

PREFACE

When the present manuscript was about ready for publication, a rather unexpected event occurred which completely upset the agreed time schedule with the publisher for it required some thorough rethinking and adaptation of the original text. Indeed, on 25 December 1991, former president M. Gorbachev resigned, marking the end of the U.S.S.R.¹ As a result, one of the two countries which formed the focal point of the present comparative approach simply disappeared from the political map of the world. Because of the importance of this development and its profound impact on the substance of the present book, it appears appropriate to devote some words in this preface as to the manner in which these recent changes were still incorporated.

Starting from the premise that geography suggests that the Russian Federation became the sole legal successor of the U.S.S.R. as far as the Arctic is concerned, one might be tempted by simply replacing the words "U.S.S.R./Soviet (Union)" by "Russia/Russian Federation" in order to give the book a more updated look. It is the opinion of the author, however, that such a procedure is totally unacceptable from a scientific point of view. The Russian Federation, as successor state of the Soviet Union, has to be viewed as a new actor on the international scene of which the priorities do not necessarily correspond with those set by its predecessor.

The better alternative, therefore, appears to adhere as closely as possible to the following five rules of thumb. Firstly, and most important, events which occurred after the disintegration of the former Soviet Union are clearly attributed to the Russian Federation. New headings are therefore created and added to the original outline of the book. Secondly, all reference in the text to the "U.S.S.R./Soviet (Union)" which are tied to a *particular moment in time between 1917 and 1991* remain unchanged. Thirdly, whenever "U.S.S.R./Soviet (Union)" is encountered in the text as a mere *geographical or general reference*, i.e. not linked to a specific moment in time, conversion to "Russia/Russian Federation" is allowed. A good example can be found in the maps which accompany the present study. Fourthly, in order to avoid confusion, all references to pre-1917 events are specified as "Imperial Russian" in nature. Finally, as a result of all the above-mentioned changes, the option is also made to use the past tense when speaking of Soviet authors. The present tense, on the contrary, is used when addressing Soviet legislation for the simple reason that these enactments remain in effect until they are officially repealed. It is believed that such a conversion pattern reflects the political reality as closely as possible.

At the same time, however, it must be admitted that these dramatic Christmas events which took place in the Soviet Union in 1991, also add some extra value to this book for it

will have the merit of being the first to have covered the Soviet Arctic maritime policy from A to Z in some detail. The additional time period covered, relating to Russia, runs *grosso modo* until the summer of 1992, with some later materials being included where materially possible. Because of this time restriction, as will be seen, it will often prove to be too early to talk already about a new *Russian* policy. In the mean time, as stated by a State Adviser to the Russian Federation, declarations made by President El'tsin confirm "Russia's succession to relevant decisions and intentions of the former USSR."² In order to understand Russia's Arctic policy, one will necessarily first have to come to terms with past Soviet behavior. A contiguity between the two, in other words, certainly exists but that by itself, as will be demonstrated, does not justify the simple assimilation between the two.

Notes to Preface

1. The day before, at 5 p.m., the U.S.S.R. already stopped being a (permanent) member of the Security Council of the United Nations, its place having been taken by Russia. See *Izvestiia*, 25 December 1991, p. 1, cols. 4-6. See also *infra*, chapter 1, note 212 and accompanying text.
2. Granberg, A., The Northern Sea Route and the Policy of New Russia, 12 *Int'l Challenges* p. 5, 10 (1992).