American International Health Alliance Women's Health Initiative

Background:

In June 1996, AIHA convened a Women's Health Task Force, comprised of women's health clinicians and educators associated with the AIHA partnership program to develop a model for the creation of comprehensive Women's Wellness Centers in twelve of its NIS partnerships. These Women's Wellness Centers build upon AIHA's network of 25 partnerships in the NIS, utilizing the existing programs, administrative structures, and professional relationships which have been developed by the partnerships in the areas of family planning, health education and clinical training in obstetrics and neonatal resuscitation.

In addition to addressing unmet health needs of women and adolescents, the Centers serve as a highly visible model for comprehensively addressing and managing the health care needs of women through an effective programmatic mix of health promotion, education, early diagnosis, treatment and follow up. The goal of each center is to structure services to prevent unintended pregnancies and abortions, poor pregnancy outcomes, sexually transmitted diseases and infertility, and unhealthy lifestyles across the continuum.

Each center is structuring its services to meet the needs of its target population, creating special adolescent outreach programs, discussion groups on the aging process and post-menopausal issues and/or crisis management workshops and counseling for victims of domestic violence. The three Ukrainian Centers are developing community outreach education programs, education in breast self-exam (BSE) and mammographic exams.

Clinic and resource management, the utilization of nurses as educators and administrators, patient-centered education and service, and the development of sustainable financing for each Center are program priorities. In addition, the Centers serve as a model for the integration of women's health services in primary care to avoid duplication and uneven distribution of health services. The program will thus create working models for replication in other service areas.

* Each center was selected and reviewed by joint US-NIS assessment teams. The assessment teams evaluated existing services in the area of women's health, needs of the population, level of training of women's healthcare providers, and available resources and institutions to determine whether the Women's Wellness Center was appropriate and feasible in the proposed site. Each visit was recorded through an assessment checklist-report and reviewed by the AIHA Women's Health Task Force. In some cases, additional information was requested through and provided by the AIHA regional offices.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Teams of obstetricians, gynecologists, nurse educators, midwives and administrators from each of the twelve sites traveled to their US partner institution for clinical training in women's health services and client-based clinic management during Winter-Spring 1997.

On June 14, the first Women's Wellness Center opened in Chisinau, Moldova. The ribbon cutting ceremony was officiated by the Minister of Health, the Head of Chisinau City Health Administration, the Council of Ministers of Health for the NIS, and four AIHA representatives. Following the opening, the delegates from Hennepin County and their colleagues in Chisinau conducted childbirth education classes and a menopause seminar.

On June 18-23, AIHA sponsored a five-day Management Training Seminar in Moscow for the administrators and managers of the Women's Wellness Centers. The course curriculum was developed by a sub-set of the Women's Health Task Force and conducted by a four-person training team from Magee Womenscare International. The course included training and case studies in the area of organizational strategies, human resources, strategic budgeting, quality improvement and marketing and fundraising.

NIS clinicians and female patients from Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Armenia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus participated in a Women's Wellness logo survey. Each client or clinician was presented with four logo choices and asked to select the one which best represented the common goals of the Women's Wellness Centers. Through this process, a logo was selected for use at the Women's Wellness Center and on all AIHA Women's Wellness Materials. The logo choice was announced at the Management Training Seminar in Moscow. Logo sheets and a computerized logo will be distributed to Center directors and US partner representatives at the Annual Conference in October.

On June 30, The Erebuni Medical Center's Women's Health Center conducted a Women's Conference to commemorate the enhancement of their center. The Center received recognition from the First Lady of Armenia and the Ministry of Health.

On July 10 & 11, representatives of the Women's Health partnerships convened in Indianapolis to share lessons learned and strategize for future openings and programs. On the second day of the meetings, AIHA and partner representatives met with representatives from *Eli Lilly's Center for Women's Health* to discuss collaboration in the area of menopause and post-menopause education and counseling, mental health awareness, screening and treatment and women's health research.

A computerized data-collection tool for use at the Women's Wellness Centers has been developed to track patient information. The data-collection tool was reviewed by a group of NIS and US women's health clinicians and administrators in Kiev in May 1997. Revisions were made and the data-collection tool was re-

assessed in Chisinau, Moldova in June. Following the June meeting, additional revisions were made based on input from US and NIS partners. The revised data-collection tool will be presented during AIHA's annual conference. Pilot testing of the data-collection tool will be conducted in Fall-Winter 1997.

Collaborative efforts with USAID and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

In May 1997, two AIHA representatives participated in a USAID sponsored Dissemination Conference on Reproductive Health and Family Planning projects in Moscow, Russia. An AIHA representative presented the comprehensive Women's Wellness Center model and the implementation process. Several participants approached AIHA to inquire how to create their own Women's Wellness Center.

On May 8-9, AIHA representatives participated in a Coordination Meeting of USAID Contractors involved in Reproductive Health and Family Planning Programs. During the meeting, representatives shared progress reports and identified areas for collaboration. AIHA continued discussions with AVSC, JHPIEGHO and the Futures Group to coordinate efforts in Chisinau, Moldova and other sites within the NIS. In order to avoid duplicative efforts, the contractors and AIHA have agreed to share educational and outreach materials.

NIS and US women's health representatives will meet immediately following the AIHA Annual Conference on October 9th to discuss progress and issues related to their Women's Wellness Centers. The group will be addressed by experts from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention on topics such as STDs, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Folic Acid and Micronutrient Malnutrition, Smoking Cessation, and Domestic Violence.

Future Activities:

The Kiev-Philadelphia partnership will conduct a Women's Health and Breast Care Workshop on October 16-17. Representatives from WestNIS regional Women's Wellness Centers will participate in the workshop. AIHA is working with the US-NIS Women's Consortium to develop a half-day seminar on domestic violence counseling and crisis intervention in conjunction with this workshop.

In October, equipment, medical supplies and educational materials will be sent to the Almaty and Tashkent Women's Wellness Centers. Both centers have been seeing patients for several months, but will celebrate their official openings following the installation of the equipment. US partners, local officials and AIHA representatives will celebrate with ribbon-cuttings in early November.

BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN – KANSAS CITY, KANSAS PARTNERSHIP

AIHA's Medical Partnership Program between the Kyrgyzstan and the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC), funded under a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was formed in October 1992. In addition to the Kyrgyzstan Ministry of Health, the Kyrgyz partners are the Institute of Oncology and Radiology, the Institute of Obstetrics and Pediatrics and, since 1996, the Institute of Cardiology and Internal Medicine. Since the inception of the partnership, over 100 Kyrgyz physicians and nurses have visited KUMC, while over 70 US physicians, nurses and health administrators have traveled to Kyrgyzstan.

The general areas of focus for the partnership have been nurse education, introduction of family medicine, management training, pediatric oncology, laparoscopic surgery, prosthetics and orthotics, neonatology, respiratory disease, emergency and burn care, and continuing education.

Program Outcomes

Health Care Reform: In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the partnership has focused on three main components of health care reform in Kyrgyzstan. These include nursing education, introduction of family practitioners/family medicine, and management training for nurses and health care administrators.

In order to reduce overhead costs and generate revenue, the Institute of Oncology and Radiology has decreased its number of beds by closing a hospital wing, renovating the facility and re-opening it as a hotel for relatives of patients. A private rehabilitation hospital in Bishkek was founded after studying the American health care system during a partnership visit.

Nursing Reform: The priority given to nurse education and the development of management skills represents a pioneering attempt by the partners and the Kyrgyzstan Ministry of Health to upgrade health care delivery in the country by elevating the skills of nursing professionals. Senior nurses from throughout Kyrgyzstan have participated in intensive one- and two-month training programs at KUMC focusing on skills development and hospital administration. The partners developed the "Kyrgyzstan Nursing Administration Course," emphasizing management skills for nurse administrators. The nurses receive a general overview of the structure and function of the US health care system, especially the role of the nurse, nursing education, nurses' clinical skills, and the administrative structure of nursing in the hospital. The visiting nurses accompany nurse managers on the floors, visit nursing skills labs, and are introduced to the work of the Home Health Nurse, who provides health care in a home setting. In addition, they attend lectures on standards of patient care, infection control, and prevention.

New nurse administrator/manager positions have been created by the Ministry of Health and filled by these nurses in their respective institutions. Nurses have been hired in each oblast of the Republic to the newly-created position of senior nurse-administrator with a salary comparable to that of chief physicians. In addition, nurses have been invited to KUMC to participate in a train-the-trainers courses designed to prepare them to teach other nurses at the Bishkek School of Nursing. KUMC has donated equipment for five nursing laboratories at the School for this purpose.

In May 1995, the partners hosted a conference in Bishkek for chief nurses from each of the Central Asian Republics (CAR). Over 120 nurses participated in the CAR Leadership in Nursing seminar, which specifically addressed management and administrative issues pertaining to the region. A

second nursing conference took place in Bishkek during September 1997. This conference was preceded by a "train-the-trainers" seminar for nurse educators at the Bishkek School of Nursing, using a new nursing textbook developed by the partners.

Neonatology: The partnership program has also focused on neonatal resuscitation of full-term normal weight infants. A series of seminars were conducted by KUMC specialists on thermal regulation, intubation, and general diagnostics. The program started in partnership hospitals in Bishkek; however, responding to requests from the Ministry of Health, the program has been expanded to include neonatologists from all over Bishkek. The US teams also traveled to Osh and repeated the training seminars in that city. Over 110 physicians from ten of the twelve birthing units in the Kyrgyz Republic were trained in a series of "train-the-trainers" courses to become instructors in neonatal resuscitation. Translated textbooks on neonatology were distributed to the participants to increase their knowledge base. The training in neonatal resuscitation conducted at multiple sites around Kyrgyzstan is having a significant impact on reducing morbidity and mortality. KUMC staff project infant deaths have been reduced by thirty percent as a result of the training across the republic.

Respiratory Diseases: The Partnership program has also focussed upon Respiratory Diseases. Three teams of Kyrgyz physicians traveled to KUMC to observe the American treatment of asthma and bronchial infections. Three pulmonologists traveled to Bishkek to conduct seminars and give lectures. Of interest to the American physicians were salt chambers and native herbs used in treatment of bronchial diseases in Kyrgyzstan.

Management Training: Partnership efforts, augmented by AIHA/AUPHA management training workshops, have given health care managers from Bishkek the opportunity to participate in a series of training seminars in diverse areas, such as grantsmanship, informed decision-making and financial management.

In an effort to establish model blood banks in Bishkek, partners have worked toward improving the administrative skills of blood bank directors. Their training will lead to greater efficacy and management of blood banking, including infection control. Specialists from US community blood banks traveled to Bishkek and Jalal Abad in December 1995 to assess the work of blood banks in Kyrgyzstan. The specialists made recommendations on donor recruitment, materials management, and standard operating procedures. They also donated and installed a computer with word processing, database and accounting software to Regional Blood Bank in Bishkek.

Pediatric Cancer Registry: Through several exchange visits, the KUMC and Kyrgyz partners have established an academic exchange program and a national pediatric cancer registry in Bishkek, which has allowed the partners to collect accurate cancer morbidity and mortality rates in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the partners have begun to conduct a comprehensive cancer screening and treatment project in the township of Malli-Say, which in 1993 was struck by an earthquake which reopened an abandoned mine and uncovered uranium waste. At the request of partners at the Institute of Oncology and Radiology, KUMC diagnostic teams examined residents for radiation-related illness, collected data, and treated patients. Together, the partners are analyzing the data to assist in the long-term treatment of victims of this disaster.

Laparoscopic Surgery: Surgeons from Kansas City demonstrated laparoscopic techniques at a conference of surgeons in Central Asia. They performed six operations at the Institute of Oncology and Radiology, using equipment donated by KUMC. In addition they presented two lectures: one for operating room nurses on the maintenance of laparoscopic equipment, the other for anesthesiologists on the use of resuscitation equipment.

Prosthetics/Orthotics: At the request of the Ministry of Health, the partnership took steps towards the establishment of a center for clinical training and production in prosthetics and orthopedics. One prosthetist and one orthotist traveled to Bishkek in the Fall of 1995 to review local prosthetic and orthopedic services and to study current medical practices related to prosthetic care. In addition, they visited the Bishkek prosthetic plant to evaluate the equipment and technology available. The specialists made recommendations to enhance education and improve the prosthetic rehabilitation of patients.

Catastrophic Emergency Care and Burn Care: Following a very successful two week program on emergency and burn care, the ministry asked the partners to repeat the seminar and expand the program to include the city of Osh and the firefighters and first responders in both cities. A team of physician, nurse, two therapists and an emergency technician traveled to Bishkek and Osh to teach two seminars and set up a comprehensive burn department at Hospital No. 4 in Bishkek and the Oblast Hospital in Osh. All supplies to set up these departments were donated by 20 hospitals in Kansas, cleaned and packaged by the firefighters and shipped by container from the State Department to Kyrgyzstan. The departments will be set up in such a way that they can function independently in the future.

Future Plans for the Partnership

Nursing reform through practical skills development will continue to be a major area of partnership focus. Plans are underway to upgrade the existing nursing skills laboratories, introduced to hospitals with partnership assistance. Discussions have also begun regarding the establishment of a masters degree program for nurses at the Medical Academy. They will also be conducting a seminar to train nurses to teach nurses.

The Partnership also plans to continue in it's efforts of supporting Catastrophic Emergency Care and Burn Care. They will continue to work on the two comprehensive burn care centers in Osh and Bishkek together with educating first responders. This program represents a nationwide effort in Kyrgyzstan and a statewide effort in Kansas.

Partnership Contacts

Zakir Kamarli, MD
Former Director
Institute of Oncology and Radiology
92 Akhunbaeva Street
Bishkek, 720064 Kyrgyzstan
Phone: (3312) 477-450
Fax: (3312) 479-191
E-Mail: root@aihaonco.bishkek.su

Frederick Holmes, MD
Professor of Medicine
University of Kansas Medical Center
3901 Rainbow Boulevard
Kansas City, KS 66103
Phone: (913) 588-6005
Fax: (913) 588-3994
E-Mail: ffholmes@ukanvm.cc.ukans.edu

Duishe Kudajarov, MD
Director
Institute of Obstetrics and Pediatrics
1 Togolok Moldo Street
720040 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Phone: (3312) 224-423
Fax: (3312) 264-275
E-Mail: oroz@uzakov.bishkek.su

Louise Redford, RN
Project Coordinator
KUMC-Kyrgyzstan Hospital Partnership
University of Kansas Medical Center
3901 Rainbow Boulevard
Kansas City, KS 66103
Phone: (913) 588-1490
Fax: (913) 588-4736
E-Mail: aihakumc@igc.apc.org

L'viv, Ukraine - Buffalo, New York Partnership

AIHA's Medical Partnership Program between Millard Fillmore Health Systems and the SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences in Buffalo, New York, and L'viv Clinical Railway Hospital and L'viv Perinatal Center in L'viv, Ukraine, funded under a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has existed since April 1993.

The partnership emphasizes obstetrics and gynecology, infection control, ophthalmology, resource center development, hospital administration, and laparoscopic surgery.

Program Outcomes

Obstetrics and Gynecology/Surgery: Implementation of prenatal screening and diagnostic ultrasound has enabled the partners to better identify high-risk pregnancies and, ultimately, improve fetal outcomes at the L'viv Perinatal Center. They have also introduced the utilization of the vaginal probe with ultrasound for prenatal diagnosis. Training in the primary care of women has also been conducted, combined with specific efforts in the reduction of low birth weight infants and their care. Between 1992 and 1995 the number of complications due to infections decreased in both the maternity and the gynecology units. In the maternity unit it has decreased by 2.8 times and in the gynecology unit it has been reduced by a factor of 3.8.

The mid-year report in 1996 revealed a number of statistics regarding strides that have been made in the Perinatal Center. The average length of stay in the maternity unit decreased from 13.6 days in 1995 to 11.2 days in 1996. The average length of stay in the gynecology unit was reduced from 5.8 days in 1995 to 5.4 days in 1996. In addition, the length of stay for a woman after a normal delivery was reduced to 3 days. Perinatal mortality rates were decreased from 27 percent in 1995 to 26 percent in 1996. Intra-natal mortality rates were reduced from 15.5 percent in 1995 to 14 percent in 1996. The mortality rate of full-term infants was also lowered in 1996 to 2 percent from a rate of 3 percent in 1995.

The L'viv Perinatal Center has begun performing the following new diagnostic procedures: hysteroscopy, amniocentesis, and ultrasound examination with the use of a transvaginal meter. The following treatments and procedures have also been introduced at the Center: laparoscopy cystectomy, laparoscopy tubectomy, LAVH, laparoscopic surgical sterilization, minilaparotomy, and prolongation of pregnancy despite premature release of amniotic fluid.

The Perinatal Center has begun providing laboratory examinations on an out-patient basis prior to surgery, and treating women with gynecological diseases. A short procedure unit was opened at the Center, in addition to a neonatal intensive care unit and a prenatal diagnostics unit.

Infection Control: Both NIS partner hospitals have implemented infection control programs including Universal Precautions, improved cleaning, disinfection and sterilization techniques, and prophylactic vaccination of health care providers against Hepatitis B and diphtheria. As a result, the incidence of nosocomial infections at L'viv Perinatal Center has been reduced by 15 percent. The position of Infection Control Officer has been added at Railway Hospital. This individual has responsibility for hospital-wide infection control and the quality improvement program. Nurses continue to be trained in Body Substance Isolation and Universal Precautions. Statistics at Railway

Hospital show that both hospital personnel contact with patients' blood and hospital infections between patients have been significantly reduced. The overall length of stay at Railway Hospital has been decreased by 2 days.

Ophthalmology: At Railway Hospital, extensive hands-on training in early detection of myopia and cataracts has led to a 40 percent increase in early detection and an estimated 20 percent decrease in vision related disabilities. Treatment was changed from intra-capsular to extra-capsular techniques, and over 125 patients received extracapsular implants with correctly fitted lenses to restore full vision. Training has continued in the areas of extra- and intra-capsular lens implementation surgery as well as phaco-emulsification. To date over fifty phaco-emulsification procedures have been performed. New diagnostic tools have helped to identify over 2600 patients with cataracts and over 800 patients with glaucoma. Surgery has been indicated and performed for ninety-two of the glaucoma patients.

Resource Center Development: Librarians from the L'viv Scientific Library have received training in Buffalo to increase their knowledge of computers and the use of bibliographic materials. They have studied the hospital library system and its support of patient care and have been trained in special search techniques on new equipment that they now have in L'viv. They plan to implement a computerized bibliographic system stored in two databases at the Resource Center. The partners have successfully translated "Prologue in Obstetrics" and disseminated educational materials to a vast audience. Reference materials and textbooks have been transferred to the L'viv partners for establishment of a medical reference library.

Hospital Administration: Billing and collection procedures and cost containment strategies have been implemented at both L'viv hospital sites. The role and responsibilities of the Infection Control Officer were developed to include the management of infection control data and statistics.

In February 1996, a cost accounting department was opened at the Railway Hospital. The hospital now provides services for which they receive payment. Revenues from these services total over \$5,000 per month. The hospital anticipates that within five years they will transition to a completely fee-for-service institution.

Laparoscopic Surgery: Laparoscopic training has been conducted in three stages: research and study of the techniques, observation of the techniques, and, lastly, using a laparoscopic trainer under the supervision of a US trainer. Physicians have observed and studied the following surgeries: laparoscopic cholecystectomy, appendectomy, herniorrhaphy, colon resection, and Nissen fundoplication. A new laparoscopic surgery department was opened at Railway Hospital in February, 1996; the department is staffed by physicians and nurses who were trained in Buffalo. A new laparoscopic technique, double combined extirpation of uterine tissue, was introduced at the Perinatal Center in 1996. Statistics that were received in June 1997 from Railway Hospital indicate that 1603 laparoscopic GI procedures have been performed using the equipment and techniques learned from US Partners. Eight GI endoscopists have also been trained and have begun performing laparoscopic gynecologic surgeries at Railway Hospital.

