

# The Use of Rhetoric and the Mass Media in Russia's War on Terror

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**Abstract:** The mass media are an essential element, from the perspective of both sides in the war on terrorism. This article deals specifically with the case of the Russian war on terrorism. It is intended to introduce the reader to some of the current lines of rhetoric, and why such rhetoric is employed in the first place. At times, it can be intended for the consumption of the domestic audience, but other times it is employed more as a tool with which to influence the actions of other countries. The material is drawn from various Russian mass media sources, both state and privately owned outlets, to try and find diversity (if it exists) in the message.

**Key words:** mass media, Putin, rhetoric, terrorism, war on terrorism

## Introduction

Russian President Vladimir Putin has built his political career on fighting terrorism in Russia. The apparent early “successes” of the 1999 conventional military campaign in Chechnya have been replaced by drawn-out guerrilla warfare, which has become a terror campaign aimed at striking civilian targets in Russia. The mass media are an important instrument for both sides of this conflict, which are fighting for the hearts, minds, and sympathies of their audiences. The focus of this article is to examine how the Russian mass media present the key political actors’ messages. This article focuses on matters such as the rhetoric used and the significance of the time and place that the statements were made.

The issues and rhetoric that surround terrorism in Russia can be most confusing. In the run-up to the second Chechen War, in 1999, domestic terrorism, perpetrated by Chechens, was considered to be a Russian problem. For their prosecution of “antiterrorist actions” in Chechnya, and alleged human rights violations, the international community criticized Russia. The terrorist attacks on September

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11, 2001, provided the Russian authorities with the opportunity to link Chechen terrorism with the global war on terror, which is being led by the United States. In doing this, the Russian authorities hope to reduce criticism of the Chechnya campaign, a calculation that seems to be working.

Rhetoric, and its use through the conduit of the mass media, is an important aspect of society, especially when society is stressed by conflict, which can have a cultural/ideological component to it. It is a war over hearts and minds—that is being waged in the public information space. This is a war that is being fought over the perception of reality, rather than “hard facts.” In this information/ideology war, there is a struggle to maintain acceptance and legitimacy for policies and actions. This article is divided into a number of sections that deal with a small section of the broader questions of how and why the mass media issues certain statements. It begins with a brief description of rhetoric and its use, starting with a historical perspective and the use of rhetoric in a more contemporary sense. By doing so, the foundations of analysis for how the various extracts from the mass media are given. Another important aspect that needs to be explained early is the definition of the media’s role in the war on terrorism. This section starts with the Western “good practice” definition. However, another definition is also given, the definition of how the Russian authorities view the mass media’s role.

Some basic facts and figures on Russia’s casualties as a result of terrorist acts are given. Then terrorism and terrorists are defined. Because of the emotions and politics that surround this issue, it is particularly contentious and has a tendency to cloud our understanding and judgment. It starts with the Russian authorities definition of terrorists and terrorism, before finishing with an academic definition.

The article then analyzes various rhetorical frames that are being used by key Russian actors. The first of these looks at the issue of “normalizing” the Russian war on terror in the international arena. Then the lack of understanding and double standards are examined, which is followed by calls for unity in the war on terror. The article concludes with attempts to close the rhetorical gap between Russia and the West through examples of shared history and mutual suffering. It should be noted that a number of extracts could contain more than one of the rhetorical frames.

### **Rhetoric: A Brief Description**

In a classical sense, rhetoric relates to the discussion of a special topic, which is influenced by emotion and character. In this sense: “Let rhetoric be the power to observe the persuasiveness of which any particular matter admits”; additionally, proof is achieved more effectively when speech uses a real or an apparent aspect of a particular subject.<sup>1</sup> In other words, rhetoric focuses on the relationship between the sender and the texts.<sup>2</sup>

This article takes more of a sophism approach to the study and not Plato’s point of view, which took into consideration ethical considerations and the truthfulness of the argument. Therefore, the focus will be on the nature of the arguments used and not whether they are ethically defensible or truthful.

The choice of rhetorical means must be adequate to the topic, which is an essential part of the situation. Classical rhetoric put great emphasis on the fact that rhetorical communication always takes place at a certain occasion, at a particular time, directed at a particular audience, with a particular purpose. Rhetoric is, in other words, fundamentally pragmatic in its orientation.<sup>3</sup>

Rhetorical theory identifies three main means of persuasion available to the sender: *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. *Ethos* is the uses emotion as the means of persuasion. It is tied to the impression given by the speaker and his or her credibility. The use of *logos* relates to word, speech, and reasoning. In rhetoric, there are two primary types of intellectual persuasion—deduction and induction. *Pathos* concerns the use of emotions, especially those that exert an almost “overpowering” influence on the receiver. These emotions include trust, respect, joy, anger, and grief.<sup>4</sup>

This article focuses on the aspect of fragments of speech, by key political actors in Russia, as reported in the mass media. Aspects such as the event that triggered a particular rhetorical “campaign,” the choice and nature of the language used, who made the comments under analysis, and possible political objectives are taken into account. The mass media are viewed as the conduit for a particular message. Some attention will be paid to the status of the media outlets in question, whether they are state owned, “independent,” or owned by a particular political or business interest.

#### **Defining the Media’s Role in the War on Terror**

In *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, a commentary is made on the mass media’s role in the environmental sector, with specific reference to the securitization of an incident or issue. It is possible, with modifications, to apply the reasoning and logic behind this to the issue of terrorism, and the phenomenon of global terrorism, in particular.