Future Plans for the Partnership

A comprehensive approach to women's health and breast cancer screening will be fully implemented, enabling the L'viv partners to provide screening programs for breast, cervical, and uterine carcinomas, as well as to offer appropriate treatment interventions. Mammography procedures will be standardized and an educational outreach program will be developed, including instruction in Breast Self Exam. Pap smear testing and staining will be standardized using the Bethesda Classification method. Basic birth control services will be provided in an outpatient clinic. Outpatient treatment of cervical dysplasia, including colposcopy and cryotherapy will be provided on an outpatient basis.

An NICU will be developed at the Perinatal Center and personnel will be trained in the treatment of premature newborns with respiratory illness. A birthing room and "Birthing Center" will be created at the Perinatal Center.

The partners will develop a preventative maintenance program. Equipment will be evaluated for potential maintenance. The partners will work together to assure the proper functioning of laparoscopic, ophthalmologic and laboratory equipment.

The partnership will work in the area of nursing continuing education program by enhancing collaboration on nursing school curriculum. They will also assist with the development of the Nursing Learning Resource Center.

Training will be conducted in advanced laparoscopic techniques and gynecological laparoscopy at both hospitals. Gastrointestinal and ENT laparoscopy will also be developed at Railway Hospital.

The computer network will be expanded and the potential for dial-in access from both hospitals will be evaluated. Additional training in the use of biomedical databases will be provided.

HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT IN THE NIS

NIS Health Sector: Systemic Problems and Challenges

- **High Death Rates in the NIS:** The NIS countries are striving to modernize through both market-oriented economic reform and increased democratization of society and its institutions. Yet morbidity and mortality rates are so high among working age adults (average life expectancy for Russian men is 58 years in comparison with 73 in US and Germany) that economic productivity is constrained by a limited workforce and society is burdened by many non-working citizens without a source of support.
- **Funding Shortages and Disruption:** The breakup of the Soviet Union with the economic decline and social dislocation that followed, led to a drastic reduction in government health spending, the disruption of essential drug supplies and equipment, worsening quality of care for patients, deteriorating infrastructure and infectious disease outbreaks. In Russia, health spending as a percent of GDP has fallen from 6% in 1992 to 2-3% in 1996. Former barter agreements and supply routes with Eastern bloc countries for essential pharmaceuticals and vaccines dissolved, causing severe shortages. Continued economic decline plus lack of drug information and management skills are barriers to adequate availability and access to needed drugs.
- **National Health Insurance Adopted:** Attempting to move quickly away from a completely centralized system of health care financing through the national budget, national health insurance laws were passed in all countries to be visited except Ukraine. Health insurance funds were created at the oblast level, financed by new wage taxes imposed on employed persons. The infrastructure to implement national health insurance had to be built from scratch.
- **Lack of National and Local Capacity:** As the centralized Soviet system collapsed, health officials in Central Asia and Ukraine suddenly found themselves responsible for national health care policy and financing which had been dictated from Moscow for years and resource management was unknown as a concept. Resource allocation decisions were based on historical costs which blocked creative approaches to system restructuring. Within Russia itself, the devolution of responsibility and financing for health to the local levels severely tested local officials who had little experience with facility budgeting, information-based decision-making, or competitive procurement.
- **Wasteful Use of Scarce Resources:** While the Soviet health system guaranteed access to health services for all, the system concentrated on the development of in-patient and specialty care (70% of health sector resources went to the hospital sector) with little emphasis on primary care, which was under developed. Long hospital stays were mandated for conditions treatable on an out-patient basis. Infection rates in hospitals were high. The irony is that scarce resources for health were spent on the most expensive parts of the system--the hospitals--which were overused and least productive in terms of protecting and improving the public's health.

NIS Health Sector: Systemic Problems and Challenges

- **Over-Specialized, Fragmented Delivery of Care:** Patients seeking care entered a complex vertical network of polyclinics, dispensaries, general and specialized hospitals. Holistically-related services, such as immunizations, pediatrics, and reproductive health, as well as disease-specific care for AIDs, tuberculosis, and cancer, were provided by entirely separate, vertical networks of facilities and resulted in uncoordinated and fragmented care.
- **Underdeveloped, Underequipped Primary Care:** District doctors, who were the patient's first contact with the health care system, typically lacked necessary training and equipment to treat the simplest illnesses and functioned as 'revolving doors' directing patients to specialists and other facilities. Because of the inadequacy of this level of care, patients often by-passed the local primary care physicians and selected specialized regional facilities.
- **Lack of Consumer-Responsiveness, Patient Education:** As an institution, the Soviet health care system was not consumer-friendly. The fragmented delivery system, the traditional authoritarian physician to patient relationship, and lack of community-based patient education and advocacy presented tremendous obstacles for patients seeking health information and services and for improving the population's health status.
- **Lack of Modern Clinical Knowledge and Skills:** Given long isolation from modern clinical research and literature and lack of technology, even the best facilities in the NIS use many elements of medical practice and standards that are outdated, ineffective, or not evidence-based by Western standards.

USAID's Health Sector Program and Results

Given limited resources and timeframes, USAID identified four strategic areas for the NIS Health Care Improvement Project to address through training, building local capacity, commodities and technical assistance:

- **Health Care Financing and Service Delivery Reform**
- **Vaccine and Pharmaceutical Security** (also see Child Health page)
- **Health Information and Response Systems**
- **Women's Reproductive Health** (see Women's Health page)

Health Care Financing & Service Delivery Reform

USAID's objective is to restructure the organization, financing and delivery of health care in the NIS by introducing models of reform in payment, quality assurance, service delivery, and management and information systems to improve citizens' access to quality, affordable health care.

ZdravReform Program

Since 1993, through the ZdravReform project, USAID helped establish new models of ambulatory and hospital care that use resources more efficiently and effectively and are more responsive to the medical and customer service needs of NIS citizens. ZdravReform has increased the effectiveness of new national health insurance systems (adopted in all countries except Ukraine) and used new payment systems and financial management tools to improve the delivery and organization of care.

- **Consumer-Focussed Care:** Since 1993, USAID helped create ambulatory care models that are responsive to the medical and customer service needs of NIS citizens. 160 family group practices are providing quality care in cost-effective out-patient settings leading to high patient satisfaction and demand to join the family group practices. (Russia: 20, Ukraine: 10, Kyrgyzstan: 80, Kazakstan: 56)
- **New Provider Payment Systems:** USAID has piloted a variety of primary care provider payment systems that will provide incentives for primary care providers to take more responsibility for providing quality care to their patients. USAID has also helped create information systems to manage the new payment models under the health insurance programs.
- **Privatization:** In Kazakstan, where USAID has provided privatization and policy assistance for the pharmaceutical sector, 82% of the 1,325 formerly state-operated pharmacies have been auctioned and legal ownership transferred to private parties and facilities or have been liquidated, as of November 1996. The remaining pharmacies are being prepared for auction. USAID pharmaceutical sector restructuring activities have led to a more reliable supply of essential drugs and contraceptives.

Hospital Partnerships Program

The American International Health Alliance's (AIHA) partnership activities have produced significant results in key clinical areas and developed a cadre of NIS health care leaders skilled in modern medical management.

- **Strengthened Institutions and Manpower:** The 28 partnerships between NIS and U.S. medical institutions are creating a "critical mass" of reformed hospitals and empowered personnel. The partnerships have developed medical services nuclei with strengthened clinical and services management capacities. Partnerships have updated medical practice, improved quality and introduced modern management approaches practices and techniques in critical areas of health needs - eg., in women's health, pediatrics, family medicine, surgery, emergency medical services, patient education and alcoholism treatment. By modernizing clinical techniques, opening out-patient clinics, and introducing basic infection control techniques, the partnerships have been able to reduce average length of stay (ALOS) in hospitals, achieved better quality of care and promoted the shift from costly hospital care to out-patient care.
- **Human Capacity Development.** By building local capacity in health, partnerships have developed a cross-national NIS cadre of over 300 health care managers and trainers, with the necessary tools and confidence to lead continuation and dissemination of clinical and nursing management development. In addition to health-related achievements, the partnerships have had a significant impact in promoting democracy, civil society, and citizen empowerment on a broad regional scale and have encouraged communication and dialogue between the US and CEE/NIS and also inter-regionally.

Vaccines & Pharmaceutical Security and Effectiveness

USAID is focussing on building capacity at the national and local levels to improve disease monitoring, surveillance and response, standard case management of child illnesses and other infectious diseases, rational drug use, financing and competitive procurement for drugs and vaccines.

- **Improved Child Survival:** Since 1992, USAID helped NIS countries to modernize national immunization policies and schedules in accordance with international standards, improving the delivery and quality of immunization services to children and resulting in over \$1million in savings (lower supply costs by eliminating redundant vaccinations). In CAR, improved clinical practices for the treatment of the primary causes of child mortality in the region (acute respiratory infections and diarrheal disease) has resulted in a 93% decrease in deaths due to diarrheal disease in one pilot district despite a greatly increased incidence of diarrheal cases.
- **Halted Spread of Infectious Diseases:** USAID has provided vaccines, training and technical assistance to the NIS, building national capacity to monitor, identify and respond to emerging and reemerging diseases. As a result, diphtheria rates in Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have declined below epidemic levels. In Central Asia, USAID has also responded to outbreaks of malaria and typhoid as well

as have improved polio immunization rates by introducing national immunization campaigns. Currently, effective TB treatments are being tested in Russia and Central Asia to halt the growing epidemic of drug-resistant TB.

- **Promoted Effective Use of Drugs:** USAID is supporting technical assistance to improve the selection, use and procurement of drugs throughout the region. For example, international procurements in Moldova, Central Asia and Russia have significantly reduced the costs of drug purchases and improved the availability of essential drugs. In CAR, the costs for treating diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections has fallen dramatically due to a reduction in the unnecessary use of intravenous fluids and antibiotics.
- **Increased U.S. Investment:** In Russia, USAID is supporting three U.S. pharmaceutical firms (Bristol Myers Squibb, Searle, and MIR Pharmaceuticals) that are planning to establish pharmaceutical production facilities. Russian consumers will benefit by having greater access to affordable, high quality, essential drugs.
- **Health Information and Response Systems:** USAID and the Centers for Disease Control are strengthening surveillance systems and improving local- and national-level monitoring, reporting, and response of priority infectious diseases in the NIS, which will alert governments to threatening epidemics. In Kyrgyzstan, improvement and decentralization of monitoring of immunization program information has resulted in a decrease of vaccine wastage by a factor of 2. In Russia, health officials acquired public health communication skills to change behavior and applied the methods to fight the diphtheria and polio epidemics and country-wide dissemination of health information is now possible with the establishment of a MOH web-site.

What is USAID doing worldwide to prevent the spread of infectious diseases?

USAID's approach to the prevention and control of infectious diseases has four elements:

- (1) working to change the social and economic conditions that allow infectious diseases to flourish and spread (such as poverty, malnutrition, education, lack of sanitation, overcrowding, environmental degradation);
- (2) helping to strengthen health systems so developing countries themselves can control infectious diseases;
- (3) focusing on priority infectious diseases; and (4) responding to emergency disease situations.

Globally, USAID activities in the control and prevention of infectious diseases have focused primarily on: acute respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases in children; integrating health interventions for the prevention and treatment of malaria; and, as the largest single donor, the control and prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). In FY 98, USAID will initiate implementation of an expanded initiative to

prevent and control infectious diseases. The four key elements of this initiative will focus on antimicrobial resistance, tuberculosis control, malaria, and strengthening surveillance systems.

Lessons Learned from USAID's Health Program:

- Health sector reform is critical to the region's successful transition to a free-market economy and democratic open society.
- The reform process is on-going and slower than we had anticipated. Programs must be flexible to adapt to a continuously changing and expanding environment.
- A Demonstration is worth 1,000 words. NIS health care leaders rapidly pick up on successful demonstrations and are adapting them for the NIS environment and making policy changes. Exchanges of physicians and nurses have facilitated the transfer of modern medical technology and health care practice standards as clinicians and administrators learn about evidence-based medicine.
- There is power in partnerships--we in the U.S. share many common issues with NIS counterparts and peer-based relationships have proven productive for both Americans and NIS colleagues.
- There is power in communications--formerly cut off from information, NIS citizens are now eager for it; are increasing access to information from publications, fax and internet; and are increasingly sharing it with each other and their international colleagues.

Children's Issues in ENI--Threats to Child Health

Children's health in the NIS had gradually improved through the early 1990s, but has been threatened by the worsening economic conditions, which have thrown many families into poverty and weakened health and sanitation infrastructure.

The primary causes of child mortality throughout the region are acute respiratory infections and diarrheal disease. In addition, several countries have been unable to maintain their childhood immunization programs. Chronic malnutrition exists in several countries (mostly areas of civil unrest) and rates are markedly elevated in children and the elderly. Region-wide, children face micronutrient deficiencies (particularly for iodine, iron, fluoride, and some critical vitamins). Children are definitely more susceptible to exposure to environmental hazards including lead and other heavy metals, sulfur dioxide, and contaminated water.

Children are innocent victims of the expanding social problems which accompany economic decline, including domestic violence resulting from alcohol, stress, dislocations, etc. Problems of institutionalization of children and of street children are also gaining visibility as are lifestyle issues resulting from smoking, sexual activity and drugs.

- Few USAID programs in the NIS have been specifically and directly targeted at children. However, USAID support to improve immunization systems throughout the region and the program in CAR to improve treatment of childhood acute respiratory infections and diarrheal disease will contribute to child survival in the NIS. Several AIHA partnerships have created model high-risk pregnancy and neonatal care units, and stressed new techniques of neonatal resuscitation, resulting in a marked decrease in neonatal mortality.

USAID has also supported:

- creation of a web-site for MOH of Russia to improve dissemination of child health information
- an educational Russian Sesame Street;
- activities to address childhood physical and mental illness in Ukraine resulting from Chernobyl;
- Mothercare and breastfeeding programs throughout the NIS;
- high school exchange programs focused on lifestyle questions (supported through the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission);
- vulnerable group feeding programs; programs to reduce childhood exposure to lead and other toxins; and
- Micronutrient fortification through the iodization of salt in Russia.

Women's Issues in ENI: Women's Reproductive Health (WRH) Program

Since 1992, USAID has been modernizing WRH services throughout the NIS by creating women's health clinics, updating provider clinical and counseling skills and improving availability of high-quality contraceptives to consumers. The program is designed to reduce reliance on abortion, which in the NIS is the most common "fertility control" method. Excessive abortions have been associated with high levels of infertility, premature births, pregnancy complications and maternal mortality.

- **Reduced Abortion:** In 33 project sites in Central Asian countries, where the WRH Program has operated since 1992, data showed a 58% increase in new contraceptive acceptors 1994. Reproductive Health Surveys in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan showed a 20-31% decrease in abortion rates by 1995. In Ukraine, where WRH began in 1995, the MOH reported an 8.6% reduction in induced abortions in the first six months of 1996, and directly attributed the decline to USAID assistance.
- **Improved Access to Safe Reproductive Services:** Across the NIS, model family planning clinics are providing women with alternatives to abortion, and pharmacists and physicians are now better trained to deliver reproductive health services, e.g. based on an initial USAID-funded, training of 14 trainers, , the Donetsk Regional Center for Maternal and Child Care in Ukraine has provided in-service and pre-service training for 872 health providers. Improved availability of affordable, quality contraceptives through the private sector resulted when USAID programs made an agreement with Gedeon Richter, to supply over 12,000 commercial pharmaceutical products to Family Group Practices in two major cities in Kazakhstan, the first time patients can obtain birth control products at their doctor's office.
- **Improved Maternal Health Services:** Family-centered maternity services are providing compassionate and quality services, including rooming-in for newborn and mother. Education emphasizes preparation for childbirth and parenting so the mother-to-be can take an active role in promoting her own health and that of her baby. In April 1997, the Odessa Oblast Clinical Hospital's Maternity Center opened the first family birth center in Ukraine.
- **Innovative Women's Health:** Through the Hospital Partnerships, USAID is supporting 14 Women's Wellness Centers, providing a "one-stop shopping" approach for reproductive health, counseling and education services in the NIS for women of all ages. Wellness Centers will also focus on mental health, substance abuse prevention, and support for victims of domestic violence. Magee Womancare International with Savior's hospital in Moscow found that the overall number of clients grew from 5431 women in 1995 to 6236 in 1996, with more women using a modern contraceptive in 1996-94%, than in 1995-86%.
- **Innovative Communications:** Public information campaigns throughout the NIS have promoted the health benefits and safety of modern contraceptive methods. The WRH Program so impressed a Ukrainian TV employee, that she convinced her station to produce and nationally air a 4-part series on the Odessa Oblast Maternity House, a USAID project site. Segments covered family-centered maternity care, rooming-in, breast feeding, family planning, and HIV/AIDS. In another USAID-funded activity, Ukrainian specialists produced Night Saxophone, a 20-minute video on sexual

responsibility. The video has been shown to thousands of Ukrainian youth, and according to focus group discussions with adolescents in Lviv, Ukraine, watching the video helped them get information about contraception and promoted dialogue within their families. Ukraine implemented its first National Family Planning Week, with great success. Reports in from 16 of the 25 oblasts indicate that there were over 100 TV broadcasts, 60 radio broadcasts, 125 newspaper articles, 95 professional training events, and 200 events for adolescents, all focused on the importance of family planning.

May 1997, the Russian Minister of Health met with women TV journalists for a successful breakfast dialogue on family planning to lay the groundwork for the national mass-media campaign developed by a USAID-funded program. "Ask Dr. Olga", a syndicated column on women's reproductive health issues, also a part of this public education campaign has begun distribution through a national syndication service to newspapers throughout Russia.

TO: David Shipley

FROM: Theresa Loar

DATE: November 6, 1997

SUBJECT: Violence Against Women Projects/Organizations in the Stans

Kazakhstan

- The Almaty Women's Information Centre conducts seminars on women's rights, provides legal consultation for women, publishes the Almaty Women's Information Centre Bulletin, conducts national and international conferences on women's issues and lobbies for legislation pertaining to women. Future plans call for seminars to move out to regional centers and reach women in rural villages, as well as the publication of women's rights newspapers for Central Asian countries.
- LIANA, an international association of women, works in Kazakhstan and throughout central Asia to lobby for laws that assist women and to encourage women to be active in NGOs and other types of organizations. LIANA hosted two international conferences on women, one on the role of NGOs and one on women in business. It is now hosting a conference on women in politics to encourage women to run for office.

Kyrgystan

- The Women's Association of Kyrgystan has plans to work with the Fund for Legal Initiatives in the sphere of the law, to publish a legal newspaper, to create projects with the Children's Fund, and to render legal assistance to NGOs (*Unfortunately, we have no more information*)

Russia

- On June 18, women joined together to improve women's economic status in Russia. Women affiliated with over 120 business projects from various regions of Russia participated in the Fourth Annual Exhibition, "Women's Project-97". Goals of the conference included attracting business clientele, providing a forum for small businesses run by women, fostering business contacts, and attracting business investors to finance women's projects. This group was founded in 1994 and currently teaches a wide range of business courses for women.
- The Russian Women's Forum Project links two other multipurpose women's leadership centers in Russia, the Women's Information Network in Moscow which uses electronic and traditional communication to link 360 grassroots regional groups and the Soros Internet Program which allows women at regional universities across Russia to exchange information via the internet. Rapidly, the goal of 30 interlinked centers across the Federation is becoming a reality.

Uzbekistan

- Women's Resource Center in Tashkent runs women's human rights programs, one of the first of its kind. The education program is part of its collaboration with Sisterhood is Global, a worldwide Muslim women's organization. *(This group reported at a recent conference in Washington, DC. We are getting more information about this report and will send it to you as soon as possible)*
- Republican Women's Committee, a government-sponsored NGO headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, is working in cooperation with the government to develop a National Action Plan to improve the status of women.
- Tashkent State Medical Institute and the University of Illinois Teaching Hospital are working together to treat Tashkenti women in danger of high-risk pregnancies and have formed the Women's Wellness Center to provide health care to women and their newborn babies.

UNCLASSIFIEDUnited States Department of State
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

Viewpoint

INR analysts' working paper

International Trafficking in Women from Central Europe and the NIS

Trafficking in women from Central Europe and the New Independent States (NIS) has increased over the past few years. Well-established criminal organizations are running these trafficking and prostitution operations by capitalizing on the poverty, rising unemployment and the disintegration of social networks in the region.

* * *

Trafficking definitions and statistics elusive

The definition of trafficking in women varies widely given differing interpretations by individual countries, and because the industry may take different forms, such as sexual exploitation, indentured servitude and mail order brides¹. Moreover, definitional difficulties persist as cases may involve legal or illegal immigration, with women witting or unwitting about their employment as prostitutes. For the purposes of this paper, trafficking will focus primarily on trafficking for sexual exploitation and will cover the following practices as defined by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights.

- keeping women in a state of illegal dependence;
- the use of force and deception;
- employment in prostitution or other unregulated and unprotected work;
- debt slavery i.e. by means of improper agents' fees and exorbitant rates of interest;

¹ Marriage or international matchmaking agencies offer foreign women for marriage abroad through "mail-order bride" catalogues. These companies may mask trafficking operations.

*Produced by the Office of
Analysis for Terrorism, Narcotics
and Crime (INR/TNC)*

UNCLASSIFIED

November 4, 1997

UNCLASSIFIED

2

INR

- (emotional) blackmail and exploitation of the illegal immigrant status;
- physical and sexual abuse;
- physical violence and the threat of violence;
- transport of one or more persons within a country or between countries for profit.

It is also difficult to estimate the true level of trafficking in women as it is an underground industry. No one agency compiles accurate statistics on how many women and children are trafficked worldwide; most estimates are anecdotal or difficult to extrapolate from limited case studies. Not enough research has been done to give precise ratios for women trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation versus other forms of exploitative labor. Nevertheless, according to some non-governmental organizations (NGOs), each year between one and two million women and girls are being trafficked around the world² with some 10,000 to 100,000 women trafficked for sexual exploitation from East to West. EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs Anita Gradin estimates that two-thirds of the women trafficked to Europe come from Eastern Europe and one-third of the women come from developing countries.

The lack of accurate statistics is also a problem in monitoring the trafficking of children, though reports from the 6th session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice indicate that there has been a dramatic increase in the abduction of children for commercial purposes by organized crime syndicates.³

Trafficking trends

The general magnitude of trafficking in Central European and NIS women and children to and through Europe, Asia and the Middle East appears to be increasing, though specific numbers have not been established. Recent investigations show that the majority of these women are trafficked to Western Europe, largely for sexual exploitation. Women from Central and Eastern Europe are particularly vulnerable to being exploited by the traffickers given the women's geographical proximity, cultural/racial similarities and ability to enter legally as tourists often without the need to apply for a visa.

² Beyond Europe, other anecdotal figures, collected from NGOs, human rights groups estimate that over the last ten years, 200,000 women and girls have been trafficked from Bangladesh to Pakistan. Moreover, 20,00-30,000 women have been trafficked from Burma to Thailand, and 150,000 Thai and Filipino women have been trafficked to Japan.

³ It has reached critical proportions in Asia where poverty is the main motivating factor behind children being trafficked or sold into debt bondage, brothels or sweat shops. NGOs, human rights groups and law enforcement officials, for example, estimate that 40,000 children from Nepal have been trafficked to India and Hong Kong over the last ten years, 15,000 children have been trafficked in Cambodia over the last six years, and 30,000 children to date have been prostituted in Sri Lanka.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3

INR

The main countries of origin for trafficking in women from East to West are Russia, Ukraine, Poland and The Baltic states (see map), according to an International Organization for Migration (IOM) officer. Other countries of origin include Belarus, Moldova and Central Europe. Traffickers target women in these countries because their difficult economic conditions make them more susceptible to offers of employment abroad. Some experts estimate that 80 percent of those in the region who have lost their jobs in recent years due to economic difficulties have been women. In addition to being origin countries, the Central European countries, especially Poland, Hungary, Romania and the Czech Republic, are key transit countries to Western Europe. The Baltic countries are also a transit point to Western Europe as they already have the infrastructure and well established alien smuggling routes.

According to an IOM officer, most Western European countries, especially the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Greece, are major destination countries. The NGO Global Survival Network (GSN) concurs with this list and adds Japan, Israel, Turkey and UAE. Others include Thailand, Macau, South Africa and Tanzania. GSN and the NGO Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women claim that North America is also a growing destination point. Officers from IOM and INS believe the majority of NIS women trafficked to the US are going to New York, Washington, DC, Florida, California and Hawaii. Conversely, GSN found that some US women have been trafficked to Japan and Russia, though US law enforcement appears to have little information on this issue.

IOM, GSN and the Dutch Foundation Against Trafficking in Women (STV) claim that women from Central Europe and the NIS are trafficked to Western Europe primarily by private car and bus, although some transport of NIS women includes planes. According to the NGO End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, women are primarily trafficked to large cities, vacation and tourist areas, and military bases in Europe. Trafficking rings operate along major truck routes, for example the roads from Warsaw to Berlin and Budapest to Vienna.

Targeting, profiles and recruitment

Traffickers most frequently target young women, who are thought to be free of AIDS or other sexually transmitted disease, for sexual exploitation. Most of the trafficked women are under the age of 25, with many only 15-18 years old. This contrasts with women from developing countries, namely Asian countries, who are trafficked to Europe. These women tend to be older, more likely to be married, and to have children.

IOM, GSN and STV studies found that the recruitment of women from Central and Eastern Europe was often informal—through friends and acquaintances—but, on arrival in the destination country, many found themselves indebted to a trafficker or club owner. GSN also found that the Russian mafia recruits women at mixers or matchmaking parties organized by marriage agencies. The Russian mafia also uses these companies' databases to get additional

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

4

INR

names of possible recruits. Additionally, young women are often recruited at bars or dance clubs.

Similarly, GSN found that criminal organizations will commonly contract procurers⁴ to approach women or their families with offers of well-paying jobs in exotic cities, though ultimately the girls will be forced into prostitution. In societies with a tradition of fixing deals informally, this form of recruitment does not necessarily arouse suspicion. Agents will generally front the money for provision of travel documents, transportation and supposed jobs; GSN found that depending on the destination, trafficking networks may charge NIS women anywhere from \$1,500 to \$30,000 which they are expected to pay once they begin working. GSN also discovered that trafficking networks may use contracts. Many of the contracts are bogus and used to provide an image of legitimacy, lulling the girl into believing that she is dealing with a reputable business.

An additional venue for recruiting or duping women is through advertisements. Typically, ads in papers--usually placed by an agency not an individual--recruit women by offering lucrative jobs for models, dancers, waitresses, au pairs or hair stylists in Western Europe. According to an officer with the NGO Women in Development, women from Central Europe and the NIS, especially from small rural towns, are not always as accustomed to evaluating the legitimacy of the advertisements, particularly as some legitimate advertisements list young and attractive as qualifications.

Links to organized crime

Attracted by the endless market, enormous profits and minimal risks, criminal groups of all levels of sophistication are involved in the trafficking industry. There are an abundance of freelance traffickers who supplement their income by providing one aspect of the trade, such as internal or international transportation, on an ad hoc basis. There are also small but well-organized rings that specialize in trafficking nationals out of one country using similar routes repeatedly. Most notably, large, well-organized international trafficking rings have increasingly become involved in this trade over the past five years. Dr. Bruggeman, from Europol, said in 1996 that organized crime groups are using violence and intimidation to kidnap, imprison and force females into prostitution. These criminal organizations are capable of changing routing and means of transportation as necessary, and can procure fraudulent or authentic documents. Moreover, IOM, GSN and several European law enforcement agencies believe that the same criminal organizations engaged in trafficking women are involved in other illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, auto smuggling and gas scams, with the profits all interrelated.

⁴ According to a 1996 NGO study (The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Eastern Europe) presented before the Stockholm World Congress against the Sexual Exploitation against Children, it appears that procurers may be paid between \$2,000 to \$5,000 dollars to recruit a girl. GSN, however, found that in Russia recruiters might be paid as little as \$10 per woman recruited for the marriage agencies.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

5

INR

Though the Russian mafia has traditionally been involved in prostitution, they are increasingly "evolving" into the trafficking of women. GSN discovered that the upper echelon of Russian organized crime was largely involved in providing the "roof" for the trafficking operation, while lower level criminals were responsible for managing the logistics, such as recruitment. Outside of Russia, IOM and GSN report that Russian organized crime groups are controlling European prostitution industries, such as those in Poland, Germany and Italy. According to Bulgarian Interior Ministry Chief Popov, Russian criminals are also trafficking Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian and Chechen women through Bulgaria to Turkey, Greece and elsewhere in Western Europe for prostitution. GSN found that Russian criminal groups are collaborating with Turkish and former Yugoslavian crime groups in trafficking women in Western Europe. GSN also found that in Russia's Far East, Russian criminals are reported to have supplied Russian women to brothels and clubs in Hong Kong and Macau. Lastly, Russian crime rings have trafficked women to the United States. For example, California authorities arrested 11 members of a Russian-Armenian mafia ring in September 1995 for importing Russian women for prostitution.

Other organized crime groups are also involved in the trafficking industry. Albanian criminal groups are involved in the Italian prostitution market, while Ukrainian groups reportedly control the markets in Hungary and Austria. In June, a Ukrainian mafia boss was arrested at the Austrian / Italian border at Tarvisio. In partnership with Albanian criminals, he had been trafficking dozens of Ukrainian girls to Italy and forcing them into prostitution. Dutch authorities have found that highly organized, extremely violent Eastern European trafficking gangs are largely controlling the trade in their country. A Belgian Interpol officer also claims that the Turkish PKK has used traditional alien smuggling routes to traffic women to Belgium for prostitution.

GSN investigations uncovered that the Japanese Yakuza are also involved in the trafficking industry, often in cooperation with the Russian mafia. The Yakuza not only force Russian women, who thought they were going to Japan to work as hostesses, into prostitution but also traffic Thai and Mexican women to Japanese brothels. The Thai women are frequently bought from Thai traffickers, while the Mexican women are duped into thinking they would be singers or actresses in Japan.

Widespread abuse of travel documents

The use of travel documents varies according to the immigration regulations in the destination countries. Traffickers usually bring Central and Eastern European women to Western Europe legally on work permits or tourist visas but then force them to work as prostitutes. In many instances, the travel agencies--often run by or associated with traffickers--have established relationships with various embassies which may "rubber stamp" the visas. Commonly, when a visa expires, women are given aliases and a visa for a different country. They then may be rotated on an international circuit of strip clubs and brothels in order to evade authorities and keep them from becoming discovered. One IOM study reflected that most Central European

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

6,

INR

women entered the Netherlands as tourists, enabling them to remain legally (though not work) in the country for up to three months. By contrast, Russian women and most East European women entered the Netherlands illegally.

GSN found that in the few reported instances nationwide where Russian women were trafficked to the US, the traffickers used tourist visas. In general, it appears that prostitution is a low priority for US law enforcement agencies. Though local police may have anecdotal evidence of foreign women engaged in prostitution, in general, US law enforcement agencies do not keep accurate statistics and do not know the extent of the problem in the US. Additionally, women from the NIS are increasingly entering the US through mail-order bride companies. There are an estimated 200 mail-order bride companies which arrange some 2,000 to 5,000 marriages in the US each year; Russian and Filipino women are the two largest sources of foreign brides of US men.

Additionally, IOM has found that those countries with liberal visa policies for dancers or those involved in the arts or entertainment business tend to have a larger problem with trafficking, as traffickers often exploit this loophole. Traffickers, for example, have used Canada's entertainment visa to trick NIS women into believing they will be folk dancers, and then trap them into the sex industry. Facing growing domestic pressure over the traffickers use of the entertainment visa, Switzerland recently revoked this type of visa.

When tourist or work permits are not available, traffickers may purchase false or altered passports from local authorities. GSN found that in Russia, traffickers claim they can generate, often with official connivance, documentation to traffic women overseas. The GSN study showed the traffickers were confident that they could obtain false documentation for minors to work abroad, or new identities for women by acquiring false passports with genuine information, sometimes by using contacts from Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Lax law enforcement

There are a multitude of factors--including limited funding, resources and attention--which hinder law enforcement in combating the trafficking in women. Undercover operations, for example, are difficult because an insufficient number of European policemen speak Russian or other NIS languages. Lack of coordination and information-sharing among local police, border police and immigration authorities further impedes law enforcement efforts.

Beyond inadequate cooperation, there are unspoken biases, confusion, and disbelief over the issue in many governments. There is often a lack of political will to seriously address the issue, which is still largely seen as secondary to trafficking in drugs and arms. The trafficking industry is often associated with prostitution, a low priority for many law enforcement agencies, or associated with illegal migration and alien smuggling. Many governments are under tremendous pressure to limit migration, so they detain and deport the trafficked women without further investigation. Frequently the focus becomes whether or not the woman knew she would

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

7

INR

be a prostitute, or whether or not prostitution is illegal in a certain country, rather than the violation of the woman's civil and human rights.

Corruption may also prevent governments from arresting and prosecuting traffickers. In several instances, shady or corrupt government or law enforcement officials benefit or profit from the trade. Facing domestic pressure, governments are occasionally compelled to pursue the traffickers. For example, Greek authorities arrested at least 10 policemen, including two police chiefs, in August 1995 for masterminding several Russian and Eastern European call-girl trafficking rings in Greece. The rings had enticed thousands of girls and women with promises of a better life; yet when they arrived, corrupt policemen confiscated their passports and sold them to nightclub owners. In Germany, the Chief of the Special Commission on Organized Crime in Frankfurt, was arrested in 1996 for working with a trafficker of Eastern European women.

A GSN study also found that some Russian police and Federal Security Bureau (FSB) officials are involved in the sex trade. Private security firms—which provide the protection for the trafficking organizations, brothels and prostitution rackets—often include current or former members of the FSB and police. Widespread indifference to women's issues, a lack of resources, and a heavy workload have also prevented honest Russian security personnel from tackling the problem of trafficking in women. These obstacles and instances of corruption add to the victim's fear of punishment and arrest by local law enforcement and prevent trafficked women from coming forward and testifying. The women fear not only deportation but also reprisals by traffickers to themselves and/or their families. Language barriers and a lack of knowledge of their legal rights further compound their fears. Traffickers, however, know how to exploit the loopholes in the various countries' penal codes, according to a Belgian Interpol officer.

For further information, contact: INR/TNC Amy O'Neill, (202) 647-78272, or INR/TNC Office Director Mark Steinitz, (202) 647-6812.

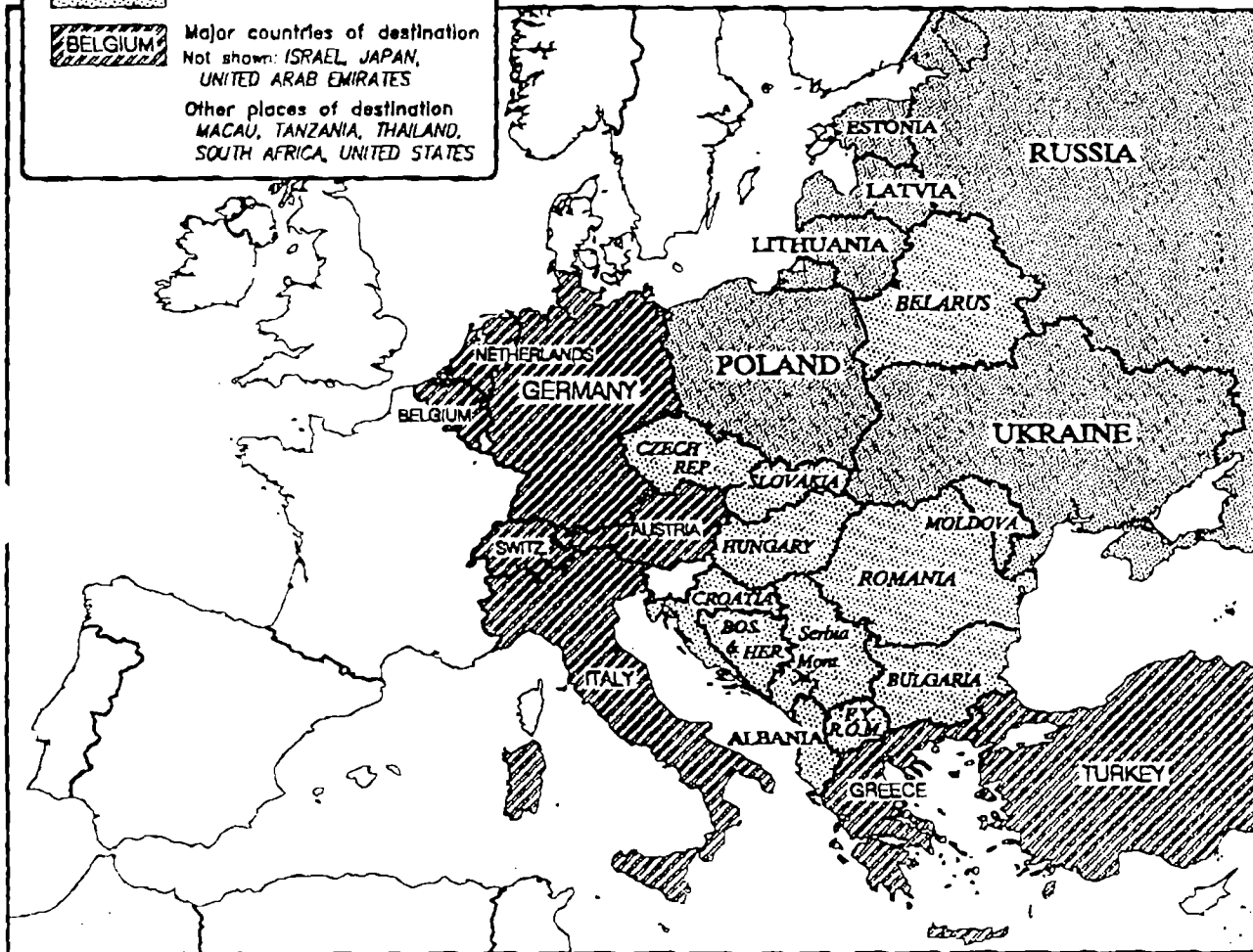
UNCLASSIFIED

Unclassified

Trafficking in European Women IOM and GSN estimates

- RUSSIA** Primary countries of origin
- BELARUS** Other countries of origin
- BELGIUM** Major countries of destination
- Not shown: ISRAEL, JAPAN,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
- Other places of destination
MACAU, TANZANIA, THAILAND,
SOUTH AFRICA, UNITED STATES

Europe: International Trafficking in Women



Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative

4234 10-97 STATE (INIC/GCI)

UNCLASSIFIED

8

INR

This Viewpoint reflects the opinions of the drafter. The information was based on open source literature and interviews with non-governmental organizations, human rights organizations, inter governmental organizations and government officers. The following sources were used:

Reports:

Global Survival Network, "Crime and Servitude: An Expose of the Traffic in Women for Prostitution from the Newly Independent States" October 1997

Trafficking and Prostitution: The Growing Exploitation of Migrant Women From Central and Eastern Europe, International Organization for Migration, May 1995

Trafficking of Women to the European Union: Characteristics, Trends and Policy Issues, International Organization for Migration, June 1996

Trafficking In Migrants Quarterly Bulletin, International Organization for Migration, Bulletins: No 15 June 1997, No 11 June 1996, No 9 December 1995, No 8 September 1995

Information from The Protection Project, the University of Minnesota, The Center on Speech, Equality and Harm, October 1997

One Year La Strada, Results of the First Central and East European Program on Prevention of Traffic in Women, The Dutch Foundation Against Traffic in Women, September 1996

Conference: Sexwork, Sextourism and Trafficking in Woman: A New Reality in Eastern Europe? Heinrich Boll Foundation 1996

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Some Eastern European Countries, a study carried out by Helena Karlen and Christina Hagner and commissioned by End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, March 1996

Trafficking in Women for Purposes of Sexual Exploitation, Risto Veijalainen Rapporteur to the Conference on Trafficking in Women, Vienna, June 1996

UN Crime Commission: Report on the 6th Session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, April 1997

European Parliament Report on Trafficking in Human Beings, Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs, December 1995

Trafficking in Women for Purposes of Sexual Exploitation, Report by Europol Drugs Unit, May 1996

Trafficking in Women, report by the Spanish National Police, 1996

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

9

INR

"Women's Vital Voices, The Costs of Exclusion in Eastern Europe," Swanee Hunt, Foreign Affairs, July/August 1997

Interviews:

The drafter spoke on the phone or in person with individuals from the State Department, DOJ, INS, Postal Inspections (Crime Division), and Customs (Crime Division). Additionally, representatives from the International Organization for Migration and Belgium's Interpol office provided information. Outside of government agencies, the drafter spoke with representatives from the following Universities and NGOs:

Global Survival Network

Network of East-West Women

Women in Development, Technical Assistance Project

The Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women

The International Womens Judges Foundation

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes

University of Minnesota, Center on Speech, Equality and Harm

University of British Columbia, Department of Women's Studies

UNCLASSIFIED



Health Status of Women in CEE and the NIS

The rapid political, economic and social changes occurring in the countries of central and eastern Europe (CEE) and the new independent states (NIS) of the former USSR have created conditions that fundamentally affect

the population. These changes have led to social and economic hardship and, in some cases, to war. The result is a widening gap in health between the eastern and western halves of Europe, a serious inequity. A closer look at CEE and the NIS reveals that while women bear more of the burdens imposed by change, they also comprise an invaluable, largely untapped resource for improving their communities and their health.