The reference to the general good is important; it implies that local conflicts are the result of considerations about wider contexts. Dealing with the causes leads to preemptive, low intensity conflicts to avoid high intensity disaster. In the face of such environmental security policies, the local scale maybe the main level of implementation and conflict, but it is not the level at which security in this sector crystallizes. The fear of cumulative negative effects on regional and global scales motivates the policies.<sup>5</sup>

Some have argued that using a crisis, be it imagined or real, is a means of stifling the mass media. “Invoking a state of crisis has, at least in the past half-century been the classical strategy for legitimating the silencing of media criticism, and the tendency for the media is to go along.”<sup>6</sup> This problem has been recognized for some time. In 1977, a United Nations’ Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) commission, headed by Sean MacBride, studied the “problem of institutionalized state-controlled information” (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems) and produced what has become known as the “MacBride Report.” A concise description of the report highlights the findings: “While institutional communication may be

necessary, the report concluded, it can be used to manipulate opinion, to monopolize the sources of information, it can also abuse the principles of government secrecy or state 'security' by concealing basic facts."<sup>7</sup>

One of the "problems," which is not confined to Russia, is the proximity of the mass media to society's establishment. This topic, which is often discussed and theorized, is unlikely to stop being discussed any time soon. George Gerber described this relationship, rationalized it, and gave it a historical comparison (of institutional interdependence). "Media are the cultural arms of any establishment. Private media relate to public authorities as the Church did to the state in medieval times. It is a symbiotic relationship of mutual dependence and tension."<sup>8</sup>

Some people assert that the mass media's reporting reflects the interests of those who own it. Ownership and control can be two completely different things, however, as one does not necessarily need to own a media asset to control it. Taking Gerber's observation a little further and reflecting on the balance between being perceived as independent, and not "upsetting" powerful interests, Michael Parenti wrote the following: "Like editors, reporters are granted autonomy by demonstrating that they will not use it beyond acceptable limits. They are independent agents in a conditional way, free to report what they like as long as their superiors like what they report."<sup>9</sup>

The mass media are a conduit through which society obtains their images through which they will derive their sense of reality. In this sense, media have three important properties, the importance of which is even further elevated in times of difficulty and stress: a mirror, a witness, and a transmitter.

- Mirror: reality is amplified through the images that the media transmit; this gives a certain definition of reality.
- Witness: the survival of democracy is ensured as the media see and hear events and act as a watchdog; they can also add credibility or otherwise, to an event.
- Transmitter: media act as an intermediary for all groups that are able to express themselves and transmit their image to the public (the so-called "CNN effect").<sup>10</sup>

However, this idealized image of the mass media runs into a variety of problems and contradictions. One of these problems is the apparent contradiction with Gerber's statement, that the mass media are an arm of the establishment. If true, this would cast serious doubts on the mass media's ability to act as effective watchdogs of democracy and truth. Through the images they transmit, they are certainly a mirror of a certain "reality." However, does this reflect a desired "political reality" (agenda), or the actual reality of events? A final problem to point out at this stage relates to the transmitter qualities of the media. They act as an intermediary for the political actors who are able to express themselves and articulate their message. This is potentially helpful, however, those who are not ordinarily able to do this are society's most vulnerable and arguably most in need of broadcasting their message to a wider audience. Is it possible to break this cycle?

If Gerber's statement is correct, and the facet of the mass media acting as a mirror from which society determines its reality is added to it, a potentially powerful asset is in the making. "Thus, while the media serve as resources for a majority of the population in their roles as audiences, they have increasingly become a resource, or more aptly, a tool for powerful social actors."<sup>11</sup> The mass media as a source of manipulation, policy promotion, and policymaking is not a novel concept. Serving the dual capacity as a source of information and a source of influence requires careful coordination and control over both images and discourse.

In late November 2005, *Rossiskaya Gazeta*, a state-owned newspaper, interviewed Nikolai Patrushev, the director of the Federal Security Service (FSB), about the fight against terrorism. When discussing the measures that are necessary to combat terrorism, the mass media's roles were mentioned.

I believe that it is essential to increase responsibility in law for the dissemination of extremist materials through the mass media and telecommunications systems, particularly the Internet. The reason for this is that terrorists, taking account of the great significance of the media in modern society, are now attempting increasingly frequently to use them as auxiliary resources to achieve their criminal objectives. The urgency of this matter is confirmed by the adoption by the UN Security Council in September of a resolution that criminalised incitement to terror. Its binding nature opens the way for tough legislative counterterrorist initiatives at the national level.

Unfortunately, this has still not yet become the norm for all states. Thus, despite all our appeals, the Kavkaz-Tsentr Internet site, which not only fuels ethnic and religious strife but also calls in practice for the commission of terrorist attacks, continues to find refuge in first one, then another country.<sup>12</sup>

President Putin has hinted that a role will be developed for the Russian media in a campaign against challenging contemporary societal issues such as drug trafficking and the war on terror. Under the umbrella of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CTSO), a conference began in Moscow on December 8, 2005—the Second International Anti-Terrorist Media Forum.<sup>13</sup> In this respect, the media are being used as a means to enact, or at least publicize/popularize state goals.

During Russia's war on terror, the authorities' relationship with the mass media has been somewhat contradictory. On one hand, it is feared that the mass media will be hijacked and used by media-savvy terrorist groups. The authorities assume that a passive mass media will not resist a "takeover" and a passive audience will "believe" the terrorists' message. On the other, the authorities view the mass media as an essential vehicle for mobilizing resources and public opinion. Russian Security Council secretary, Igor Ivanov, expressed the need for social mobilization and unity in a briefing: "These efforts on the part of the authorities will not prove productive if they lack public support. People need to understand these problems and play an active part in resolving them. We will only be able to protect ourselves from terrorism if society gets involved in the fight against this threat."<sup>14</sup>

### **Russia's War on Terror—Some Basic Facts and Figures**

At 5 a.m. on September 13, 1999, an explosion ripped through a residential block at Kashirskoye Shosse in Moscow. A total of 124 people were killed and 149 were

injured. A similar incident occurred four days earlier on Guryanova Street. In addition to these two Moscow locations, a residential dwelling in Volgodonsk was attacked on September 16. A total of 240 people were killed as a result of these attacks, which signalled the beginning of a new terror campaign in Russia.<sup>15</sup> At the Terrorism and Electronic Mass Media conference at Gelendzhik (Krasnodar Territory) in October 2005, Moscow's police chief, Colonel General Vladimir Pronin, stated that from 1999 to 2004 terrorists carried out thirteen attacks in Moscow. This resulted in 354 deaths and 647 injuries.<sup>16</sup> A spate of terrorist attacks across Russia between August and September 2004 claimed more than 500 lives.<sup>17</sup>

According to police colonel Aleksandr Trudov, chief of the sixth sector of the Interior Ministry's Crime Investigation Department, the number of bombings has declined since 1997. However, there has been an increase since 2001, with 871 recorded bombings. By 2003, this number had increased to 1,370, with a decline to 826 in 2004 (through December 1).<sup>18</sup>

### Defining Terrorism and Terrorists

The word *terrorist* and the concept of terrorism are hotly contested. In the debate on terrorists and terrorism, it has become clear that the definitions of terrorists and terrorism are relative. Key political actors in Russia have relayed their definition(s) of terrorists and terrorism. The definitions have links with some of the rhetorical frames, which will be described later. In the wake of the Beslan attack, in September 2004, Putin called for the need for an international definition of terrorism, which he hoped would help weed out what he calls "double standards."