It must be emphasized that the information available on women's health is quite limited. In the past, the collection of gender-specific data was uncommon globally. Only in recent times have the fundamental differences in the health of men and women been formally recognized. Further, a great deal of the available data is uncertain. Not only do the systems of data collection vary greatly in quality and comprehensiveness, the types of data collected and the methods of analysis are often quite limited.

Most of the diseases that are major threats to the health of populations in CEE and the NIS develop over long periods of time. Causal factors interact with other influences in complex ways. Many health problems are related

to the life situation, to conditions of work and to patterns of behavior, all of which tend to vary in gender-specific ways.

Life Expectancy

Data comparing life expectancy at birth provide an overview of differences in survival for the female population of CEE and the NIS in relation to European Union (EU) averages. In 1993, the average life expectancy for women in the NIS was six years less than the average for women in the EU. The difference for women in CEE was five years. Within CEE and the NIS, there is a seven-year average difference between the countries with the lowest and highest figures, from 69.3 years in Turkmenistan to 76.5 years in the Republic of Georgia.

In the 1980s, life expectancy in CEE and the NIS showed a very gradual increase. But for most of the countries, life expectancy fell from 1990 to 1993. Life expectancy at birth in the Russian Federation decreased from 74.4 years to 72. Latvia fell from 74.5 to 73.3 years.

Cardiovascular Disease and Cancer

Diverging trends between CEE and the NIS and the rest of the region in the two



Nurlla Narina of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, gave birth to twins at the Institute of Obstetrics and Pediatrics last February. The Institute has improved neonatal mortality, from 8.1 percent in 1994 to 7.5 percent in 1995.

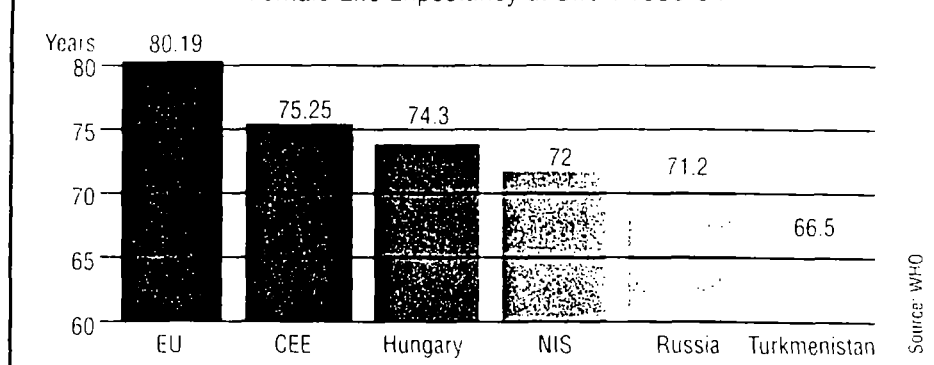
main causes of overall mortality for males and females (cardiovascular disease and cancer under the age of 65) give rise to concern. Particularly worrisome are the death rates for cardiovascular disease for females. The lowest female rate in CEE and the NIS — Lithuania at 72.95 per 100,000 — is more than one and a half times the European average of 47 per 100,000 and more than twice the EU average. Subregional variations in cardiovascular mortality are particularly large — Turkmenistan has 165 deaths per 100,000 women, while Estonia has 81. While mortality from cardiovascular disease (mainly ischemic heart disease and cerebrovascular disease) in females has been decreasing since 1980 in western Europe, no progress was made in CEE and the NIS.

The gap in cancer mortality rates for females is less dramatic than that for cardiovascular diseases, but growing larger.

Excerpted from "Investing in Women's Health: Central and Eastern Europe," World Health Organization, 1995 and WHO's "1995 Highlights on Women's Health in Europe."



Female Life Expectancy at Birth, 1993-94



CEE and the NIS have not enjoyed the consistent decline in mortality from cancer in females under 65 that has been found in other countries of the region since 1995.

The standardized death rate for female lung cancer in CEE is similar to the EU average of 6.48 deaths per 100,000 women under 65. As in the western countries of the region, the rate in CEE rose in the 1990s. Female lung cancer rates in the NIS, however, were low and stable, with 3 deaths per 100,000 in Tajikistan and 5 per 100,000 in Russia in 1991, possibly because of a lower smoking rate among women.

Mortality from cancer of the breast, in contrast to most other major causes of death among women, is lower in CEE and the NIS than the rest of the region. The EU average is 20 deaths per 100,000 women under 65, but the CEE average is 16 and the NIS average is 14.5. It appears, however, that breast cancer may more often reach an advanced stage before being detected. Estonia has reported that 30 to 40 percent of all new cases of breast cancer are advanced.

The rates for cervical cancer are among the highest in Europe: 7 per 100,000, compared with the EU average of 2.3. The NIS average is slightly lower than that of CEE. Cervical cancer is decreasing in the rest of Europe, mainly as a result of effective early detection and treatment.

Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality rates in the NIS are about twice those in CEE and about four times the average for the region. Maternal mortality in Romania and Albania fell dramatically after the legalization of abortion in 1989. Nevertheless, abortion remains a major cause of maternal mortality in both countries.

In 1990, the maternal mortality rate in Tajikistan was 42 per 100,000 live births; two years later it leapt to 83. In Georgia, the rate rose from 20.5 in 1990 to 50 in 1992. A portion of the increases is probably due to better reporting systems, but real increases in maternal mortality arise from deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, limited access to safe and effective health services and other factors. Still, it is important to note that at the same time, several nations report decreases in maternal mortality, such as Kyrgyzstan, whose rate went from 73 in 1990 to 43 in 1994.

Only in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, where most birth-related deaths are due to hemorrhage, is abortion not the primary cause of female deaths associated with pregnancy and birth.

Family Planning

Because of the reliance on abortion, awareness of family planning alternatives remains quite limited. Although most countries report a growing interest in contra-

ceptives, limited availability and cost remove them as viable options for many people. In a 1993 survey of St. Petersburg women, almost 34 percent said they use no contraception. A 1994 Centers for Disease Control study in Romania found that the most prevalent method of contraception is withdrawal (34 percent) followed by the calendar method (8 percent). Only 14.5 percent of the women studied used "modern contraception" such as birth control pills or intrauterine devices (IUDs).

Abortion remains the most frequently used means of family planning. In many CEE and NIS nations, the rate is as high as one abortion for each live birth. Data from 1992 show three abortions for each live birth in Romania. In St. Petersburg, the ratio rose from 2:1 in 1990 to 2.48:1 in 1992. Estonia's rate rose from 1.13:1 in 1990 to 1.5:1 in 1994. But in several Central Asian nations, the ratio of abortions to live births is dipping slightly: In Kyrgyzstan, the ratio dropped from .606:1 in 1990 to .588 in 1994. In Kazakhstan, the ratio was .975:1 in 1990 and .88:1 in 1994.

Lifestyles

Where information is available, the evidence shows that the prevalence of smoking is still far lower for women than for men. The relatively greater rates of death attributed to smoking among men as compared to women reflect the usually lower smoking prevalence among women. In Albania for example, 7 percent of women smoke, whereas 50 percent of men smoke. In Belarus, 37 percent of deaths of males ages 35 to 69 are attributed to smoking; only 1 percent of women in that age group died of causes related to smoking. However, it is feared that the targeting of young people, particularly young women, in tobacco advertising will lead to higher smoking rates among women.

While little is known about the rate of
See *Health Status*, page 24

15 Between tradition and modernity: the dilemma facing contemporary Central Asian women

SHIRIN AKINER

Introduction

By the end of the nineteenth century a huge part of Asia had been brought under Russian rule – in terms of surface area, a territory far larger than that encompassed by modern India. The indigenous population was almost entirely Muslim, of the Sunni sect. In the north (approximately equivalent to the territory of present-day Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and the south-west (present-day Turkmenistan), the local peoples followed a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life. Religion here tended to be syncretic, only superficially Islamicised. In the oasis-river belt of Transoxiana (present-day Uzbekistan and western Tadjikistan), there was an ancient urban culture. The cities in this region had long been famous as centres of Muslim scholarship. There were hundreds of *madrasah* (religious colleges) and thousands of (male) students of Islamic law. The focal point of the social as well as the religious life of the community was the mosque, at least one of which was to be found in every hamlet or town ward. Folk traditions and customs were inextricably intermingled with Islamic practices. At the popular level these were reinforced by the authority and prestige of representatives of the mystic orders – Sufi adepts, wandering dervishes (*kalendar*) and local holy men (*ishan*) – who were frequently credited with possessing supernatural powers of healing and soothsaying.

Under Soviet rule, Central Asia underwent an intensive process of modernisation. In effect, the region was wrenched out of Asia and thrust into Europe. Traditional culture was either destroyed or rendered invisible, confined to the most intimate and private spheres. In the public arena, new national identities were created, underpinned

262

Shirin Akiner

by newly fashioned languages and Western-style literatures and histories. Universal compulsory education was introduced, at first at primary level, later extended to secondary level; medical and social welfare networks were established, as a result of which health standards were greatly improved and average life expectancy raised by several years. Society was secularised: Islamic legal and educational institutions were abolished and Islamic beliefs and practices almost obliterated. Western-style cultural amenities such as museums, art galleries, opera and ballet companies and theatres took the place of traditional forms of artistic expression, thereby altering the social, cultural and intellectual environment. These and the many other changes that were set in motion at this time were ideologically driven and underwritten by major allocations of human and financial resources from the central government. This degree of official support (accompanied, from time to time, by ruthless coercion) enabled substantial progress to be achieved within a remarkably short period.

It was against this background of dynamic transformation that the campaign for female emancipation – or more precisely, for gender equality before the law, in the home, in education and at work – was launched. Thus, the struggle to redefine women's rights did not take place in a vacuum, but as part of a larger process, and was strengthened and amplified by other reforms that were implemented concurrently. The basic aims were underpinned by a variety of practical measures that gave substance to these new rights and opportunities for women. These might appear to have been optimum conditions in which to bring about a radical change in the position of Central Asian women. Yet this was only partially achieved: despite the very real improvement in facilities and range of choices, and the greater visibility of Central Asian women in public life, in the private sphere older patterns of behaviour continued to dominate gender relations. Soviet-style modernity was accepted by the indigenous population, but subtly transformed (or subverted) so as to accommodate traditional concepts of social order and propriety.

Today, since the collapse of the Soviet Union and consequent disintegration of the political and economic framework within which the modernisation of Central Asia was accomplished, many aspects of the Soviet legacy are being re-examined. In each of the newly independent states a new phase of nation building has been initiated and a redefinition of the national identity is under way. Traditional cultural and social values are now being emphasised and Islam is again beginning to play a prominent role in public life. At the same

time, this region, which until very recently had almost no direct access to non-Soviet sources of information, is suddenly experiencing a flood of exogenous influences: foreign films and publications, businessmen from all parts of the world, tourists, international civil servants, aid workers and missionaries (representing every shade of Islam and Christianity, as well as other faiths or sects such as the Baha'i and Hare Krishna) are introducing new ideas and helping to shape new aspirations. Attempts at economic and political reform are also creating an impetus for change.

The emancipation movement was one of the defining elements of the ideological construction of Soviet Central Asian identities. It is not surprising, therefore, that as part of the current, post-independence process of refashioning national identities, the validity of the Soviet view of gender relations is being called into question. However, the situation is in flux. It is by no means clear whether the newly independent Central Asian states, individually or as an integrated group, will choose to remain within the European socio-cultural orbit that they have inhabited for the past half century, or whether they will seek to associate themselves more closely with their earlier, Islamic/Asian heritage. Central Asian women themselves are caught between conflicting impulses: some feel the need to return to their 'authentic' roots, with a renewed emphasis on traditional domestic obligations; others, to continue along the road to greater personal independence and freedom of choice. The great majority, however, would like to retain the balance between tradition and modernity that was reached, slowly and sometimes painfully, during the Soviet period. The dilemma that now confronts Central Asian women, poised between two value systems, subscribing in part to both, but not wholly to either, can only be understood in the context of the rapid, enforced, and not fully internalised, transition from a pre-modern to a modern society. It is therefore necessary to take a broader chronological perspective when dealing with this region than with other parts of the former Soviet Union, where the discontinuities have not been so profound. Hence, this paper begins by briefly reviewing the position of Central Asian women in the pre-Soviet period; it then looks at the relevant aspects of the Soviet emancipation movement; and, finally, at the challenges that are confronting Central Asian women in the post-Soviet states.

The term 'Central Asian women' is here used to refer collectively to the women of the titular peoples of these states, namely, the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tadzhiks, Turkmen and Uzbeks. Ideally, were space to permit, each of these national groups should form the subject of a

separate study. However, they do still share a sufficient number of common features – in large part the legacy of a shared Soviet experience – for it to be possible to make some valid generalisation about their present situation. This may not continue to be the case in the future, but as yet the divergences are quite slight. The issues that affect the position of women in the settler communities are rather different and it is beyond the scope of this paper to consider these groups. Likewise, indigenous peoples such as the Bukharan Jews, who have a different cultural background from the majority of the population, are not covered here.

Central Asian women in pre-Soviet society

Central Asia was incorporated into the tsarist empire over a period of some 150 years, beginning with the creeping annexation of the Kazakh steppes in the early eighteenth century and ending with the subjugation of the Turkmen tribes in the deserts of the south in the late nineteenth century. Russian policies towards their new subjects varied over time and from one area to another, but, in general, they were less interventionist than those of other European colonial powers. The tsarist government was mainly concerned with the creation of an effective administrative apparatus and the development and exploitation of the economic potential of the region. The local rulers were generally deposed (in most cases to be coopted into the service of the new regime), but the emir of Bukhara and the khan of Khiva were allowed to retain semi-independent status. Even in the areas that came under direct Russian rule, there was very little interference with traditional institutions. In the legal sphere, the most serious crimes were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Russian courts, but in all other cases *sharia* (Islamic canon law) and *adat* (customary law) continued to regulate the lives of the indigenous population. Although some Russian and Russo-native schools were opened, education, too, remained predominantly Islamic.

Information on pre-Soviet Central Asian society (or more accurately, *societies*, since there were many different groupings, all of which had their own traditions and customs) is very sparse. Moreover, it is almost entirely confined to the 'outsider's' view, as recorded in the accounts of tsarist officials and ethnographers, West European and American travellers, and Soviet field researchers of the 1920s.¹ The evidence they present is valuable, but it is incomplete, and informed by very particular cultural biases. Inevitably, this has given rise to misunder-

standings and conditions. Indeed, such material generally reveals more about the prejudices and ideals of the writers than about Central Asian perceptions of their own society. However, despite the inadequacies of these sources, it is nevertheless important to review the picture they provide of Central Asian life at this period, since this construct has formed the basis for two, mutually contradictory, mythologising projects: that of the Soviet activists, who used it to promote a negative image of traditional society; and that of anti- and post-Soviet nationalists, who created from it an idealised image of a 'golden age', uncorrupted by Europeanising/Russifying influences, and hence an inspiration, if not a model, for the future development of the region.

In this period (that is, the nineteenth century), large extended families were the norm amongst nomads as well as sedentary peoples.² Several married groups, spanning at least two generations, would form a single entity, living, working and, in the case of the nomads, migrating, together. Marriages were arranged by close relatives in accordance with the rules of Islamic and customary law; neither the bride nor, generally, the bridegroom had any say in the choice of their future partner. There was frequently a considerable difference in age between husband and wife, since the financial obligations incurred by the male were very heavy, especially the payment of the 'bride price' (*kalym*); only young men from the wealthiest families could afford this. The minimum age set by Islamic law at which a girl could be given in marriage was nine years. Islamic law permitted a man to be wedded to up to four wives at any one time (on condition that all were treated equally), but local practice in some places allowed many more.³ Concubinage was also not uncommon. In theory, both husband and wife had the right to initiate a divorce, but in practice it was invariably the husband who took such action.

Female members of the family made an important contribution to the family economy, producing foodstuffs, clothing and furnishings. However, child-bearing was probably their most important function. Large numbers of sons were considered to be vital for the security and prosperity of the household, but proverbs suggest that daughters were regarded as a burden.⁴ Female mortality was very high;⁵ this was probably owing to frequent pregnancies starting from a very young age, but it is possible that girls were given less care and nourishment than boys. Medical help was minimal, for the most part restricted to the services of local holy men who were credited with supernatural healing powers, occasionally enhanced by some knowledge of traditional remedies.

In urban communities, girls and women led a segregated existence, contact with males being restricted to close relatives. Within the family home they had their own quarters; when they went out, they wore a cloak-like over-garment (*parandzha*) and a waist-length horse-hair veil (*chachvan*) which concealed their faces. In nomad and semi-nomad communities, and possibly in remoter settled areas, women were not veiled, although they did wear some form of headgear which also covered part of their upper body. They did not have segregated dwellings, but there was a strict division of labour which served to mark out the boundaries of male and female space. Given the paucity of source material, it is impossible to gain a coherent picture of regional, social and economic variations. It is generally supposed that women in nomad communities enjoyed a greater degree of freedom. This may not have been the case at the lower end of the social scale, but amongst the ruling elites, women appear to have been able to act with a substantial degree of autonomy.⁶ In settled communities, women were probably subjected to greater formal controls, although those who were skilled artisans could possibly acquire some independence through membership of craft guilds.⁷ By the early twentieth century, there were some facilities for the education of girls. For the most part, these took the form of elementary religious schools run by the wives of the local *mullah* (religious functionary). In middling and upper-class circles women received a fuller education; a few became accomplished literary figures in their own right.⁸

Almost nothing is known about intra-family relationships and the way in which they affected the position of women. By analogy with societies that have similar traditions (for example, in Afghanistan and Pakistan) and also with modern, post-Soviet family structures, it seems reasonable to assume that although there was strong patriarchal control, and overall gender asymmetry in terms of authority and prestige, within their own domain women had parallel hierarchies that were as rigidly ranked and almost as powerful as those of the male world. Moreover, as wives, and the mothers of sons, women would have been able to exert very considerable influence not only within the family unit, but also in external affairs.

Soviet gender politics

In the aftermath of the Russian revolution, Central Asia, as other parts of the tsarist empire, was swept by civil war. The main contenders were various Slav military and political factions, but in some areas

contingents of foreign (mainly British) interventionists played an active role; there were also nationalist movements that sought to establish autonomous states in Kazakhstan and Kokand, and amorous bands of rebels, known as *basmachi*, under the leadership of local warlords. By 1920, Soviet power had been firmly established in most areas, though the *basmachi* continued to offer a guerrilla-type resistance for almost a decade longer. They claimed to be fighting a 'holy war' in defence of Islam and traditional values. Although they only represented a serious military threat, their influence amongst the indigenous population was so strong, especially in the 1920s, that the Soviet authorities were forced to temper their reformist zeal with a degree of caution, and to delay for some years the full implementation of programmes such as the emancipation of women and the campaign against religion.

Nevertheless, a number of measures were introduced at this time which laid the foundations for later developments. The most important of these was the National Delimitation of 1924-5, whereby administrative-territorial units were created on the basis of the ethnogeographic affiliations of the main indigenous peoples. Two of these units, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, immediately acquired the status of full Union republics, while Tadzhikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were elevated to this status some years later. These formations were entirely new, with no basis either in the tsarist provincial divisions or in the pre-colonial khanates. The reasons for this exercise in territorial division are debatable, but certainly it was more successful in consolidating the main ethnic groups within a single unit than were similar boundary-drawing projects enacted by other colonial powers in Asia and Africa. Without any movement of peoples, an average of some 90 per cent of the Uzbeks, Turkmen, Kazakhs and Kyrgyz were included within the borders of their respective titular republics.⁹ The Tadzhiks fared less well: they were so closely intermingled with the Uzbeks that it was impossible to make an equitable territorial division of the land they both occupied; the new borders deprived them of the historic centres of Bukhara and Samarkand, and, as a result, over a third of the ethnic Tadzhiks were brought under Uzbek jurisdiction.¹⁰ In addition to the indigenous Central Asian peoples, there was already a sizeable Slav (mainly Russian) presence in the region;¹¹ the percentage share of the titular people in the total population of each of these republics decreased during the first decades of the Soviet period owing to the constant influx of migrants from other parts of the Soviet Union, especially from the European

republics.¹² This helped to dilute further the traditional culture and to accelerate the process of social and economic change.

Creating the legal and operational infrastructure

Ideologically, the campaign for the emancipation of Central Asian women grew out of Russian Marxist feminism, drawing inspiration and moral support from leading activists such as Nadezhda Krupskaya, Klara Zetkin, Inessa Armand and Aleksandra Kollontai (who is sometimes credited with being the instigator of the movement in Central Asia).¹³ The project was organised and monitored by the central organs of the Communist Party in Moscow. From the earliest days of Soviet rule it was regarded as a strategic priority. There were three main reasons for this. Firstly, there was genuine horror and disgust at the social injustice: to Russian eyes, the treatment of Central Asian women in traditional society seemed tantamount to slavery. Secondly, there was a political imperative to create a 'surrogate proletariat' to engage in the class war and also the related war against religion.¹⁴ Thirdly, there was an economic necessity to draw women into socialised production.

During the first years of the emancipation campaign (c. 1918-26), the main emphasis was on the creation of an organisational infrastructure. One aspect of this was to establish a legal framework that codified women's rights, as well as the measures that could be used to enforce them. Islamic courts, using the *sharia* and *adat* legal systems, functioned alongside Soviet courts until 1928, but their powers were circumscribed and in some areas of family law they ceased to have any jurisdiction in the early 1920s. Laws and decrees passed by the state took precedence over the provisions of all other codes. In 1918, the official registration of marriages, births and deaths was made compulsory. Also, the option of having recourse to Soviet divorce law instead of the *sharia* code was introduced, in an effort to give women greater protection. Between 1921 and 1923, laws were passed banning such practices as polygamy, the payment of *kalym* and marriage without the consent of the bride; the minimum age for marriage for girls was set at sixteen years, for boys at eighteen years. Any violation of these laws was treated as a criminal act and subject to severe penalties. The land and water reforms of 1925-9 gave women an independent entitlement to a share of these resources, thereby emphasising their autonomous status in law and in society. Great efforts were made to publicise these new legal provisions: the laws were translated into the

cal languages and the texts disseminated widely. Public meetings and rallies were held to explain women's civil and constitutional rights. Moreover, Central Asian women were urged to take an active part in the legal process. Several were given basic training in Soviet law and attached to the courts as People's Assessors. Later, longer courses were provided and towards the end of the 1930s they began to enter the judiciary.¹⁵

Another aspect of the work of these years was the training of local cadres. The first activists were almost all young Russian communists;¹⁶ few of them had any knowledge of the local languages or customs. Gradually, however, from about 1925 onwards, they were joined by Central Asian supporters. These were mostly young girls from poor backgrounds who, for one reason or another, had become isolated from their families; they joined the Communist Party and became actively involved in the emancipation movement.¹⁷ By 1920, a number of women's sections (zhenotdely) of the Communist Party had been organised in Central Asia. At first they made little impact on the lives of the indigenous population, but they were later to play an important role in strengthening and consolidating the emancipation movement. Much of the practical support and training for Central Asian women in this period of transition was channelled through these bodies; they also acted as watchdog committees, monitoring working conditions and ensuring that local officials and employees fulfilled their statutory obligations towards women. They were likewise responsible for ideological education and were much involved in consciousness-raising activities among the local women.

One of the most important areas of the work of the women's sections was the organisation of social clubs exclusively for women. Here they were able to provide a secluded, protected environment in which Central Asian women could feel at ease outside their own homes. The first such club was established in the old quarter of Tashkent in 1924; others soon appeared throughout the region, even in remote, rural areas.¹⁸ The clubs offered a range of medical, legal and educational services; other activities included sewing and reading circles; amateur dramatics, devoted mainly to the performance of playlets on contemporary themes; consultations on nutrition, hygiene and child care; and also lectures, film shows and concerts.¹⁹ Given the very controlled and segregated conditions of female existence in Central Asia at the time, the clubs were a remarkable innovation. They represented the first tentative step towards women's full participation in public life.

Cast off the veil

The decision to intensify the emancipation campaign by initiating the mass unveiling of Central Asian women was taken in Moscow in the autumn of 1926.²⁰ The organisation and preparatory propaganda work was delegated to specially constituted regional party committees, but the overall strategy continued to be formulated and directed by the central authorities. By this time some 25,000 Central Asians had joined the party and almost 55,000 were members of the Young Communist League; thus there was a body of 'shock troops' in place to carry out the operation.²¹ In Uzbek it was known as the *khudzhum* (the attack), and indeed it was conceived in terms of a military exercise. The key target areas were the densely populated cities of Uzbekistan, where the practice of wearing the veil was most deeply entrenched.

The first large-scale public displays of unveiling took place in 1927, on International Women's Day (8 March). Preliminary estimates claimed that on that one day 8,500 had cast off their *parandzha* and *chachvan* and ceremonially incinerated them on giant bonfires.²² In reality, the figure of those who unveiled was far lower; moreover, of those who did make this gesture, many, including several Young Communist League members, redonned the veil the following day. However, this did not deter the party-state authorities. The wearing of the veil was not banned by law (although some activists were in favour of this), but a variety of so-called 'administrative' measures were used to further the campaign. Special privileges were given to women who discarded the veil; the husbands of those who did not were liable to be penalised.²³ In some enterprises it was a condition of employment that women should be unveiled. On occasion, more ruthless methods were used; women were intimidated into unveiling, or unveiled by force.²⁴ Meanwhile, there was ceaseless ideological indoctrination through newspaper articles, films, posters, lectures and even house-to-house visits.²⁵ The results of these efforts was that by the mid-1930s it was increasingly rare to see a fully veiled woman. However, in country areas or in the old quarters of the cities, women continued to cover their heads and shoulders with large headscarves.

The *khudzhum* was a definitive episode in the social transformation of the region. To the Russians, the *parandzha* symbolised everything that they were fighting to eradicate: oppression, ignorance, injustice and human degradation.²⁶ However, from the little contemporary and circumstantial evidence that is available, it would seem that, for

Central Asians, the veil had a very different range of associations. It was a protection against unwanted contact with strangers and also against the physical grime of the environment. It could be, too, a status symbol, indicating social standing.²⁷ Most importantly of all, it was a statement about the fundamental ordering of society: the nature of gender relations, the division between public and private space, the conventions of civility. For the Russians, the success of the *khudzhum* was an ideological victory. For the Central Asians, it was a defeat and a brutal rape: the honour and dignity of the community was suddenly and monstrously violated. No other measure of Soviet policy – not the closure of the mosques, the sedentarisation of the nomads, collectivisation or the purges – provoked such violent and outspoken resistance. Even senior party officials at first refused to allow their wives to unveil.²⁸ Women who did throw off the *parandzha* were often rejected by their families. More than a thousand unveiled women were murdered, either by their relatives or by the *basmachi*, in these years.²⁹ It was not, however, only men who were opposed to the *khudzhum*. Published Soviet sources generally present the reaction of Central Asian women to the campaign to cast off the veil in very enthusiastic terms. Occasionally, though, there are hints that there were some who were prepared to speak out openly against it.³⁰ However, the terror that was unleashed in the 1930s effectively put an end to any further opposition. The trauma of the *khudzhum* was suppressed, buried in the sub-conscious, as were so many of the other tragedies of this period. A new generation of women grew up in a world in which Soviet values had already become the accepted norm: for them, the discarding of the veil took on the significance of a rite of passage that marked the entry into a new era of progress and enlightenment. Concomitantly, the former way of life was made to seem very remote, alien and primitive, an attitude which facilitated the inculcation of a negative evaluation of traditional society as a whole.

Political and economic mobilisation

The Soviet authorities regarded education as an essential component of political and economic mobilisation. In Central Asia, in the early 1920s, the level of literacy amongst the indigenous peoples (as estimated in Soviet sources) ranged from an average 7 per cent amongst the Kazakhs, to just over 2 per cent amongst the Turkmen and Tadzhiks; in rural areas it was lower, and amongst women, scarcely above 1 per cent. One of the first priorities of the new state

was to remedy this situation. Special ABC (*likbez*) courses were set up in railway coaches, tents, factories and every other conceivable venue. Great efforts were made to reach the female population. The women's sections were especially active in this field, but the trade unions (*profsoiuzy*), Young Communist League and other socio-political organisations also contributed to the campaign. At the same time, the network of schools and teacher-training colleges was expanded, while the Islamic educational institutions were gradually phased out; by 1927, the entire educational system had been Sovietised.³¹ In the larger towns and cities most of the schools were co-educational, but in rural areas many families refused to allow their daughters to attend mixed establishments. Fully integrated education was not achieved until the 1930s.

Primary schooling was made compulsory for boys and girls alike by about 1930. This was later expanded to an eight-year (incomplete secondary) course;³² eventually an optional two to three years (higher secondary) were added. Central Asian girls began to embark upon tertiary education in significant numbers in the late 1930s and thereafter to enter the professions, particularly law, medicine, teaching and scientific research. Nevertheless, in the 1970s the proportion of Central Asian women with higher education was still considerably lower than the average for the Soviet Union as a whole.³³ The chief obstacle to raising the level of attainment was the tendency of Central Asian girls to leave school early in order to marry. Some later returned to full- or part-time education, but the majority did not progress beyond the minimum school-leaving qualifications.

School was not only the place where a general educational programme was provided; it was also the channel through which the values and goals of communism could be inculcated in the younger generation. The educational process was also used to challenge inherited conventions regarding the role of women in society. As one former Soviet citizen put it, 'they constantly told us that women must be fully equal with men, that women can be flyers and naval engineers and anything that men can be'.³⁴ Central Asian girls were encouraged not only to study, but also to take part in physical training and team sports; in performing arts such as ballet, acting (on stage and in films) and singing; and in occupations requiring technical skills such as tractor driving. Perhaps nothing so vividly illustrates the changes that were taking place at this time as the appearance, in the 1930s, of the first female parachutists in a society in which only ten years previously women had been heavily veiled.³⁵

During the same period, energetic efforts were made to involve Central Asian women in the political-administrative process. Female delegates were elected to represent their communities in public meetings at local and republican level. Activists were sent for training to the Communist University, the Turkic School of Soviet and Party Work and other such institutions.³⁶ In the early 1920s, Central Asian women began to join the party, some no doubt impelled by idealism and belief in the reform programme, but others by a realisation of the practical benefits that would accrue from such a move. In percentage terms their participation remained low, but actual numbers were quite high, given their lack of previous political experience; in Uzbekistan, for example, by the beginning of 1929 there were over 1,000 Uzbek women party members.

In response to Lenin's injunction that more women should be elected to the soviets, Central Asian women gradually came forward to stand as candidates. However, progress was slow; not only were the women reluctant to take part in elections, but there was much covert opposition from the male members of the community. Nevertheless, the authorities continued to press for an improvement in the situation. There was a constant monitoring of the proportion of women in senior managerial posts, and shortcomings as well as successes in this field were widely publicised.³⁷ Positive discrimination was used to accelerate promotion and a quota system was introduced whereby women were allocated approximately a third of the posts in government and in party-administrative organs. This, along with the effusive public acclaim that was accorded to women's achievements in other fields such as the arts, sports and science, provided a high degree of female visibility in society. It created a range of positive, 'progressive' role models with whom Central Asian girls could identify.

Another important aspect of the political mobilisation of Central Asian women in these years was their role in the anti-Islamic campaign. Since women were regarded as the chief victims of religious oppression, it was they who were selected to take a leading part in the campaign to eradicate Islam. The *mullahs* were equated with the wealthy peasants and represented as both class enemies and the enemies of progress. Branches of the Godless League (later renamed the 'Militant Godless League') were set up in all the Central Asian republics. They grew rapidly in the frenzied, fear-dominated atmosphere of the day. In Uzbekistan, for example, in 1928, 3,500 Uzbek women were members of the League; by 1931, the number had

reached 27,000. Anti-religious circles were set up in most enterprises and about 80 per cent of the members were local women.³⁸

The result of this onslaught was that knowledge of the religion was reduced to a minimum. Almost all that survived were some of the rituals connected with the major life-cycle ceremonies (male circumcision and burial rites, for example), and some semi-folk, semi-Islamic practices such as visits to the graves of revered individuals, where prayers and sacrifices were offered up in the hope of securing benediction. Women remained active in keeping such informal aspects of Islam alive. So far as more orthodox beliefs and practices were concerned, some of the older generation of women continued to perform as best they could some of the prescribed ritual prayers and to observe at least a part of the fast of Ramadan. However, few of the generation that grew up after the Second World War maintained this tradition. Islamic prohibitions on the consumption of pork products and alcohol were increasingly disregarded by Central Asian men, many of whom spent most of their working lives in multi-ethnic environments, where they were under constant pressure to conform to the norms of Soviet society; women, however, protected by the privacy of their homes, were able to observe these dietary laws more strictly.³⁹

The first steps to draw women into socialised labour were made through women's cooperatives. These were organised in the early 1920s, and represented a half-way stage, enabling women to continue practising their traditional tasks, such as weaving, sewing and dairying, but outside the family home, in a group environment and for financial reward. Special shops and consumer cooperatives were set up through which women could sell their products directly, without the intervention of middlemen.⁴⁰ Towards the end of the decade there was a proliferation of light industrial enterprises, and increasing numbers of local women found work in factories concerned with food-processing, silk-spinning and the production of garments and hosiery. Heavy industry was developed somewhat later, but relatively few female workers were employed in this sector since conditions were considered to be unsuitable for women for physical as well as psychological reasons.

By contrast, the agricultural sector was regarded as eminently suitable for female labour and a concerted effort was made to draw Central Asian women into the work-force. In the north, this was mainly devoted to various forms of animal husbandry, while in the south, the chief areas were cotton cultivation and silk-worm breeding.

Women's involvement in the development of the cotton-growing industry was the most problematic area, and subsequently attracted much adverse criticism. By 1934, women were involved in almost all aspects of the production of the cotton crop; however, the majority were employed on a seasonal basis for the back-breaking job of harvesting the cotton by hand.⁴¹ Their achievements in helping to secure 'cotton independence' for the Soviet Union were praised in the mass media and those who exceeded their set norms were rewarded with medals and special privileges. The other side of the coin was that work conditions in the plantations were very arduous and that the women were, in effect, used as human tools.

Central Asian girls were taught that it was their right, and also their duty, to seek useful and gainful employment in the public sector. As adults, most of them were to have some experience of work outside the home, but the period of employment was often quite limited, owing to the almost continuous cycle of child-bearing and child-rearing. Moreover, the goal of gender equality at work was never fully attained. Here, as in other parts of the Soviet Union (and in many other countries, too), employers were reluctant to take on female workers on the grounds that they were less productive than their male counterparts; there were also complaints about the length of the statutory maternity leave. Women were frequently (and illegally) paid less for the same work as men; they were also not given as many opportunities for in-service training to raise their qualifications.⁴² As a result, many remained trapped in low-paid, unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. This made them vulnerable to redundancy when more efficient technology was introduced.⁴³

The main motivation for the economic mobilisation of Central Asian women was undoubtedly the need to boost the labour force at a time of major industrial and agricultural expansion. However, it was seen, too, as a means of reinforcing the emancipation movement, since it gave women the possibility of achieving financial independence through waged work. It also provided them with an opportunity to experience new conditions, and to come into direct contact with people from different social and ethnic backgrounds. In most parts of the world, the move to paid employment outside the home has had an important impact on the way women regard themselves, as well as on their position in the family and in the broader community. In Central Asia, however, this did not happen to any significant degree. There was scarcely any redefinition of gender roles, scarcely any extension of the traditional kin-based networks of friendship, solidarity and support.

This is less surprising than it might at first appear: Central Asian women (and men), confronted with the headlong pace of change in the public sphere, reacted by holding on yet more firmly to the order they knew in the domestic sphere, where they had a greater degree of control. Thus, Central Asian women did not in fact assume the role of a revolutionary force to destroy traditional society. Rather, they colluded in its preservation: by accommodating external pressures through the adoption of additional identities, appropriate to the public sphere, they deflected intrusions into the private domain, thereby protecting the integrity of the older disposition of family roles. This is not to imply that the public identities were a sham; on the contrary, all the indications are that they were the product of genuinely held perceptions and aspirations. However, they were confined to one area and were not permitted to penetrate beyond that space, and thus could not bring about the radical change of society that had been anticipated.