We believe that there should be not only the same definition of terrorism for everybody but we should also mean the same things when we talk about it. Bin Laden has twice offered a truce to Europe in exchange for withdrawal of troops from Iraq, but nobody has entered into negotiations with him, because the methods and means he chooses make it impossible to maintain dialogue with him.<sup>19</sup>

Putin raised the problem of the word "terrorist" again in early 2005, in regards to a press conference on the report of an operation in Kabardino-Balkariya. Interrupting Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev's report on the incident, Putin stated, "What you should refrain from is the use of their terminology, all this jamaat nonsense. Bandits will be bandits."<sup>20</sup> Putin's interruption and comment seems to reflect a concern regarding legitimacy. Perhaps, by using the bandits terminology, it gives the terrorists legitimacy. And by referring to them as bandits, legitimacy is withheld or removed. Another incident involving terminology and legitimacy occurred in a condemnation by Russia's chief rabbi, Adolf Shayevich, of the terror attacks on the Egyptian tourist resort Sharm el-Sheikh. He referred to terrorists as "zombies and sick people having false and man-hating ideals."<sup>21</sup> The use of such strong rhetoric is used to strip away any semblance of humanity of the public notion of the terrorist. This makes this "other" group much easier to despise, as it has little or nothing left in common with those who constitute the "we."

Approximately one month later, Sergei Mironov, the Federation Council chairman, raised the issue of the need to create a common definition. "If such a definition existed, some people who are travelling to various conferences to

speak on behalf of so-called advocates of independence or some liberation movements would be called by their names, with all of the consequences following from this.”<sup>22</sup> The statements by Putin and Mironov clearly display some of the Russian authorities’ frustrations, especially with regard to the calls for Russia to enter into negotiations over Chechnya with a number of “exiles” who have asylum.

A Russian Foreign Ministry statement that was released on the third anniversary of September 11, 2001, attacks used a variety of similes and rhetoric to draw a picture of terrorism as an evil entity, which is the threat of the twenty-first century, and thus requires a united front.

Terrorism is Nazism of the 21st century. The only way to defend ourselves against it is rooting it out. On September 11, 2001, many came to realize that the world had undergone an irrevocable change. New-generation terrorism then put itself on the world map in a most hideous manner. Back then, not all of us could fully comprehend the actual magnitude of the threat posed by our attackers. The entire world reawakened to this threat when shaken by yet another barbarous terrorist act—this time around, in Russia. Terrorism, which affects many countries, is international in nature and has no ethnic, religious, cultural, or any other affiliation. Terrorism defies all legal and moral constraints. Its goal is to destroy the very foundation of our civilization, to subdue the world to its will. We, the civilized world, will surely win in the mortal combat against terror if we come to realise that terrorism is our No. 1 enemy and if we join hands and act consistently and honestly toward one other . . . countering terrorist threats’ new dimension with a qualitatively new level of anti-terrorist partnership, absolutely free of double standards.<sup>23</sup>

The Foreign Ministry’s statement, which is loaded with emotional rhetoric, includes historical comparisons (e.g., Nazism) and the stated need for unity between Russia and the world to defeat their common enemy. The use of history comes not only through mentioning a common historical enemy (which required a common front), but also by mentioning the September 11, 2001, and Beslan attacks. The description of the “new-generation” terrorist enemy paints a picture of a group that has no kind of cultural or social ties with the civilized world. By depicting the common enemy in this manner, it presents a picture of a polarized world between “us” and the “other.” In doing so, Russia presents itself and the “civilized world” as “us” and the new-generation terrorist as “other.” Thus, it is a lot easier to form an alliance with a group that can be more closely identified to your own.

The deputy head of the Center for Political Technologies, Aleksei Makarkin, identified what he termed as a “new generation” of terrorism. This is a breed that is distinct from the period that existed during and before the Cold War:

Modern civilisation has faced a new phenomenon that has little in common with the usual political radicalism of the previous decades. At that time, terrorism was part of the armed struggle for national liberation. Now the situation has undergone a dramatic change. The terrorists among religious fanatics (representatives of radical Wahhabism) do not limit themselves to local tasks: They want to change the whole world according to their own pattern. Their ideals appeal both to social outsiders who kill policemen in Dagestan, and to people with a Western education who perpetrated acts of terror in New York and London.<sup>24</sup>

On one hand, Makarkin's comments give a historical account of terrorism and imply that terrorism has evolved from the old model into a form that is a potential threat to "modern civilization," as it is nonselective in who it targets. He attempts to narrow the perceived difference between terrorism in Russia and the West through selective examples; New York and Washington are compared to the situation in Dagestan in this instance.

FSB Director Nikolai Patrushev stressed the need to arrive at a unified definition, and therefore action, on terrorism. "We have to take a more proactive approach in eventually working out an adjusted definition of terrorism. It is time that we created a legal basis for a person as a terrorist in one country to be treated likewise in all countries and therefore deprived of political asylum."<sup>25</sup> This quote illustrates the problem with trying to define terrorism; a terrorist to one group may be a freedom fighter to another. It is clouded by political and cultural issues. This article will use the following definition of terrorism:

Terrorism is understood here as the symptomatic use of coercive intimidation against civilians for political goals. This concept identifies this phenomenon by the techniques, targets, and goals; and all these attributes are regarded as necessary and sufficient for an act to qualify as terrorism. "Terrorists" are those who employ the methods of terrorism.<sup>26</sup>

### **Use of Rhetoric: Normalizing Russia's War on Terror on the International Stage**

In war, the conflict that appears in the mass media parallels the fighting "on the ground." To prepare the domestic and international publics for war, it is common practice for governments and authorities to soften them up as a means to justify their actions. One of the tried-and-true strategies that is employed in information warfare is the simplification and polarization of the impending conflict and the key actors involved on both sides. American academic George Gerbner highlights this aspect.

Stigmatisation and demonisation isolate their targets and set them up to be victimised. The cultural context in which that can precipitate social paranoia and political crisis is the historically unprecedented discharge of media violence into the mainstream of common consciousness. The ultimate victim is a community's ability to think rationally and creatively about conflict, injustice and tragedy.<sup>27</sup>

Using Herman and Chomsky's 1988 "propaganda" model, an ideology of antiterrorism seems to have filled the post-Cold War void as the "political control mechanism" of the mass media.<sup>28</sup> Generally, it helps to mobilize the population against a poorly defined enemy and legitimizes measures that may potentially threaten freedom in an otherwise democratic society. The way it is employed is designed to keep the domestic opposition on the defensive by labelling them as naïve, enemy sympathizers, or even traitors. The use of this rhetoric is intended to narrow public debate and eliminate dissenting views. This is done on the assumption that the established "we" are righteous and are thus enabled to defend themselves against the cruel "they," who are described as being bent on destroying the people and culture of the "we."



The authorities have defined their enemy in a manner that is similar to what is described above. Putin once publicly defined a “terrorist” in the following manner: “Terrorists are bandits who hide behind political, religious or nationalist slogans to try to resolve questions that have nothing to do with what they publicly state.”<sup>29</sup> After the Beslan attack, a harsher and more sinister rhetorical tone was used to define the enemy. One of the frames that has emerged revolves around the slogan “Some people are unfit for talks.” At a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) conference in Astana, Kazakhstan, Putin said, “There are people with whom no talks can be held,” after which he made some links to other frames by mentioning Osama bin Laden as being one such person and double standards in the war against terrorism.<sup>30</sup>

The “new” type of Chechen terrorist was described in the mass media, too, which emphasized the international dimension to the conflict and the ruthless nature of this actor. Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov described them in an interview on NTV:

The latest series of terrorist attacks—airplane crashes, the explosion near Moscow Rizhskaya metro station, and the terrible tragedy in Beslan—indicates that this war is becoming a system, and we are facing a powerful adversary. This does not mean that there are many of [enemy fighters] around. The point is that they are well organized, well controlled, and undoubtedly enjoy substantial financial support. Many militants fight not for an ideology, but just for money. There is no forward edge in this war, we cannot see the enemy, so it is just impossible to use army methods to defeat such an enemy.<sup>31</sup>

Ivanov gives a vivid collection of terrorist acts committed by an enemy that is described as being driven by money rather than an ideology. They are not portrayed as inept and disorganized but as a ruthless, powerful, and unseen. It is an enemy that cannot be stopped through the use of conventional methods.

#### **“Double Standards” and a “Lack of Understanding”**

Currently, the Russian authorities use rhetorical slogans such as double standards and/or a lack of understanding in their communications (through the mass media) with the West. These slogans attempt to justify policies in their war against terrorism. One source of irritation, as mentioned before, is the issue of the so-called exiles who have asylum in Europe and the United States. The authorities’ level of frustration increases when the exiles’ statements receive publicity through the mass media.

One week after Beslan, RIA Novosti raised the issue of Chechen exiles and Russia’s failure to convince the West that Chechnya is a terrorist battleground. An extensive interview with Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the State Duma’s International Committee, on the matter was published. The interview sets out Russia’s case and the problems that are faced in the process of attaining the demands stipulated by the West.

For example, Europeans and Americans continue to plainly ignore Moscow’s major demands on extraditing (Ilyas) Akhmadov and Zakayev. However, says Mr. Kosachev in the interview to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* newspaper, it does not mean that they turn their back on Russia. They just need comprehensive evidence of these persons’

involvement in the terrorist activities. And the Russian side cannot obtain this evidence until these men are brought to its territory and the investigation is completed.

Russia, complains Mr. Kosachev, has so far failed to convince the rest of the world that the Chechen operation for the country is an anti-terrorist operation. And the lack of argumentation is primarily to blame. This being the case, without full-scale cooperation with the West and the East, Russia will never settle the Chechen problem. "I am not speaking about internationalising the problem, . . . I am speaking about cooperation in suppressing the flash-points of terrorism on the territory of the Chechen Republic, because they could simply not exist without external support. The situation is aggravated by the fact that it is extremely difficult to obtain exhaustive revelatory information on the terrorists for the West in Chechnya, because the present-day terrorists are rather educated and competent, many of them have worked for special services and have a clear understanding of where they can be caught and how to avoid such traps."<sup>32</sup>

Implied in the interview is not only the "problems" faced by Russia in conveying its message to the international community, but also a lack of understanding. This comes through in the mentioning of the situation in Chechnya, especially with the reference to the contemporary educated breed of terrorist. The first part of the quoted extract stresses the necessity of extraditing the exiles. However, it stops short of accusing the named countries of shunning Russia. On one hand, Kosachev rues the apparent inability of Russia to formulate a convincing case. Yet, on the other, he blames "external support" for perpetuating the conflict. There is a lack of emotional rhetoric in this particular interview, which instead uses a logical form of reasoning to persuade the reader.

Akhmed Zakayev, a Chechen separatist emissary who has received asylum in the United Kingdom, is a leading source of annoyance. The leader of the Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov, appealed to the United States and the United Kingdom to expel what he called "foreign emissaries of the Chechen rebels" from their respective territories as a mark of commitment and solidarity in the campaign against terrorism. "Let Blair and Bush expel at least Zakayev alone instead of telling tales of fighting international terrorism. Zakayev knows all the secret hideouts, all the sources of financing, and could give very important testimony to the investigation."<sup>33</sup> As the exiles' level of activity increases, so does the official Russian response. The Russian Foreign Ministry issued a strong protest concerning the "sharply intensified anti-Russian activities" of both Zakayev and self-exiled oligarch Boris Berezovsky.<sup>34</sup> It was noted that their slanderous remarks received broad coverage in the media, including the state-owned BBC, but were not met with an adequate official response. The message went on to state that as the British had given refuge to these people, they had to accept full responsibility for their actions.<sup>35</sup>

A little over one year later, after the attack on the southern Russian town of Nalchik, the issue was revived. Once again, Zakayev appeared in the British media and publicly voiced "support" for the raid. The presidential envoy for international cooperation in combating terrorism, Anatoli Safanov, issued a commentary on the Foreign Ministry Web site. "This propagandist of terrorism, this terrorist instigator again expressed public support for terror, for the barbaric actions of the militants in Kabardino-Balkariya. Once again, he openly and blatantly

called for violence, for killing Russian civilians.”<sup>36</sup> On October 16, 2005, on the state-owned channel RTR’s program *Vesti Nedeli* (News of the Week), Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov described Zakayev’s actions as criminal. He went further: “I think that we can define such appeals as a crime. Moscow will make a statement, presumably, to British colleagues and voice the need to ensure the fulfilment of resolutions of the UN Security Council.”<sup>37</sup> The comments made by Zakayev to Reuters that were of the most concern were that “This was a legitimate military operation which took place in the framework of the Caucasus front” and he stated that Russia should “definitely” expect more attacks.<sup>38</sup> References to issues of morality and law are used in this particular rhetorical frame.