Family and community

Family and community relations were (and remain) the most conservative areas of Central Asian society. Even in cities, amongst the most educated and travelled groups, there was relatively little structural change during the Soviet period; in rural areas, social conventions were even more strongly preserved. Hence, there were perceptible continuities with the pre-Soviet period. The extended family networks remained powerful. The actual size of cohabiting units fell sharply, owing to such pressures as the nature and availability of accommodation, changes in employment patterns (including, of course, collectivisation) and the general regimentation and homogenisation of life under Soviet rule. Nevertheless, close contact was retained amongst the members of the larger family even when they were physically dispersed through frequent (wherever possible, daily) visits and telephone calls.⁴⁴ Adult sons would often continue to live at home even after they had married. In such cases, it remained customary for them to hand over their wages, as well as any earnings of their wives, to the head of the family to use as he pleased. The absolute authority of the father was mirrored by the less formal, though perhaps psychologically yet more compelling, authority of the mother. In accordance with the Islamic precept, 'Happiness lies at the feet of the mother', sons treated their mothers with huge respect, regarding her every word as a sacrosanct command. This honoured

status gave her as great a degree of control over their lives, and over the lives of their dependents, as she herself wished to exercise.

Within the family unit there was a high degree of order. This expressed itself through a strong, almost ritualised, code of civility which regulated every aspect of behaviour. Children were socialised in this environment to accept their place in the hierarchical structure, with the attendant obligations, responsibilities and privileges. Constructions of masculinity and femininity were internalised at this stage and gender roles assigned. A strong sense of sibling solidarity was fostered, as well as respect and affection for the older members of the family. Habits of obedience, conformity and submission were fostered in girls and boys alike; the latter may have had greater freedom of action outside the home, but within the family both genders were equally bound by strict conventions. Discipline was maintained through positive encouragement in the form of praise and little gifts. Corporal punishment was very rare: patriarchal authority was clearly enough understood, even by very young children, for a warning tone of voice and a stern demeanour to serve as a sufficient reprimand. There was still a residual preference for sons, though in terms of care, affection and opportunities, daughters no longer appeared to be less privileged than sons.

On marriage, brides moved to the patrilocal residence. From the outset, they were expected to conform to the conventions of their husband's home. Attitudes towards the newcomer were often harsher and more demanding than towards the children of the family. For the young bride, the mother-in-law's word was final. If there was a dispute, the husband would almost always side with his mother, even if he sympathised with his wife's position, and this could cause the young bride to feel very isolated. Her defencelessness was underlined by the fact that her husband would normally take control of any money she might earn, giving back to her only what he considered to be an adequate allowance (thereby defeating the Soviet aim to give women economic independence through waged work). A girl would often not be able to visit her family without her husband's permission. In case of a complete marital breakdown, however, she would normally return to her parental home. There was no social stigma attached to divorce or to remarriage. A wife's status in the family improved with time, with the birth of children, also with the arrival of other daughters-in-law, the wives of younger sons. Initially, the experience of learning to live in the new household could be difficult. However, there was usually a great deal of encouragement and

support from other female members (including, sometimes, the mother-in-law herself) and normally the bride was assimilated into the new environment quite quickly.

Community relations usually involved extended kin-networks as well as neighbours. There was a high level of group solidarity, reinforced through numerous joint activities. The practical preparations for such events as a wedding or a wake were undertaken by the community as a whole, thus relieving the strain on the individual family. These were often huge affairs, requiring vast quantities of food (80 kg each of meat and rice were not uncommon provisions), chairs, tables, crockery, and pots and pans. The utensils and furniture were all provided from the communal stock. Women, whatever their status and professional qualifications, would take their place at the stove and the chopping board. These occasions provided an important opportunity for gossip to be exchanged, a family's reputation and standing in the community to be monitored, problems to be aired, and advice to be given and received. Thus, the community helped to offset the possible isolation of family life. In cases of major family disputes, the senior female of the community would act as counsellor and arbitrator, guiding the different sides towards a compromise. The community also provided additional opportunities for socialising children in traditional values, supervising them when they were out of the home and reinforcing habits of civility, consideration and courtesy. The positive aspect of community life was that it provided a highly effective, informal and very sensitive social security network. The negative aspect was that it was very difficult to escape from its all-embracing control.

Marriage and fertility

It has become an accepted axiom, confirmed by evidence from all over the world, that rises in female literacy rates are accompanied by a decrease in birth rates. Central Asian women, however, have to date proved to be an exception to this rule. Under Soviet rule the crude birth rate remained very high. Consequently, the age structure of the titular peoples of the Central Asian republics continued to conform to the model of the broad-based demographic pyramids of countries such as India, Kenya and Nigeria, with well over half the population under twenty years of age. There are a number of reasons why this pattern was maintained, but principally it was the result of a convergence between pro-natalist attitudes in traditional and Soviet society.

Custom, mediated through family and peer pressure, ensured that

marriage, preferably at an early age, remained the natural goal for Central Asian girls.⁴⁵ As in the past, children were regarded as a blessing, the foundation of the family's happiness and prosperity. Moreover, within the family unit, the young wife's status was to a large extent still determined by the number of children, especially boys, that she produced. At the same time, with improved medical care, female life expectancy rose and hence the period of fertility was extended. Since infant mortality was likewise reduced, the result was a high level of natural increase. The financial strain of a large family was relieved by the state provision of child and maternity allowances. The lump sum allocation at birth, as well as the monthly welfare benefit, increased in accordance with the number of children. Thus, a mother who had only one child received a considerably smaller sum for that one child than she did for her fourth or fifth child; for the eleventh child and above, the benefits were quite large.⁴⁶ In the European republics, where wages were generally higher and families smaller, these allowances were not of great importance. In Central Asia, however, they could constitute a substantial contribution to the family budget.

There were also other forms of state support for motherhood. There was a statutory obligation for employers to provide sixteen weeks' paid maternity leave, as well as entitlements to further unpaid maternity leave without loss of job or seniority. The status of motherhood was reified by the ceremonial award of honours, medals and privileges. The highest rank, that of 'Heroine Mother', was bestowed on those who had borne and reared ten or more children. In Uzbekistan alone, by 1987 over 100,000 women had been given this title; over a million had been awarded the order 'Mother's Glory' (seven to nine children) and over 2 million that of 'Medal of Maternity' (five or six children).⁴⁷ The holders of these honours were treated with great respect, their maternal achievements noted in the press and praised in party reports, alongside accounts of industrial and agricultural successes. Thus, motherhood, or rather, the child-bearing aspect of motherhood, was set on a par with other important contributions to society. By contrast, the domestic routine of child-rearing was regarded as an obstacle to full emancipation, hence to be eradicated as soon as possible through the provision of a full range of socialised welfare services. In fact, this goal was not realised and Central Asian women continued to be childrearers as well as child-bearers for a large portion of their lives.

In addition to these pro-natalist measures, there were other factors

which also helped to perpetuate the tradition of large families. Clo knit kinship networks ensured that there were generally other females available to help with child care and other domestic chores.⁴⁸ Women who wished to pursue professional careers, therefore, did not have to make a choice between having a family or continuing to work. At the same time, the close proximity of senior relatives meant that they were able to exert continued psychological pressure on the younger wives to produce children.⁴⁹ This, coupled with a high level of ignorance about sexual matters, very little medical counselling on family planning and a very inadequate supply of contraceptives, meant that even those who wished to limit their pregnancies were unable to do so.

Ill-health, domestic violence and self-immolation

For most of the Soviet period the campaign for the emancipation of Central Asian women was described in very positive terms, with great emphasis on the achievements, and a glossing-over of mistakes and unfulfilled goals. In the mid-1980s, however, during the period of perestroika and glasnost, a more critical attitude began to emerge.⁵⁰ One of the issues that attracted wide coverage, both in Moscow and in the Central Asian republics, was the use of harmful substances to sustain the cotton monoculture, and the effect that this was having on the health of the workforce, the great majority of whom were women and schoolchildren (who every autumn spent several weeks assisting with the cotton harvest). It was revealed that a highly toxic chemical, similar to Agent Orange, was being used to defoliate the cotton. Immediately after the spraying had been completed, women and children were sent into the fields to pick the cotton with their bare hands, without any protective clothing. Another malpractice was the use of huge quantities of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides to boost the yield; these then leached into the soil and water and in turn contaminated the food chain.⁵¹ Concerns were voiced at this time as to the possible long-term effects of measures such as these on the health of the population. Some feared that irreparable damage had already been inflicted on their immune systems; the term 'ecological AIDS' was coined to describe this condition.

Some of these reports undoubtedly owed more than a little to journalistic licence. There was also an element of political manipulation, with this and other examples of environmental mismanagement being used by the liberal-reformist lobby as a stick with which to beat the Soviet system as a whole. Until further, unbiased, medical research

has been carried out it will be impossible to assess the full gravity of the situation. It is, nevertheless, beyond dispute that there was gross exploitation of women and children and that this was causing major health problems.

More attention also began to be paid to shortcomings in the domestic sphere. As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, there was criticism of the heavy 'double shift' of work that women had to endure. In Central Asia, the burden was the more onerous owing to the prevalence of large families, relatively low provision of communal amenities such as crèches, canteens and laundries, and, outside the main cities, the chronic scarcity of labour-saving devices such as washing machines and electric vacuum cleaners.⁵² Concerns were voiced, too, about the dangers of frequent, closely spaced pregnancies and the debilitating effect this was having on the physical and mental well-being of Central Asian women, as well as on the health of the nation as a whole. The question of family planning began to be raised in public in the second half of the 1980s, though was soon dropped on account of strong local opposition.⁵³

At this time, there was also some discussion of the psychological pressures that were inflicted on women within the confines of the family. There was little specific mention of physical violence, but anecdotal evidence suggested that it was quite widespread, indicating that it was an accepted, or at least acknowledged, feature of marital behaviour. The one aspect of domestic violence that did come to light was the horrifying and baffling incidence of suicide by self-immolation. According to official sources, in Uzbekistan, in one year alone (1986-7), 270 girls and young women killed themselves in this way.⁵⁴ It was generally agreed that the actual figure was probably far higher and that many such deaths were being passed off as accidents. The phenomenon appeared to be limited to Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan.

Some commentators believed that it was the relentless drudgery of women's lives, compounded by oppressive patriarchal attitudes in the family, that were to blame; others sought an explanation in a possible nutritional deficiency (a lack of protein, for example), which might cause depression and disorientation. It was also suggested that the practice might have its origins in some form of religious belief. However, Islam is categorically opposed to suicide. The more ancient faith of Zoroastrianism, which in pre-Islamic times had many adherents in Central Asia, did involve the practice of fire-worship, but the flame was regarded as holy and pure, not to be defiled by any form of live sacrifice. Animistic cults regarded fire as a cleansing force, but

there is no evidence that they sanctioned human immolation. Interviews with the local population revealed a wide variety of reasons, or at least triggers, ranging from persistent bed-wetting among young teenagers to quarrels with best friends; from aspersions cast on the virginity of a young bride to arguments over the payment of the bride price. The method of death, by the girl dousing herself with oil, then setting it alight, was excruciatingly painful; the very few who survived were dreadfully disfigured. Yet this did not seem to act as a deterrent, but rather as a goad to others to take more care with the preparations. Visitors to areas where there had been recent instances of self-immolation described an atmosphere of contagious, almost physically palpable hysteria.⁵⁵ Whether this phenomenon was in any way provoked or stimulated by conditions that were specific to the Soviet regime must be a matter of speculation. What it does indicate, however, is that even after more than sixty years of Soviet rule, there were areas of Central Asian life that were still unknown and unfathomable to outsiders.

Post-Soviet readjustments

The Central Asians acquired political independence not as a result of a struggle for national independence, but as a consequence of the disintegration of the imperial power. In January 1992, the governments of the new states inherited, almost literally overnight, direct responsibility for a formidable array of problems. Other former Soviet republics encountered similar difficulties, but in Central Asia the situation was rendered more acute by a number of factors that were specific to the region. One of these was the high level of specialisation in the production of primary commodities and the relatively low level of industrialisation; these republics were thus more dependent on inter-republican exchanges than were other regions. They were also poorer and therefore more reliant on budgetary transfers from the central government to help support their welfare services. The geographic location of these states, surrounded by steppes, deserts and mountains, and over a thousand kilometres in any direction from an open sea, was an added disadvantage. Moreover, the transport and communication links that had been developed during the Soviet period tied the region to Russia; there were virtually no direct connections of any sort with the world beyond the borders of the Union.

The difficulties of transition from Soviet republics to independent

states are today being compounded by social problems. The rapid rate of demographic increase is placing ever greater pressure on the resources of the new states. There is a high ratio of dependents to wage-earners, thus the rise in unemployment has affected the living standards of a wider section of the population than in the European regions of the CIS, where families are far smaller. The economic deterioration has likewise contributed to a heightening of inter-ethnic tensions. The settler communities feel threatened and many thousands have chosen to emigrate. In some ways this has helped to defuse the situation, but the sudden loss of large numbers of senior managers and technical personnel has inflicted substantial damage on the nascent post-Soviet national economies of the region.

The most potentially dangerous effect of the collapse of the Soviet Union was that it created an ideological vacuum. It was not only that the economic and administrative framework within which the modern Central Asian states had been developed abruptly ceased to exist, but that the theoretical justification for their formation was discredited. Consequently, the physical boundaries of the new states, and even the validity of the national identities that had been crafted during the Soviet period, were suddenly open to question. The result could have been the instant Balkanisation of the region. However, with the exception of Tadjikistan (arguably the most flawed of the Soviet nation-building projects), this has not happened. The instinctive response to the threat of chaos has been a reassertion of the most conservative features of society. There has been no transfer of power to new leaders: on the contrary, it is because of their links with the previous regime that incumbent ruling elites are regarded as guarantors of stability. Equally, the majority of the population are prepared to accept a high degree of authoritarian control in order to guard against the perceived danger of social and regional fragmentation.

In all the Central Asian states, some appearance of political pluralism is currently permitted, but in reality, only those parties that support government policies are granted official registration. Genuine opposition movements have been suppressed, either, as in Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and Turkmenistan, by formal bans, or, as in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, by indirect, but scarcely less effective, controls (for instance, by restricting access to the media or creating obstacles to registration). Yet even without these curbs, it is unlikely that dissident groups would attract much support. In the late 1980s, their efforts to draw attention to political and social abuses were welcomed, but today they are regarded as perilously divisive. The emphasis now is on

conformity and solidarity. A form of self-censorship has re-emerged, stifling the discussion of potentially controversial questions. Thus, for example, it is acceptable to discuss mother and child welfare, since these are matters that relate to the health of the nation as a whole; moreover, problems in these areas can be blamed (with some justification) on the shortcomings of the Soviet system. Domestic violence or the phenomenon of female self-immolation, however, are issues which do not fit easily into the idealised image of traditional family life; also, they cannot easily be resolved without the public examination of questions that are still regarded as essentially private, falling within the domain of the patriarchal family. They are therefore treated, as in the pre-perestroika period, as taboo subjects.

New parameters for gender relations

Nation-building projects in the newly independent Central Asian states are drawing on three main elements: the reinstatement of Islamic values as the guiding ethic for society; the rearticulation of the national culture by such means as the rewriting of the historical narrative to establish linkages between the pre-colonial past and the post-Soviet present, and the reviving of 'authentic' traditional institutions, symbols and concepts of propriety; and the reassertion of patriarchal authority through the symbolic identification of the head of state as the 'Father of the Nation'. All three elements are contributing to a redefinition of the parameters of gender relations.

The Islamic resurgence in Central Asia began in the 1970s with the emergence of a small-scale revivalist movement in the Fergana Valley (eastern Uzbekistan, southern Kyrgyzstan, northern Tadjikistan). A second and stronger impetus was provided by a sudden shift in government policy towards Islam. Previously, Islam had been condemned as a pernicious force, inimical to progress. At the end of the 1980s, however, there was evidence of a more conciliatory attitude. This was partly the result of a greater tolerance to religion throughout the Soviet Union, but was also an attempt to combat the perceived threat of Iranian influence by fostering a sense of pride in an indigenous Islamic tradition. More mosques were opened in 1989 than in the whole of the previous decade, the public celebration of Islamic feast days was given official support, and copies of the Qur'an and records and cassettes of Qur'anic recitations suddenly began to appear in state-run kiosks. The number of Soviet Muslims allowed to perform the *hajj* (prescribed annual pilgrimage to Mecca) rose from

thirty in 1989 to 1,500 in 1990, and, in general, links with Muslims in other countries increased. These measures did not result in a mass return to religion, but they did reintroduce Islam into the public arena. Islamic symbols and references became an accepted part of life: Muslim clerics were accorded a new respect and invited to contribute to the process of *perestroika*.⁵⁶

After independence, the re-Islamicisation of the social environment was used as a substitute for the liberation struggle that had not taken place. There was a triumphalist fervour in the rash of mosque building that took place in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Turkmenistan, for example, there were only four mosques open for worship in the 1980s; by 1994, there were 181, with 100 or more at the planning stage; in Uzbekistan there were 300 in 1989, but over 5,000 by 1993.⁵⁷ There was a similar proliferation of mosques in the other republics. Schools and voluntary bodies began to teach the Arabic script (abolished in Central Asia in 1930) and to give instruction in reading the Qur'an. *Madrassah* and Islamic cultural centres were opened throughout the region. The finance for these undertakings was provided jointly by local Muslim communities, district authorities and charitable donations from Muslims abroad.

Today, although most Central Asians welcome the reintroduction of Islam into the public space, the majority do not want it to assume a regulative function: they still feel strongly that religion and the state should be separate. Nevertheless, a core of active and committed believers has begun to emerge. Quite a large proportion are from villages and provincial towns, or the poorer quarters of the capital cities, but there is also a substantial number of university students and young professionals. The proportion of women who actively espouse an Islamic way of life is as yet very small in relation to the total population of each of the five states. However, the fact that they have so categorically rejected the Soviet model of female emancipation (and likewise the more recently proffered Western versions) has a significance that goes far beyond mere numbers. Some interpret it as a portent of an imminent mass return to Islam. It is too early to predict whether or not this will happen, but certainly there has been an upsurge in the demand for a Muslim education for girls. In response to this, several women's *madrassah* have been opened and courses at some of the men's *madrassah* now accept women.⁵⁸ Women are also beginning to go abroad for further training to Islamic universities in Turkey, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries.

Muslim women's organisations in Central Asia have not so far been very successful. Fledgling 'Leagues of Muslim Women' were founded in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan soon after independence. However, the Kazakh organisation collapsed within months, owing to financial improprieties in the handling of its accounts; the other two groups are now also moribund. Schoolgirls and young university students have begun to wear the *hejab* (Muslim headscarf) and ankle- and wrist-length clothes, but this practice is still rare, especially in the cities; in the Ferghana Valley, a few of the older women have resumed the full *parandzha*.⁵⁹ As yet, however, the veil is still regarded as a symbol of a personal commitment to Islam. It has not become politicised as has been the case elsewhere.

While some women are certainly adopting an Islamic way of life of their own volition, in some areas there is a growing tendency for men to impose Islamic norms on women. This is most noticeable in the Ferghana Valley and in Tadzhikistan. Here it is men who set the standards for female modesty in behaviour and dress. It is also the men who decide whether or not women should be allowed to attend the mosque or to play an active role in religious undertakings outside the home.⁶⁰ The women here are more vulnerable because not only is the protection offered by the state now much weaker, but usually these women do not know their rights in Islamic law and are therefore unable to argue their case on those grounds.

The second element in the post-Soviet nation-building process – that of a rearticulation of the national culture – has not brought about a qualitative change in gender relations, but it has given renewed respectability to attitudes and practices that, during the Soviet period, were regarded as socially and politically unacceptable. This is most marked in matters concerning the family. The traditional power balance – patriarchal control allied to maternal authority – is now acknowledged with a sense of pride rather than decried as a vestige of primitive practices of the past. This new mood was vividly illustrated by the comment of a young Uzbek, who, when asked recently what were the qualities that had most attracted him to his bride-to-be, answered without hesitation, 'That she should be as a floor-cloth to my mother, then to my elder brothers' wives, then to me.'⁶¹ The phrasing is, of course, crude, and more urbane Central Asian males would certainly not formulate their view of their relationship with their wife in such terms. However, the very fact that anyone should voice such sentiments in public is in itself a sign of the changing times: a decade ago, this would have been inconceivable.