On the fourth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks, the State Duma was especially active in initiating a rhetorical campaign dealing with the issues of double standards and a lack of international unity in the global war on terror. They issued a statement that outlined Russia’s concerns in what they saw as a “division” of terrorists—into good and bad categories. “Double standards in the struggle against the main evil of modern times, attempts to make advances to terrorists, divide them into “good” and “bad,” and trying to explain or justify the actions of those capable of shooting cold-bloodedly at children weaken the antiterrorist coalition.”<sup>39</sup> The resolution that was issued by the Duma continued, drawing a link between al Qaeda and the Chechens, as well as the costs of engaging in this “policy.” “Pursuing al-Qaeda terrorists and at the same time being lenient toward representatives from its ‘Chechen cell’ means leaving at large a dangerous enemy capable of using all of the possibilities of the democratic system against the security and lives of both Russian and British citizens.”<sup>40</sup> This part of the resolution conveys an image of Russia and the democratic world (with an emphasis on the UK) being locked the same conflict—the “Chechen cell” is only a piece of a larger puzzle. It also emphasizes the need to neutralize all parts of this cell to gain some measure of security for Russian and British citizens. Boris Gryzlov, the speaker of the State Duma, drew a final parallel and a hope in witnessing coordinated action against global terrorism:

When we speak of the 9/11, Nord Ost and Beslan, we speak of tragedies the world will never be able to forget. The memory of the victims and grief, the awareness of responsibility before future generations will have us do everything possible to put a barrier to new terrorist attacks. The will of all the nations across the world should be focused on achieving precisely that goal.<sup>41</sup>

### **Unity in the War on Terrorism**

“Unity,” as it appears in the mass media, seems to operate on two levels: national and international. In the context of national unity, references are made to the need to harness and direct various resources in the war against terror as mentioned earlier in this article’s section on the mass media. A brief article that appeared in the private news agency RBC News demonstrates this aspect:

Fighting terrorism first of all needs unity of action of all executive authorities, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared at an extended meeting of the government. He underlined that fighting terrorism was a national task and all state resources

should be mobilised to fulfil it. In this connection, it is first of all necessary to ensure the unity of the country, the unity of action of executive agencies and the public.<sup>42</sup>

An interesting aspect of Putin's call to mobilize society is that it implies that after approximately five years of being involved in an antiterror campaign with Chechen rebels, Russian society is still not fully engaged in this war. The deputy director of the Moscow Carnegie Center, Dmitry Trenin, stated the perceived problem that Russia faces at a round-table conference in September 2004:

Terrorism is not a policy but an instrument. The goal of Shamil Basayev and his likes is to destabilise the situation not only in the North Caucasus but also in the Volga Region, to undermine the peoples' trust in the Kremlin administration, to unleash a war, to split Russia and to create a Muslim caliphate in its ruins. The al-Qaeda comrades of the Chechen terrorists pursue similar goals. They are trying to involve Washington in the struggle in the Islamic world, to use it in order to replace authoritarian regimes in some major Arab countries, which they want to unite under radical slogans, and to dictate their conditions to the world.<sup>43</sup>

The proposition that terrorists were creating and using social, ethnic, and religious divisions in Russia to attain their political ends was raised by Putin at the Council for Interaction with Religious Associations (three weeks after Beslan). "There are in Russia, with its age-long experience of peaceful coexistence, many peoples and religions, and the struggle against this threat is, in the full sense, the struggle for the unity of our country." He urged citizens not to vent their anger against people of another faith or nationality, as this would play into the hands of the terrorists. Putin also urged calm and patience, as measures were being taken that would eradicate terrorism, but that it would take time.<sup>44</sup> Under the circumstances, with the existing social tensions that were heightened after the Beslan attack, Putin tried to communicate with the nation's religious leaders in an effort to maintain some form of workable balance. His appeal makes use of a civic nation, one devoid of religious or ethnic identity, so as to not inflame passions further. He called for diverse groups and interests to come together to work for Russian unity and the defeat of terrorism.

One of the rhetorical frames that is apparent in the Russian news media is the issue of global unity in the war against terrorism. The impression of unity is conveyed by a number of themes, one of which is Russian cooperation with international partners. The stories are used to convey images of trust and reliability, as well as the appearance of consensus. In November 2005, the state news agency ITAR-TASS covered a story on cooperation in the field of countering terrorism between the United States and Russia. ITAR-TASS interviewed Henry Crumpton on the talks that were scheduled to take place in December:

We are taking a very robust delegation because we place so much emphasis on our bilateral relations with Russia. My portion of it—looking at counter terrorism—we'll be looking at terrorism not only in terms of the activities of the terrorist groups but also the motivation of our enemies and trying to understand them and this evolving battlefield, global battlefield and how we can cooperate more closely on these issues. . . . the need to have bonds of personal trust not only in the intelligence field, but also in a diplomatic and the military and law enforcement— across the board.<sup>45</sup>

The quotation from ITAR-TASS is used to give the impression of a close and valued working relationship between the United States and Russia. In addition to this message, the combating of a mutual enemy under trying circumstances is given (an evolving global battlefield). The closing part of the quote seems to bestow legitimacy to the proposed partnership, by not solely basing it on a military foundation, but on a variety of state institutions.

In addition to unity on the basis of bilateral relations, some stories focus on talks and arrangements between Russia and multinational organizations. One such organization is the Council of Europe (CoE). The state news agency RIA Novosti reported on an opinion of Terry Davis, the secretary general of the CoE, about the Beslan attack, which was published in the Moscow-based newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. The article noted that, "According to him, the terrorist attacks in Russia, Spain, and Turkey show that the problem of terrorism is facing the whole of Europe and calls for joint actions to prevent a repetition of such tragedies" and that the "reaction to international terrorism must be international."<sup>46</sup> Davis's words supported the Russian argument regarding the common threat and the need to form a united "front" against the international terrorist threat. Some fourteen months later, on November 17, 2005, Russia signed the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (for the member states of the CoE). The convention covered various spheres of society; education, media, culture, civil society, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Glushko, who signed the document on behalf of the Russian government, hailed the document as "the first counter-terrorism convention wholly aimed at preventing terrorist acts . . . As a matter of fact, the convention has opened an important front of international anti-terrorist cooperation, joint efforts and initiatives for states to counter terrorist ideology and propaganda."<sup>47</sup> The passage leading up to and including the convention appears to vindicate Russian concerns on the lack of unity (and double standards) and goes some way in settling Russian concerns.

Within the rhetorical frame of unity, several other messages exist, including, and in addition to, the ones already mentioned: real action needed in the fight against terrorism, global unity and resolve needed, no indulgence of terrorism, and no single country can defeat terrorism alone. However, a number of the messages mentioned can exist together in the same news story. As part of the real-action-needed argument, a case is made on the basis of human values and the creation of groups of nations brought together through common suffering inflicted by acts of terrorism. This was brought to the fore prior to Lavrov's visit to Madrid where he discussed on forming an "Alliance of Civilizations":

The time has come to replace political discussions with real political interaction of civilisations . . . [expand cooperation] not only at the level of interstate relations, but also between the civil society institutions. We should make common for all people values the cornerstone and on that basis form a coordinated political course. [The danger of terrorism is that] it seeks to use unresolved problems for making people of different confessions and cultures clash. [Moscow] welcomes the initiative of Spain and Turkey to form an Alliance of Civilisations. The problem of maintaining accord between civilisations is one of the most vital for international relations. Terrorists want to split the world on the civilisation principle, but it should

not be allowed. In the conditions of globalisation this would be catastrophic for our planet. . . . I think the idea of the Alliance of Civilisations will help build a more just, democratic and secure world order.<sup>48</sup>

Lavrov issues a call to action at the beginning of the article, and then sets out to justify this call through emphasizing certain humanistic values and a common situation with other European nations. He makes clear that the initiative to form an “Alliance of Civilizations” comes from Spain and Turkey, with Russia welcoming this suggestion. A message of the need to band together to ensure mutual survival of the civilized world is made at the end of the story.

On the matter of calling for global unity and resolve in the war on terror, such a call appears to be linked to a matter that can also be placed in the double standards rhetorical frame. One such call was made by Putin during a UN Security Council session on countering terrorism in September 2005, where he voiced support for the British proposal that condemned acts that instigated terrorism. Putin made a call for states to unite “to fight this evil” and denounced “any attempts to connive at terror, playing with terrorists, using them for the sake of some political biases or aims.”<sup>49</sup> Gryzlov repeated this call in October 2005, on the eve of the Dubrovka Theater (Nord Ost) anniversary. “The practice of ‘double standards’, discordant anti-terrorist measures and a low level of coordination are [the] next problems which we should settle.” He went on to describe the activity of the State Duma in bringing about legislation designed to combat terrorism.<sup>50</sup> Use is made of the anniversary of an act of terrorism in Russia, which constitutes an emotional pull aspect to the call for global unity, resolve, and action. By using the anniversary of the Dubrovka Theater incident, a certain amount of emotion is evoked in the rest of the message, possibly influencing the readers’ perception of the part of the message that contains the call.

In September 2005, Putin raised the issue of indulging terrorism. He did so in New York during the preparations for a UN General Assembly meeting that included a convention on international terrorism.

New serious tasks, such as the prevention of instigating terrorism have emerged. . . . Such actions should be recognised as criminal by all states, with no exceptions. Any attempts of being indulgent with terrorism, flirting with terrorists, using them for the benefit of this or that political fancy or ambition should be met with general condemnation. It is the UN and its Security Council that might become a coordinating centre, a kind of interior headquarters for the international counter-terrorist front.<sup>51</sup>

A very dry message that uses legal or semilegal appeals was made in this instance. There is an absence of the use of emotional words or events. This could imply that the intended audience for this message is not so much the general public, but those who would be participating in the UN General Assembly meeting.

RIA Novosti featured an opinion article after the Beslan tragedy. Among other things, the article discussed Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, in addition to Chechnya and terrorism in Russia. The writer, Oleg Nechiporenko (director general of the National Anti-Criminal and Anti-Terrorist Foundation of the Russian Federation), focuses on the expression of sympathy from the United States and its lead-

ers after Beslan and the apparent double standard in their call for Russia to start discussions with moderate Chechen factions. This is made after the American mistakes in Iraq and Afghanistan (due to increased instability and increase in drug production) are described. A lot of rhetorical imagery is used throughout the article, especially the image of children and innocent civilians being slaughtered. It ends with a call for unity and an end to double standards to combat an enemy that is hard to define and has a constantly evolving identity.<sup>52</sup>

### Episodes of Common History and Common Suffering

This section, devoted to media materials that contain matter on subjects that imply a common suffering or resurrecting historical memories,

when a common approach was needed to defeat a powerful common enemy, begins with a description and analysis of the use of Nazism and its comparison to contemporary terrorism. Putin spoke at a ceremony commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in January 2005. He stated that: “in the

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***“By using the anniversary of the Dubrovka Theater incident, a certain amount of emotion is evoked in the rest of the message, possibly influencing the readers’ perception of the part of the message that contains the call.”***

same way as there could be no good or bad Nazis, there cannot be good or bad terrorists. Double standards are simply unacceptable here, they are deadly dangerous for civilisation.”<sup>53</sup> In his talk on double standards, Putin makes maximum use of *pathos*—the use of emotional language and, in this case, symbols, too. He makes his plea to end double standards on the grounds of Auschwitz, which was marking its liberation, comparing Nazis to terrorists. However, this only marked the beginning of the rhetorical parallels with Nazism as the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II neared.

In April 2005, during a ceremony accepting the credentials of new foreign ambassadors in Moscow, Putin took the occasion to stress the need for nations to unite under a common threat, including terrorism.<sup>54</sup> This message was reinforced closer to the May 9 (Victory Day) celebrations. Putin left a message as part of an address on the official Kremlin Web site for the celebrations: “We must remember the main historical lesson of WWII: only by joining forces can the world community stand up to violence and evil.”<sup>55</sup> An emphasis was placed on fundamental human values. This was also the case in an article that appeared in *Le Figaro* titled “The Lessons of Victory over Nazism” by Putin.