Other indications of the shift in attitude include a greater readiness to admit to the continued existence of a practice such as polygamy: this is still illegal, but the fragmentary evidence that is now emerging suggests that it is quite widespread and, moreover, not regarded with the disapproval that characterised Soviet writings on the subject.⁶² The positive aspects of traditions such as the payment of the bride price – now usually presented in the form of gifts of clothes, jewellery and household items – are also stressed. Likewise, participation in large-scale family and community functions, formerly frowned upon by the authorities, is now regarded as a positive feature of social life. In Uzbekistan, the role of the local neighbourhood (*mahalle*) in poverty alleviation and other social welfare projects has been institutionalised through the allocation of government funds and the formal recognition of the authority of community elders. Finally, the centrality of motherhood is being reaffirmed, but with a telling shift of emphasis: during the Soviet period, the maternal role was divorced from domesticity. Now, the domestic context has been reinstated and child-rearing is being accorded the same importance as child-bearing. Concomitantly, the role of women as the moral educators of the new generation is being highlighted.

The third element, that of the cult of the father-leader, is yet another reversal of a fundamental tenet of Soviet ideology. The image of the head of state as the loving but stern, wise but generous, head of the family-nation firmly reinstates the patriarchal discourse. This was implied in the personality cults that evolved around Soviet leaders, but in Central Asia today, especially in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, the notion has been elaborated far more comprehensively. The concept of male guardianship has now been re-established as a parameter of private as well as of public life. Society has finally freed itself from the emasculation imposed by the *khudzhum*. From a traditionalist perspective, it might be said that order and propriety are being restored. The result has been that gender asymmetry in power and status has re-emerged in unashamedly vigorous form, giving rise to a rapid masculinisation of the positions of authority. Today, women in Central Asia are not excluded from public affairs, but their participation is dependent on male-sufferance.⁶³ Nevertheless, as in other male-dominated societies, individual women, especially those who are closely related to the ruling elites, may be accepted as honorary males in the highest echelons of the power structures with relatively little difficulty. It is those lower down the social scale who are beginning to experience the brunt of gender discrimination.

Economic pressures

The dislocation of supplies, services and trade which followed the collapse of the Soviet Union has had a devastating effect on the newly emergent national economies of the Central Asian states. Prices for industrial and domestic commodities continue to soar; transport networks have been decimated owing to fuel shortages. Many industrial plants have been forced to close down, or to introduce sweeping redundancies, because of lack of supplies, loss of markets and huge debts. Unemployment has spiralled. Welfare benefits, including child and maternity allowances, have been increased at regular intervals, but have been unable to stave off severe material hardship for large sectors of the population. Education and medical care have also been severely affected; standards have fallen dramatically, while the introduction of 'hidden charges' to services that were formerly free has further reduced the scope of welfare provision. Poverty and malnutrition are now becoming serious problems.

Women have been the chief victims of the shrinking labour market. It is not only the unskilled or semi-skilled workers who have been savagely hit by redundancies, but also the trained professionals. The quota system and positive discrimination that operated in support of female employment during the Soviet period have been abandoned. Now, whenever there is a choice between employing a male or a female, the former is automatically given precedence, on the grounds that he is the main breadwinner in the family. At the same time, features in the mass media and the pronouncements of public figures are helping to alter social opinion, creating a climate in which the home, rather than the shop floor or the office, is regarded as the 'right place' for a woman. Even in Kyrgyzstan, where official attitudes towards working women are still generally favourable, it was estimated that by mid-1993 almost 70 per cent of the unemployed were women; the economic crisis has deepened considerably since then and it is very likely that the present position is a great deal worse. However, it is difficult to gain an accurate picture of the situation in any of these states since, firstly, definitions of joblessness are abstruse, designed to conceal rather than reveal the true state of affairs (a phenomenon that is by no means unique to Central Asia); secondly, women are often retained on the staff of an enterprise or institution, but rarely given any work and paid, if at all, a nugatory salary.

Economic pressures are also beginning to have an adverse effect on female education. Schooling used to be free, compulsory and of a

reasonably high standard. Today, the quality of tuition in the state schools is so poor that those who can afford it send their children to private schools. These are very expensive. The state schools, too, though still nominally free, require so many extra contributions from parents that even this form of education is becoming a financial burden for poor families with large numbers of children. In these cases, it is the daughters' education that is sacrificed. The girls become semi-permanent truants, and are often set to work selling assorted oddments on street pavements in order to supplement the family income.

There are rumours that in return for a substantial down payment to the parents, some young girls are being sent to the Gulf states to work as household servants;⁶⁴ this may be utterly untrue, but the level of material deprivation is reaching such a point that even if this is not so, it is already taking shape as a fantasy solution. Female (and, to a lesser extent, male) prostitution is on the rise in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; for students, it is sometimes the only way of financing their studies.⁶⁵ In Kyrgyzstan, questions have been raised in parliament as to the desirability of licensing brothels, in order to limit the risk of spreading sexually transmitted diseases. The majority of those who are involved in prostitution are Slavs and members of other immigrant groups, but there are also quite a few Kazakhs and Kyrgyz. In the other Central Asian states it is uncommon for women of the titular groups to work as prostitutes. However, in the capital cities of the region (and perhaps in other large urban settlements), sexual conventions are no longer as strict as they once were and it is not unknown for local girls to enter into extra-marital relationships in return for financial benefit.⁶⁶

Another consequence of the economic crisis has been to bring about changes in attitudes to family planning. In urban areas, at least among the professional classes, young couples are beginning to worry about the cost of rearing a large family. Before, this was not a consideration, since all the major expenses were covered by the state. Now, it is not only that the price of essentials such as health care and education are rising, but that many more choices are available in terms of optional extra-curricular activities, fashionable clothes, toys and electronic gadgetry. Parents in these circles are coming to feel that they will only be able to provide the type of upbringing that they would wish for their offspring if they limit the size of their families to two or, at the most, three children.

In rural areas, especially in Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan, birth rates are still amongst the highest in the world (over forty per thousand per

year). Since in all five countries the great majority of the titular people live in the countryside, it is not surprising that in most areas there has been a relatively small fall in the average rate of natural increase over the last three decades.⁶⁷ The governments in the newly independent Central Asian states are beginning to realise the economic implications of this high level of expansion. To date, however, it is only in Uzbekistan that an official family planning policy has been launched. This has involved intensive preliminary research into social attitudes, followed by education and information campaigns. The scheme is still too new for it to be possible to evaluate the likely impact. It is also difficult to know how the related scheme of (semi-) compulsory premarital medical counselling for young couples will develop. It is intended to raise awareness of health, sex and family welfare issues, but as it is formulated at present, with the emphasis on producing a population that is sound in mind and body, there is a hint of an underlying eugenic agenda.

External influences

In the immediate aftermath of independence, there was an influx of missionaries and various cultural delegations from Islamic countries. Such events were a novelty and aroused great interest. Now, however, the visits of delegations have become more of a routine activity and are greeted with less pomp, while the missionaries are, in most areas, subject to close state supervision. In all, the impact of Islamic countries on the Central Asian states has been considerably weaker than had originally been anticipated. The chief sources of external influence, particularly so far as women are concerned, are Western. There are two very different areas in which the effects of this pressure are felt: concepts of glamour and concepts of human development.

Little is known of traditional Central Asian concepts of female beauty other than the stereotyped descriptions of classical literature and the elegant, stylised figures in miniature paintings. These, however, are almost entirely images conceived by men; female perceptions of style and fashion, and attitudes to luxury, beauty care and physical perfection, are largely uncharted territory.⁶⁸ During the Soviet period, new stereotypes were introduced, projecting robust workers and indefatigable mothers as the ideal models, but how, why and for whom these women beautified themselves – or even if they did – was regarded as a matter too inconsequential to merit attention. Over the past two to three years, this has changed: the region has been

inundated with Western soap operas, video cassettes of the latest feature films, fashion magazines, advertisements for hair and skin treatments (sometimes even the actual products), and, most recently, beauty parlours and aerobics classes. Initially, Central Asian women were very cautious in their response to these blandishments, but, as with the women's clubs of the early Soviet era, they are gradually being overcome by curiosity and in the larger cities are starting to try these new recipes for health, beauty and a shining future. If the appearance of female parachutists and tractor drivers symbolised one turning-point in the modern history of Central Asia, then perhaps the appearance of the first be-swimsuited beauty contests may be said to have marked another.⁶⁹

A very different form of potential Western influence is diffused through aid and technical assistance programmes. These are administered through international organisations, the agencies of national governments, and also through non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Most have a brief to integrate women into development programmes. In principle, this may be a helpful approach; in practice, however, it often misfires. Central Asians, both men and women, deeply resent what they regard as the patronising attitude of some of the administrators of these programmes. The schemes the latter propose often have little relevance to local conditions; in particular, they frequently fail to take account of the existing high levels of literacy, indigenous professional experience and relatively wide range of modern amenities (albeit that these are now under threat owing to the economic crisis).

Another cause of irritation is the implicit, or even explicit, bias that some Western (or Western-trained) staff display against Islam and traditional society.⁷⁰ The message, in effect, is that the Central Asians must adopt Western institutions and norms since their own culture is characterised as 'underdeveloped'. However, many Central Asians now travel abroad and have access to the Western media, and thus are able to form their own opinion of Western societies. They find much to admire but, equally, are appalled by the social problems, especially those caused by the breakdown of the family. Thus, it is galling for them to have to endure the disparagement of their own values by those who, in their opinion, have been even less successful in creating an acceptable social environment. By contrast, respect for the achievements of the Soviet period are growing. As one Uzbek writer, formerly known for his outspoken criticism of the Soviet regime, commented recently, 'These Western activists are just like the Soviets, but at least

the Soviets gave us schools and hospitals along with their ideology, these give us only the ideology.'⁷¹ Similar sentiments are to be heard with increasing frequency throughout the region.

A third cause of complaint is the 'packaging' of Central Asian issues for the international community. Inevitably (and again as with Soviet activists in the 1920s), foreign aid and development programmes try to enlist the support of local women. However, since project organisers are often more interested in pursuing their own agendas than in gaining an understanding of local conditions, still less of local culture, what they seek is confirmation of their views. Those who would work with them, sometimes out of conviction but sometimes, inevitably, as a means of securing the per diem allowances and other fringe benefits, reflect back what their sponsors want to hear. These are the women who then become the 'independent representatives' of the community and are invited to international conferences and seminars in order to articulate the required position.⁷² Translators and interpreters compound the problem, encasing their words in a straitjacket of jargon that effectively extinguishes any spontaneity or genuine insight into the situation. It is little wonder that such women tend to be regarded as opportunists by their compatriots. The fact that they receive such attention is viewed as additional proof of the insincerity (or at the very least, naivety) of Western agencies. This severely undermines the credibility, and hence the efficacy, of programmes that might otherwise have much to offer.

Passivity: a coping strategy?

There has been strikingly little attempt on the part of Central Asian women to articulate their views on what their rights should be. In the Soviet period, this passivity could be explained by the fact that they had no option but to support official policies. Now, however, they have a greater awareness of possible choices, and it might have been expected that they would take the initiative in gaining more control over their lives and in extending their political, economic and social demands. Yet to date there has been little sign of this. In 1991-2, a few women's movements made a fleeting appearance, most notably, the Uzbek-based Tumaris (the female wing of the opposition party Birlik). The Muslim Women's Leagues referred to above fared little better, also proving to be unsustainable.

Since independence, throughout the region semi-official Women's Committees have been formed, closely modelled on the women's

councils (*zhensovery*) of the Soviet period. These are chiefly concerned with the dissemination and implementation of official social welfare policies relating to women. There are also bodies that are specifically devoted to mother and child health care. These organisations are mostly staffed by women and, indeed, provide one of the main outlets for female participation in public affairs. However, although they may have some input into policy formulation, their sphere of action is circumscribed by the fact that, as members of these committees, they have an official function. Consequently, they do not have the same degree of independence as representatives of NGOs in Western countries.

On an individual level, some women are exercising choice in the life-styles or careers that they follow. Some have entered the private sector and are becoming successful entrepreneurs. Regional Businesswomen's Associations are beginning to appear; these, however, are professional bodies that, for the most part, focus on issues relating to the general business environment and not specifically to conditions for women. A number of women are engaged in careers that take them to foreign countries for study or training; a few have taken the opportunity to remain abroad for relatively long periods. In the larger cities, more typically in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, some younger women (generally those who have spent a considerable time in study or work away from home) have distanced themselves somewhat from their families and kin-group networks in order to lead a more independent existence; such a choice often entails the corollary of rejecting, or postponing, marriage. In a very different way, those who have opted to follow an orthodox Islamic way of life have also taken control of their lives.

The above examples of Central Asian women's attempts to establish their own space may seem insignificant when compared with developments elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, but even these are exceptional in the context of the region. The great majority of women have not shown any inclination to exceed the limits sanctioned by society. This apparent apathy is often regarded by outsiders as a sign of 'backwardness', from which Central Asian women need to be liberated. Yet they themselves view their situation in a very different way. They are conscious of being part of an organic whole, no one part of which can be altered without the whole being affected. It is not that Central Asian women see their situation as perfect – indeed, they have as many complaints as women elsewhere – but that they perceive that it has compensations as well as shortcomings, that it offers good-neighbourly support as well as social constraints.

Central Asians are today under greater strain than at almost any other period in recent history. Under Soviet rule, despite all the external changes, these societies remained, in Durkheimian terms, largely 'mechanical', with a high degree of homogeneity, conformity and group solidarity. Now, faced with massive economic, social and environmental pressures, they are in danger of sliding towards anomy – the loss of shared values and the consequent breakdown of social controls. The civil war in Tadjikistan has provided a dramatic example of how easily and quickly this could happen. There is an acute awareness that the same process could be repeated elsewhere. This has provoked an almost maniacal insistence on the need to preserve stability; all other freedoms are seen as of secondary importance. This is not mere political rhetoric: it is a consistently recurring theme in private as well as public discussion.

Against this background, the 'passivity' of Central Asian women may be seen as a positive rather than a negative stance, a choice rather than a failure to choose. Today, as during the Soviet period, women are instrumental in moderating the pace of change, helping to mediate the effect of external influences. The perceived passivity could be interpreted as a sophisticated coping strategy for protecting the central values of society in a time of flux and stress, thus a crucial contribution to community life, and of fundamental importance in maintaining continuity and identity. It may of course be argued that even if this is so, the women are nevertheless involuntary victims of the system, trapped in a vicious circle of dependency and self-sacrifice. This does not seem to be borne out in practice. There are undoubtedly cases of abuse and oppression here, as in any other part of the world but, in general, Central Asian women, whether in urban or in rural areas, appear to be able to negotiate a position that is, to them, acceptable. If they do not take a public stand to articulate their demands this does not necessarily mean that they are too weak or too ignorant to do this: it could equally well indicate that they believe they are able to operate more effectively by working in an indirect way, using the social levers that are available to them within their families and their communities. This could change in the future: if there were to be a breakdown of society, then they might be forced to take a more independent position, to fight for their rights. Under such conditions, politicised feminist movements, either of a Western or an Islamic orientation, might emerge. It is, however, noteworthy that this does not, as yet, appear to have happened to any significant degree even in Tadjikistan. The upheavals of the war and the experience of the refugee

settlements have not acted as a mobilising impetus. Rather, there has been a consolidation of existing networks and of established patterns of behaviour.

Conclusions: Eurasia revisited

Central Asia lies at the heart of the Eurasian landmass. Once, it was the nodal point on the 'Silk Roads' of antiquity, the global trade network of the day. Today, after years of partial isolation on the periphery of Europe, the region is regaining its centrality: the old, long-suspended ties with neighbours to the east and to the south are being restored through modern transport and communications links. This does not mean that the Central Asian states will sever relations with Russia or reject the Soviet heritage. The complex network of personal and professional, political, economic, cultural and educational linkages that has been established over the past seventy years will certainly not be erased in the near future, though in time it may become a less dominant feature of contemporary Central Asian life. Similarly, many of the aspirations that were nurtured during the Soviet period, such as, for example, that of gender equality, will continue to shape people's hopes and expectations, even if they are not actively promoted. It is also very unlikely that contacts with the West will diminish. On the contrary, the Central Asian states have signalled their desire to remain a part of this world through numerous trade and diplomatic missions, as well as through membership of organisations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. Western-sponsored aid and development projects, whatever their shortcomings, will no doubt continue to be implemented. Informal channels of Western influence, such as the media, will likewise continue to be a major source of influence.

However, these new states are also looking in other directions and finding points of reference and mutual understanding in, for example, China, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Pakistan. These countries present models that differ very greatly one from the other, as well as from those of Western countries. Yet they also have some common characteristics, loosely described as 'Asian values', which include an emphasis on the importance of the family, on the interests of the community rather than those of the individual, and on consensus rather than confrontation. Central Asians recognise here a sense of social priorities similar to their own. Over the past few years

it is this discovery of sympathetic cultural echoes in the east and south which has perhaps had the greatest effect on the morale of the Central Asian states, giving them new confidence in the validity of their traditional values. This might well foster the emergence of more conservative trends in the future.

There are still too many uncertainties for it to be possible at this stage, scarcely five years after the traumatic transition to independence, to predict how these new states will develop. However, in view of their past history, it seems likely that there will be a very cautious and gradual recalibrating of the balance between public and private spheres, leading to a greater emphasis on traditional structures eventually, possibly, of a revivalist hue. It is unlikely that there will be a qualitative change in the position of women in the near future. Further ahead, however, it is possible that in some of the states there may be a move towards a more Islamic way of life, with a reintroduction of the constraints, but also of the freedoms and rights, that Islam gives women. In the north-eastern parts of Kazakhstan and northern Kyrgyzstan, where there has long been influence from the settler communities, it is possible that there will be a more pronounced Westernisation of society, at least in the public sphere. However, much will depend on the resolution of present economic problems. If the recession continues to deepen, there could be a very rapid unravelling of society, with consequences that are impossible to predict, except for the very obvious point that in such conditions it is invariably the women and children who are the most vulnerable and are therefore likely to suffer a major deterioration in their situation. In these circumstances, perhaps the present preoccupation with stability is no bad thing.

Notes

Conventional systems of transliteration have been used for foreign words. It should be noted, however, that in a term such as *khudzhum*, which is here transcribed from the Cyrillic script (as used, for example, for Uzbek), since it refers to a specifically Central Asian phenomenon, the sound *j* (as in 'John') is rendered by *dzh*; however, in Arabic words which refer to general Islamic practices and are already, therefore, in use in English (e.g. *hajj*), the same sound is rendered by *j*, since this is a more familiar spelling.

- 1 Good surveys of tsarist/Soviet source material relating to this period are given by Ol'ga A. Sukhareva, *Bukhara: XIX - nachalo XX v* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), pp. 3-22; Tahira Kh. Tashbaeva and Mane D. Savurov, *Novoe i traditsionnoe v bytu sel'skoi sem'i uzbekov* (Tashkent: Fan, 1989),

The most informative Western source for this period is probably George Allen (1903), *Russian Turkestan: a garden of Asia and its people* (London: George Allen, 1903).

It appears to have been an exception in this regard in that the available evidence suggests that average family sizes were small, consisting of 4-6 individuals (Sukhareva, *Bukhara*, pp. 106-11). However, the definition of terms is not always clear, hence it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.