Nazism and international terrorism are enemies of human dignity, as well as the most sacred freedoms and values, the right to life, first and foremost. Nazism plunged the people of the World and Europe into an unprecedented tragedy. . . . This was truly a victory of good over evil and faith over blind fanaticism.<sup>56</sup>

Putin reinforced this argument in his article in *Le Figaro* by adding a comment on the UN, which proclaimed May 8 and 9 as days of memory and reconcilia-

tion. Once again, he urged the international community to come together and act against a common threat.

The UN proclaimed May 8 and 9 days of memory and reconciliation. In May this year, the General Assembly will hold a special session devoted to this date. In my view, this is yet another symbol indicating that the time has come for the people who fought on both sides of the front to reconcile once and for all and overcome mistrust between peoples . . . the time has also come for all nations to resolutely unite in combating new challenges, such as terrorism and ideological doctrines based on racism and xenophobia. . . . And probably, the principle lesson is that nationalistic slogans always lead to pogroms, racial and religious superiority theories to terror and genocide against innocent people, and manifestation of weakness to an aggressor lead to global conflicts.<sup>57</sup>

The UN and the declaration of the days of memory and reconciliation in this case are used to justify the call for unity. Also rooted in the message is the implication that a new pogrom could be launched by terrorists if they are allowed to develop. The ghosts of the Nazi past are resurrected here, and, at the same time, there is a call for past adversaries to unite to meet the new challenge.

As a final commentary on the parallels drawn between Nazism and terrorism, a brief remark on the comments in Putin's opening address at a CIS summit in Moscow. He stated that: "Nazism, extremism and terrorism are threats nourished by the same ideological feeding trough."<sup>58</sup> This remark not only places terrorism in the same category as Nazism and other forms of extremism, but also denigrates all of them to the level of animals (with the reference to the feeding trough).

I now focus on the issue of creating a sense of common suffering between Russia and other nations. This is used to try to close the perceived distance between the Russian experience and the experience of other countries, thus creating the possibility of being accepted more readily as a part of the "we." One incident in particular is the focus of attention—the July 7, 2005, bombings in London. This sparked a flurry of news in the Russian media on the war on terrorism and the stories that appeared used most, if not all, of the rhetorical frames that have already been outlined.

The news agency Interfax ran a number of articles on the day of the London attacks. A selection of the articles carried messages of sympathy, tinged with a reminder of the existing double standards. At the time of the attack, a G8 meeting was in progress at Gleneagles, Scotland. Putin issued a statement on the attack:

An enormous crime has been committed in London today. I would like to say that Russia has itself repeatedly experienced terrorist attacks, brutal and bloody, which have taken hundreds of our innocent civilians.

For this reason, in no other country has this event evoked such a response, and in no other country has such sympathy been shown for those affected or have such condolences been expressed as they have been in our country.

What has happened is extra evidence that all of us are doing too little to pool our efforts in the most effective way in combating terrorism.

I would nonetheless like to express, not only hope, but also confidence that the world community, discarding double standards in the assessment of bloody crimes



such as the one that has been committed in London today, will have enough strength to stand firm against terror, to stand firm against it together, and will be able to eradicate this plague of the 21st century, eradicate it completely and indefinitely.<sup>59</sup>

Putin begins his statement by establishing Russia as a victim that has already experienced these horrors and is able to empathize with the British. However, this soon gives way to the aspect of double standards and the need for the world to act in concert. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov echoed Putin's sentiments from Moscow. "Combating terrorism is a burning problem that calls for joint efforts on the part of all countries. We must not forget this for a single day."<sup>60</sup> Aleksei Kudrin, the finance minister, issued a statement on the need to bring terrorists to justice, in addition to the double-standards question. "Terrorists must be caught and brought to justice everywhere, including the United Kingdom, which to our mind, sometimes gives them asylum."<sup>61</sup> The comments made by Putin and Fradkov alluded to what Kudrin stated, but in a more diplomatic manner.

News on the first day focused on the international dimension of terrorism, drawing comparisons and links between terrorism in Russia with acts of terrorism in Europe and the United States. Aleksei Malashenko, a political scientist and member of the Moscow Carnegie Center's Expert Council, stated that the September 11, 2001, Madrid, and London attacks were all linked and assigned the blame. "My theory is that the blasts were carried out by Islamic terrorists. Who else would have done that?"<sup>62</sup> A little later in the day, Malashenko's comments were developed further by Safonov: "Judging by preliminary information, the way the bombings were carried out is similar to the terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid, Istanbul and Moscow. This organisation is either directly or indirectly connected with al-Qaeda."<sup>63</sup>

News from the day after the attack revolved heavily around the themes of the need for global unity and cohesion in the war on terror and linking terror attacks outside Russia with terrorism in Russia. One of the messages that came out was the need for constant vigilance in the struggle and that mutual distrust and enmity need to be abandoned if the war on terror is to be successful. A RIA Novosti story ended with a somber call to unity: "Solidarity is essential. The bloodshed in New York, Moscow, Madrid or London is the same colour."<sup>64</sup> A negative article appeared on July 8 in a media outlet that had built its reputation as being part of the opposition (to the Russian government and Putin). The story focused on President George W. Bush's and Putin's political careers being built on the premise of fighting terrorism. It commented on how ineffective these measures have been to date. It also questioned the need and motives for curbing press freedom and other restrictions as tactics in fighting terror.<sup>65</sup>

The Foreign Ministry released a statement on their Web site on July 8 that linked various terror acts, such as Moscow (2002), Beslan (2004), and London (2005).

The terrorist attacks in London, as well as the tragic events in Dubrovka and in Beslan are links of the same chain of international terrorisms evil deeds, which we can only fight when united. We extend our sincere condolences to the victims, people and the government of Great Britain. The UN Security Council has confirmed its determination to continue fighting against international terrorism in accordance

with its obligations under the UN Charter. Russia, being well acquainted with the dreadful nature of terrorism shares the resolution's appeal to the world community to actively cooperate in prosecuting the organisers of these crimes.<sup>66</sup>

The United Kingdom and Russia are brought "together" in this statement through their shared experience of suffering at the hands of terrorists. The statement also makes clear that Russia's history of suffering is greater, however. Appeals to the reader are made on both an emotional basis—defense against international terrorists evil deeds—and on the basis of law and order, namely the UN Charter. The UN Charter is used to give added credibility to the Foreign Ministry's call.

The last articles that are analyzed in this article are on the Russian feelings of resentment and isolation, expressed through the media, in the wake of the London bombings. Russia's terrorism predicament is also examined. Vyacheslav Kostikov, Yeltsin's press secretary, gave an interview to the weekly *Argumenty i Fakty* where some of this frustration was vented publicly. The issue of granting asylum to Zakayev was mentioned in the interview, along with British naivety (on the basis that they should not believe that "terrorists would not rob or kill in their own street." The reported extracts from RIA Novosti finished with a dramatic warning and prediction: "If the West continues mumbling 'let's talk,' quietly gesturing towards Russia, soon Londonstan, where Islamic extremists feel quite at home, will be supplemented by a whole new continent, Europostan."<sup>67</sup>

Another two articles that appeared in RIA Novosti in July 2005 touched on the issue of Russia feeling ignored and neglected. One of these stories focused on how many times Russia was mentioned by the British authorities in their statements on background information and overseas comparisons:

. . . and presented the explosions in London as the first use of suicide bombers in Europe. Does this mean that Russia, which has suffered from suicide bombings too, is not a European nation?

Downing Street makes two statements a day about security measures, the background of the terrorist attacks, and progress made in the investigation. But it does not mention Moscow. Only once did Tony Blair mention Russia, alongside Saudi Arabia, Kenya and Tanzania. The British ambassador to Moscow has thanked Russian citizens who expressed condolences to Londoners. But this happened in Moscow, while London does not remember that over 40 people died in a Moscow metro explosion during the rush hour in February 2004 . . . But the innocent victims of the Moscow metro bombings were not mentioned, as if Russia had been crossed out of the list of countries where people die from terrorist attacks. Russia was not mentioned, because this would have made London not the first European capital hit by suicide bombers.<sup>68</sup>

Although this was a brief excerpt of the story, there is an obvious feeling of frustration and exclusion. The feeling of exclusion relates not only to Russia perhaps being "left" out of Europe, but that the suffering of Russian citizens seems to be quickly forgotten by other European nations. The "forgetfulness" of the West is brought up again in another article, which asks readers not to try to create a world of "good" and "bad" terrorists, as this will only lead to further tragedies, not only in Russia, but in the West, too.<sup>69</sup>

### Conclusion

The mass media play an important part in establishing the identities and sides of a conflict—they bring to life the “us” and “them” aspect. In effect, the media can potentially mobilize the forces of polarity in a conflict or an issue via their framing of events and involved actors. This means that the mass media can perform a rallying or consolidating (society) function in times of difficulty or crisis. It is possible to describe rhetoric as an art form that can eventually encourage self-censorship. A natural discourse of a particular theme or subject is born when one particular thread of discourse becomes dominant and is established as the primary means of explaining a phenomenon or an event. Journalists entering the debate are socialized into the rules of the dominant pattern. And this pattern is then relayed to the audience. Although, whether the audience accepts the rhetoric, is another matter.

Through this process, a pattern of routine news production is established. Routine news production creates an unwritten set of rules on how an event or phenomenon should be described and uses specialized words or phrases that become dominant. Outside or foreign terminology that competes with the dominant line of discourse is contested and excluded from appearing in the mainstream news. This means that the event is described in a more uniform manner due to the specific language employed.

The issue of double standards has an important influence on the nature of the rhetoric employed. It is not only used as a means to silence opposition to Russia’s policies in its fight against Chechen separatism and terrorism, but it is also used as a tool to influence foreign countries’ behavior. The brief extract below demonstrates these aspects and the importance carried by certain key words.

Double standards are still there. Those who demolish skyscrapers in the US, blow up trains in Spain or the underground in London, or kill American soldiers in Iraq, are unequivocally condemned as terrorists. But those who detonate houses and seize a theatre in Moscow, or take hundreds of children hostage in Beslan, a town that was all but unknown until recently, are described as rebels, if not freedom fighters.<sup>70</sup>

The issue of double standards is not only used to try to reduce pressure on the Russian authorities regarding their antiterrorism measures, but also to try to put pressure on Western countries that have granted asylum to key Chechen figures (such as Zakayev) and also as a means of debating and contemplating Russia’s place. By Russia’s place, I refer to whether other European nations consider Russia to be European, too, or perhaps something else. A lot of the rhetoric in this category makes use of highly emotional words that are charged with imagery that uses the specter of dead children and civilians.

In calls for unity, a different rhetorical strategy is employed. Taking the issue of national unity first, the calls focus on the issues of standing together in the face of an enemy that wants to divide the multiethnic and multiconfessional state, and mobilizing Russia’s people and resources. Emphasis is placed on the diversity of Russian society and the need for retaining territorial integrity. The call itself seems to use the reason and logic of in the best interests. That is, people will derive greater benefit staying within the Russian Federation. The calls for global unity have a similar message; a common enemy exists and unless everyone unites, this enemy

will not be defeated. Appeals are made on an emotional and legal basis; international organizations, such as the CoE and the UN are used by the sender to add weight and credibility.

Episodes of common history and suffering make use of strong symbols and emotional rhetoric to convey the message to the intended audience. Very specific references, times, and places are used to achieve the desired effect. These are used to draw parallels between terrorists and dark periods in history. This is especially evident in the comparisons between the Nazis and contemporary terrorists, which demonizes the enemy. This also ties into the logic of the need for a global unity message, too. Significant historical places and times are chosen to deliver the message, such as Putin's speech at Auschwitz and the increased number of calls as the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II approached. Senders use examples of common suffering to try to bring Russia closer to the European and international communities. In doing so, Russia could potentially be classified as constituting a part of the "we," rather than being left outside of this group; it is a question of belonging and the consequences this entails.

In conclusion, I will return to the issue of the mass media and examine which of the three roles (i.e., mirror, witness, and transmitter) best suits the current situation. Under the circumstances (i.e., tension that surrounds the war on terror) the media are not watchdogs (witnesses) that ensure the survival of democracy. Rather, the role seems to vary between that of mirror and transmitter. Mirror in respect that the media portray certain images of this conflict, and this is from where the public derives a part of their "reality" or understanding of the conflict. And the category of transmitter is of equal pertinence too, although in this case it is the authorities that are expressing themselves and transmitting a message through the mass media. For example, their messages of national unity and ending double standards are going to domestic and international audiences.

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