- 3 Bibi Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki* (Moscow: Nauka, 1982), pp. 7-8.
- 4 E.g. 'Qiz bola tuqqandan kora tosh tuqqan iakhshiroq, negaki, tosh hech bolmasa devor qurishga iaraiddi-ku' ('It is better to give birth to a stone than a girl-child, because at least you can build a wall with a stone'). Quoted by Z. R. Rahimboboieva, in her speech to the 'First Uzbekistan Women's Conference', March 1958, published in *Ozbekiston khotin-qizlarining birinchi s'ezdi: stenografik hisobot* (Tashkent: Uzbek SSR Davlat Nashrioti, 1960), p. 16. Meakin (*Russian Turkestan*, p. 97) confirms that disappointment was the usual reaction to the birth of a daughter.
- 5 Sukhareva (*Bukhara*, p. 105) gives some statistical information on female life expectancy in Bukhara. In 1920, the percentage ratio of females to males in the Turkestan region was 47.7 to 52.3 (Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 49). Cf. Russia in 1926, where the percentage ratio was 52.8 to 47.2, thus with a preponderance of females, unlike the situation in Central Asia, where there was a preponderance of males. (Source: Soviet Census of 1926, cited in Shirin Akiner, *Islamic peoples of the Soviet Union* (2nd edn, London: Kegan Paul International, 1987), under the relevant ethnic entries. Note: the information in this book is drawn from Soviet statistical material; for ease of reference, the ultimate sources of data are not cited in this article unless they are of particular interest.)
- 6 For example, Khansha Pupai, the wife of Abulkhair, mid-eighteenth century khan of the Kazakh Little Horde, seems to have played an active role in steppe politics; see Begezhan Suleimenov (ed.), *Kazakhstan v XV-XVIII vekakh* (Alma-Ata: Nauka, 1969), p. 141.
- 7 Very little information is available on this subject. Meakin (*Russian Turkestan*, pp. 100-2) indicates that several of the educated women in urban areas were engaged in trade, generally of objects that they had produced themselves. Zbigniew Jasiewicz, 'Professional beliefs and rituals among craftsmen in Central Asia: genetic and functional interpretation' in Shirin Akiner (ed.), *Cultural change and continuity in Central Asia* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1991), p. 173, speaking of a somewhat later period, mentions the existence of 'a certain form of organisation' amongst craftswomen of the region, notably women potters in the mountains of Tadzhikistan.

- 8 In the early nineteenth century, there were a number of talented female poets at the court of the khan of Kokand, including Nadira (b. 1790), wife of the ruler, Umar Khan; they were presumably not merely literate, but highly educated. On girls' schools in the early twentieth century, see for example, Meakin, *Russian Turkestan*, p. 87. However, literacy rates varied greatly from one place to another. According to Sukhareva (*Bukhara*, p. 104), in 1926, 13.4 per cent of the female population of Bukhara were literate, compared with 46 per cent of the male population. The overall average literacy rate for the Uzbek SSR as a whole, though, was only 3.8 per cent (Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, p. 280).
- 9 According to the 1926 Soviet census, 84.5 per cent of Uzbeks were included within the territory of the Uzbek SSR, 94.2 per cent of Turkmen in the Turkmen SSR, 93.6 per cent of Kazakhs in the Kazakh ASSR, and 86.7 per cent of the Kyrgyz in the Kyrgyz ASSR. For a summary of the regional distribution of these peoples, see Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under the relevant ethnic entries. (Reference is made here to Kazakh ASSR and Kyrgyz ASSR because at the time of the census they were Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics, not yet full Soviet Socialist Republics.)
- 10 In 1926, 63.1 per cent of the Tadzhiks were included within the territory of the Tadzhik ASSR, which at that time formed a subordinate administrative unit within the Uzbek SSR; there were a further 35.8 per cent located elsewhere in the Uzbek SSR (see further Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, p. 306). These figures are based on the official ethnic designations as recorded in the 1926 census; some would claim that they do not accurately reflect the population's self-perception of their historical ethnic origins. The negotiation of territorial rights was by no means a smooth and amicable affair: there were many bitter arguments over border regions, especially those with mixed populations. A detailed account of this process is given by Rakhim Masov, *Istoriia topornogo razdeleniia* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1991).
- 11 In 1926, Russians numbered 1,279,979 (19.7 per cent of the total population) in the Kazakh ASSR; 116,436 (11.8 per cent) in the Kyrgyz ASSR; 5,638 (0.7 per cent) in the Tadzhik ASSR; 75,357 (7.7 per cent) in the Turkmen SSR; 246,521 (4.7 per cent) in the Uzbek SSR. By 1959, these figures had increased to 3,972,042 (42.7 per cent of the total population) in the Kazakh SSR; 623,562 (30.2 per cent) in the Kyrgyz SSR; 262,611 (13.3 per cent) in the Tadzhik SSR; 262,702 (17.3 per cent) in the Turkmen SSR; 1,092,468 (13.5 per cent) in the Uzbek SSR. (See further Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under the relevant ethnic entries.)
- 12 By 1959, the percentage share of the titular group in the total population of their eponymous republic was as follows: Uzbeks 62.1; Turkmen 60.9; Tadzhiks 53.1; Kyrgyz 40.5; Kazakhs 30.0 (Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under the relevant ethnic entries).
- 13 Richard Stites, *The women's liberation movement in Russia: feminism*,

- nihilism, and Bolshevism 1860-1930 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 332. For an account of the broader Soviet context of female emancipation see Mary Buckley, 'Soviet interpretations of the women question' in Barbara Holland (ed.), *Soviet sisterhood* (London: Fourth Estate, 1985), pp. 24-53.
- 14 The term was coined by Gregory Massell, *The surrogate proletariat* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); this is the first, and to date only major study by a Western scholar on the politics of female emancipation in Central Asia.
 - 15 For accounts of the creation of the legal infrastructure, see Dilorom A. Alimova, *Reshenie zhenskogo voprosa v Uzbekistane 1917-41 gg.* (Tashkent: Fan, 1987), pp. 11-12; Shodmon M. Masharipova, *Raskreposhchenie zhenshchin Khorezma i vovlechenie ikh v sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo* (Tashkent: Fan, 1990), pp. 12-13; Aleksandr M. Lobachev, *Protiv t'my* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1990), pp. 32-6; Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, pp. 26-36; Rakhima Aminova, *The October Revolution and women's liberation in Uzbekistan* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), pp. 37-8, 59-60.
 - 16 Leading Russian activists included: Ida Finkel'shtein, widow of the Tashkent commissar; Lidia Dvorkina; Berta Bendetskaia (b. 1898); Lukiia Shumilova (1873-1939); Lidiiia Otmar-Shtein (b. 1899); Eustaliia Ross (b. 1896). Serafima Liubimova (b. 1898), who was sent from Moscow to Tashkent in June 1923 to head the women's section of the Central Committee of the Turkestan Communist Party, was responsible for creating an infrastructure of social organisations to support the emancipation movement. See further Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, pp. 49-57; Alimova, *Reshenie*, pp. 14-15; Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 12-15; R. Ia. Radzhapova, et al. *Khhdzhum - znachit nastuplenie* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1987), pp. 117-87.
 - 17 These included Risoliat-khon Alieva (b. 1898); Shamsikamar Gaibdzhanova (b. 1897); Tadzhikhon Shadieva (b. 1905). See further Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, pp. 62-7; Lobachev, *Protiv t'my*, p. 136; Masharipova, *Raskreposhchenie*, pp. 14-17.
 - 18 Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 106.
 - 19 Masharipova, *Raskreposhchenie*, p. 37; Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, pp. 108-10.
 - 20 Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 165.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 147-8; Masharipova, *Raskreposhchenie*, pp. 61-2; Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 63-4; Alimova, *Reshenie*, p. 61. Dilorom A. Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros v Srednei Azii* (Tashkent: Fan, 1991), p. 25.
 - 22 Aminova, *October Revolution*, p. 95.
 - 23 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, p. 23; Alimova, *Reshenie*, pp. 30-2; Aminova, *October Revolution*, p. 121.
 - 24 Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 168, also personal communications made to the present author by Professor Pal'vanova in London, in 1992.
 - 25 Lobachev, *Protiv t'my*, p. 40.
 - 26 This was not only a Russian view; see, for example, the comments by Joshua Kunitz, *Dawn over Samarkand* (London and New York: Lawrence and Wishart, 1936), p. 274, where he describes the garment as 'monstrous and degrading', resembling 'a gray or dark-blue coffin standing stiffly on end, covered with a black, bulging, heavy lid'.
 - 27 Meakin (*Russian Turkestan*, pp. 128-9) noted that "'the man in the street" can generally tell at a glance the social standing of a woman by the quality and condition of her *parandzha*; those worn by the rich were often made of silk, but the majority were of cotton. The usual colour was a dull grey, but Tatar women would sometimes wear bright colours, such as canary yellow or bright red. Only women from the lowest strata of society (e.g. beggars) would venture out of the house without a veil.'
 - 28 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, pp. 25-8; Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 92-103.
 - 29 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, p. 76; Masharipova, *Raskreposhchenie*, pp. 23, 32, 51-6; Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 49-57.
 - 30 Aminova, *October Revolution*, p. 92.
 - 31 Alimova, *Reshenie*, p. 55; Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 179-92.
 - 32 The move to an eight-year course was completed by 1962/63; see K. F. Fazykhodzhaev (ed.), *Deiatel'nost' kompartii Uzbekistana i usileniie sotsial'noi aktivnosti zhenshchin: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov (1959-1975 gg.)* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1986), p. 26.
 - 33 The numbers of women of the titular groups of the Central Asian republics who possessed higher (tertiary) educational qualifications in 1970 were as follows (per 1,000): Uzbeks 13; Kazakhs 20; Tadzhiks 7; Turkmen 10; Kyrgyz 15; cf. Soviet average of 37 (Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under the relevant ethnic headings).
 - 34 H. Kent Geiger, *The family in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 130.
 - 35 Aminova, *October Revolution*, pp. 211-12.
 - 36 *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
 - 37 Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 270.
 - 38 Alimova, *Reshenie*, p. 55.
 - 39 Probably the best study to date on Soviet Islam is Tolib Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1984); see also A. Ahadov, *Islom zamonga moslashganda* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1989). For more recent developments, see Shirin Akiner, 'Islam, the state and ethnicity in Central Asia in historical perspective' in *Religion, state and society: the Keston Journal* 24 (2-3), December 1996 (forthcoming).
 - 40 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, pp. 35-8.

- 41 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, pp. 47–9; Lobachev, *Protiv t'my*, p. 55; Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 244.
- 42 Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia*, p. 205; Darikha Saburova, *Zhenshchiny Karakalpakstana* (Nukus: Karakalpakstan, 1989), pp. 37–46; Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, p. 46. The problems over equal pay, conditions and opportunities for women were not of course restricted to Central Asia; for the broader Soviet context see Alastair McAuley, *Women's work and wages in the Soviet Union* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981), especially pp. 11–31.
- 43 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, p. 112.
- 44 This section is based mainly on material contained in Tashbaeva and Savurov, *Novoe i traditsionnoe*; also on personal interviews conducted by the present author 1985–95. Although the section is written in the past tense, since in the context of this article it refers to the Soviet period, the conditions described here are very much the same today, in post-Soviet Central Asia.
- 45 This is also part of the Islamic heritage; see, for example, Lois Beck *et al.* (eds.), *Women in the Muslim world* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 87–8; Parveen Shaikat Ali, *Status of women in the Muslim world* (Lahore: Aziz, 1975), p. 21. In 1959, the percentage of married girls of the titular group in the age group 16–19 years was as follows: Uzbeks 31.8; Kazakhs 28.7; Tadzhiks 36.6; Turkmen 32.0; Kyrgyz 44.2; cf. Russians 9.3. By 1970, the percentage of married girls in this age group had fallen to the following levels: Uzbeks 21.7; Kazakhs 12.3; Tadzhiks 24.9; Turkmen 19.1; Kyrgyz 20.1; cf. Russians 9.1 (Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under relevant ethnic groups).
- 46 For the pre-1981 provisions see Bernice Madison, *Social welfare in the Soviet Union* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 61–70; for post-1981, see Jo Peers, 'Workers by hand and womb: Soviet women and the demographic crisis' in Holland (ed.), *Soviet sisterhood*, pp. 116–44, especially p. 136. In 1981 the lump sum payment for the first child was set at 50 roubles, for the eleventh and subsequent children at 250 roubles each.
- 47 Tashbaeva and Savurov, *Novoe i traditsionnoe*, p. 38.
- 48 Geographic mobility was low, hence kin-groups generally continued to live within the same village, neighbourhood or collective farm. The level of urbanisation among the titular groups within their eponymous republics also remained low; in 1970, it was less than 30 per cent for four of the groups (only 14.5 per cent for the Kyrgyz), and only just over 30 per cent for the Turkmen (Akiner, *Islamic peoples*, under relevant ethnic groups). Mixed marriages between different ethnic groups were also comparatively uncommon, especially in rural areas.
- 49 Such is the preoccupation with fertility that even visiting strangers will be interrogated in great detail about the number of children they have, or

- intend to have. According to an Uzbek informant, mothers-in-law in rural areas would often accompany their sons' wives on visits to the doctor to ensure that they did not seek contraceptive advice (communication with the author, Tashkent, 1996). For a comparative international perspective see Helen Ware, 'The effects of fertility, family organization, sex structure on the labour market, and technology on the position of women' in Federici *et al.* (eds.), *Women's position and demographic change* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), pp. 257–84.
- 50 See, for example, Saburova, *Zhenshchiny Karakalpakstana*, p. 49.
- 51 A great deal has been written on this subject in recent years. A fairly comprehensive account is given by Boris Rumer, *Soviet Central Asia: a tragic experiment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 62–75. See also Aleksandr Minkin, 'Zaraza ubiistvennaia', *Ogonek* 13, 1988, pp. 26–7; Aleksandr Minkin, 'Posledstviia zarazy', *Ogonek* 33, 1988, p. 25; Shirin Akiner, 'Environmental degradation in Central Asia' in Reiner Weichardt (ed.), *Economic developments in cooperation partner countries from a sectoral perspective* (Brussels: NATO, 1994), pp. 255–63.
- 52 See, for example, Saburova, *Zhenshchiny Karakalpakstana*, pp. 71–80; Tashbaeva and Savurov, *Novoe i traditsionnoe*, p. 67.
- 53 Alimova, *Zhenskii vopros*, p. 118.
- 54 *Ibid.*, pp. 118–19; E. Gafurov, 'The flames of feudalism', *International Pravda* 2(7), 1986, p. 24; Pal'vanova (*Emansipatsiia*, p. 8) indicates that the practice was not unknown in pre-Soviet times.
- 55 Personal communications to the author in Tashkent in 1990 by an Uzbek film-maker, Shukhrat Makhmudov, and his Kazakh wife.
- 56 Shirin Akiner, 'Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia', *Harvard International Review* 15(3), 1993, pp. 18–21. The article was written on the basis of information gathered by the author from informants in the Central Asian republics 1989–92.
- 57 *Aziia*, 11 June 1994, p. 24; *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 6 January 1994, p. 3.
- 58 Anara Tabyshalieva, *Vera v Turkestane* (Bishkek: AZ-MAK, 1993), p. 123; *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, 30 November 1993, p. 3.
- 59 These are subjective assessments, based on the author's personal observation made in the course of several visits in 1994–6 to Tashkent, the Ferghana Valley, Bishkek and Almaty. Some other observers feel that this is an underestimation and that both the *hejab* and the *parandzha* are becoming far more common. This perception may be influenced by the fact that such observers (local and foreign) regard the resurgence of Islam as a threat. It should be noted that the wearing of the *hejab* is a new phenomenon, imported from other Muslim countries; the traditional Central Asian covering is the *parandzha*. To some extent, these different interpretations of the Muslim dress code reflect divergent trends in Islam in Central Asia today. Wearers of the *hejab* tend to favour a more reformist, modernist approach to the religion, while wearers of the *parandzha* are

generally more conservative. However, regional and social factors also play a role here, hence no firm conclusions can be drawn about a woman's religious orientation solely on the basis of her outer garments.

- 60 Gillian Tett, in an unpublished paper on 'Women and Islam in Tadzhikistan', presented at the conference on 'Social change, demographic trends, family structure and gender relations in Muslim societies – with special reference to Central Asia', held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, July 1992, made the point that while it was women who 'de facto carried the greatest religious burden during the Soviet years, it is now men who dominate Islam in the public sphere' and that it is men who are setting the agenda for what Islam should 'mean' for women.
- 61 Comment made to the author by a young Uzbek of about twenty-four years of age, with secondary schooling and further educational training, in the Ferghana Valley in 1994.
- 62 Tatiana Savelieva, in an unpublished paper presented at the conference on 'Social change, demographic trends, family structure and gender relations in Muslim societies – with special reference to Central Asia', at SOAS, July 1992, gave an account of recent fieldwork carried out in Uzbekistan; in one village, she reported, almost 20 per cent of the unmarried women were integrated into polygamous families.
- 63 In June 1995, the senior government posts held by women included the following: in Uzbekistan, deputy prime minister, chairman of parliament (*Olii Madzhlis*), deputy chairman of parliamentary committee on labour and social security, deputy minister of labour, first deputy minister of social welfare; in Kazakhstan, deputy minister of trade and industry; in Tadzhikistan, deputy prime minister, deputy minister of health; in Kyrgyzstan, minister of foreign affairs. No information was available on the situation in Turkmenistan.
- 64 Personal communications to the author in Bishkek, 1996.
- 65 In one evening, a student can earn at least 30 US dollars, the equivalent of some six times the value of a monthly stipend. (Personal communications to the author in Bishkek, 1996.) In Kazakh and Kyrgyz newspapers of 1994–6 there have been several reports on rising levels of prostitution and other criminal activities carried out by women. See, for example, Gul'mira Arbabaeva, 'Na kollegii MVD otmechen rost zhenskoi prestupnosti', *Panorama* 29, 23 July 1994, p. 9; Kanapiia Gabdullina, 'Bezrobotitsa s zhenskimi litsom', *Dzhuma: Piatnitsa* 17, 20 October 1995, p. 2.
- 66 Personal communications to the author in Bishkek, Almaty and Tashkent, 1996.
- 67 Levels of natural increase (per 1,000 of the population) in the five republics in 1960/1987 respectively were as follows: Uzbekistan 33.8/30.1; Kazakhstan 30.6/18.0; Kyrgyzstan 30.8/25.3; Tadzhikistan 28.4/34.9; Turkmenistan 35.9/29.3. (Source: *Naselenie SSSR 1987*, Moscow: Finansy i

statistika, 1988, pp. 132–42.) The largest change was in Kazakhstan where the birthrate fell quite steadily in rural and in urban areas in 1980; thereafter it began to rise again. A similar pattern was also observed in Kyrgyzstan. These two republics have long had large non-indigenous populations; the birthrate in these non-indigenous communities is significantly lower than amongst the titular peoples, hence the overall slower rate of increase. In Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan the rate of increase is such that, according to some estimates, in the near future for every 100 people who leave the ranks of the working age group, some thirty-five will enter it (Viktor Perevedentsev, *Moskovskie novosti* 41, 11 October 1992, p. 9).

- 68 Meakin, *Russian Turkestan*, pp. 120–8, is one of the few writers to comment on this aspect of the lives of Central Asian women.
- 69 See, for example, the report on the 'Kazakhstan Queen of Clubs – 95' beauty contest, *Delovaia nedelia*, 11 August 1995. *Dzhuma: Piatnitsa*, published in Kazakhstan, is a typical new-style women's paper, full of advertisements for stylish lingerie, cosmetics and beauty treatments.
- 70 This phenomenon has been noted elsewhere. See, for example, Angela Gilliam, 'Women's equality and national liberation' in Chandra Mohanty *et al.* (eds.), *Third World women and the politics of feminism* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 215–50, especially p. 218; also Chandra Mohanty, *ibid.*, pp. 51–80, 'Under Western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses'.
- 71 Personal communication to the author by a member of the banned opposition party *Erk*, in Germany, 1995.
- 72 Cf. Gilliam, 'Women's equality', p. 227, where the question is posed: 'Which Third World Women speak for which Third World women?'